

Time Audit Chronicles: Teachings on the End Times – The Return of the King

(Matthew 24-25)

Prologue: Looking Toward the Future

The Presswood family gathered around the fireplace in their cozy living room, each sipping hot cocoa. Ariel was reading a book about famous historical events, while Alice was cuddled up with Mr. Fluffernutter, pretending they were exploring the “future” in a time machine.

“Daddy,” Ariel asked thoughtfully, “do you think we’ll ever know exactly when the world will end? I mean, it’s kind of scary to think about, but also kind of fascinating.”

Ryan smiled, his eyes thoughtful. “You’re right—it’s both mysterious and sobering. Jesus actually talked a lot about the end of the world, but He didn’t give us a specific date. Instead, He told us to be ready and to live wisely, so we’d be prepared for His return.”

Alice’s eyes widened. “Is He coming back soon?”

Ryan nodded. “Jesus promised He would return, and He gave His followers clear teachings about what to expect. Let’s use the Time Audit Machine to hear His words about the end times and how we can live in light of His return.”

The Journey Begins: The Mount of Olives

The Time Audit Machine hummed softly as Ariel set the coordinates.

“Coordinates locked: Mount of Olives, 30-33 CE. Objective: understand Jesus’ teachings about the end times and how to live in anticipation of His return.”

With a flash of light, the family found themselves on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem. Jesus was sitting with His disciples, speaking to them privately, away from the crowds.

“There they are,” Ryan said, pointing. “This is where Jesus shared some of His most important teachings about the end of the age.”

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple (Matthew 24:1-2)

As the disciples marveled at the magnificence of the Temple, Jesus turned to them and said:

“See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” (Matthew 24:2)

Ariel’s eyes widened. “The Temple would be destroyed?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Jesus predicted that the Temple, the center of Jewish worship, would be destroyed. And it happened in AD 70, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.”

The Disciples Ask About the End Times *(Matthew 24:3)*

Later, as Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him privately and asked:

“Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matthew 24:3)

Ryan looked at the question. “The disciples wanted to know about the end times—the signs that would mark Jesus’ return and the end of the world. And Jesus gave them a clear response, but He didn’t give them a specific date. Instead, He shared what to look for and how to live.”

Signs of the End Times *(Matthew 24:4-14)*

Jesus began His teaching with a warning about false messiahs and the beginning of birth pains:

“Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” (Matthew 24:4-5)

Ariel’s pen hovered over her notebook. “Is that happening now?”

“It has been happening throughout history,” Ryan said. “There have always been people claiming to be the Messiah. Jesus warned His followers not to be deceived.”

Jesus continued, describing wars, famines, earthquakes, and persecution:

“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name’s sake.” (Matthew 24:9)

Alice looked worried. “Is this going to happen to us?”

“Jesus promised that in the end, there would be challenges and suffering for His followers,” Ryan said. “But He also assured them that those who endure to the end will be saved.”

He concluded this part of His teaching:

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matthew 24:14)

The Great Tribulation *(Matthew 24:15-28)*

Jesus warned His disciples about a time of great tribulation and suffering, beginning with the “abomination of desolation,” a term used to describe the desecration of the holy place:

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)” (Matthew 24:15)

Ariel looked up from her notes. “What’s the ‘abomination of desolation’?”

“Historically, it referred to the desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem,” Ryan explained. “But it also points to future events that signal the end of the age. It’s a warning for God’s people to be alert and prepared.”

Jesus continued, emphasizing the severity of this time:

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matthew 24:21)

The Return of the Son of Man *(Matthew 24:29-31)*

Jesus then turned to His glorious return, giving hope to His followers:

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.” (Matthew 24:29)

Ariel gasped. “That sounds intense!”

“It will be,” Ryan said. “Jesus is describing cosmic signs that will precede His return.”

Then, He said:

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Matthew 24:30)

Alice’s eyes sparkled. “He’s coming back in glory?”

“Yes, He is,” Ryan said. “When Jesus returns, He will come with power and glory, and every eye will see Him. This is the moment all believers are waiting for.”

The Parable of the Fig Tree *(Matthew 24:32-35)*

Jesus used the parable of the fig tree to explain how we should recognize the signs of the times:

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh.” (Matthew 24:32)

Ariel nodded. “So, when we see signs of the end times, we should know that Jesus’ return is near.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Jesus wanted His followers to stay alert and be prepared, just like farmers watch the fig tree to know the seasons.”

The Importance of Being Ready *(Matthew 24:36-44)*

Jesus made it clear that no one knows the exact time of His return:

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”
(Matthew 24:36)

Ariel’s pen hovered over her notebook. “So, we don’t know when He’ll come?”

“No one knows the exact time,” Ryan said. “But Jesus called us to live as if it could happen at any moment.”

Jesus then warned His followers to be ready, telling the parable of the thief in the night:

“Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” (Matthew 24:44)

The Parable of the Ten Virgins *(Matthew 25:1-13)*

In the next part of His teaching, Jesus told a parable about ten virgins who were waiting for a wedding feast. Five were wise and brought oil for their lamps, while five were foolish and ran out of oil. When the bridegroom arrived, the wise virgins were ready, but the foolish ones were left behind.

“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”
(Matthew 25:13)

Ryan explained: “Jesus was saying we must be ready for His return, just like the wise virgins who kept their lamps full and were prepared.”

The Parable of the Talents *(Matthew 25:14-30)*

Jesus told another parable, this time about a master who gave his servants talents (money) to invest. The faithful servants used their talents wisely, but one servant buried his, afraid to risk it. When the master returned, he praised the faithful servants, but condemned the one who did nothing with what he had been given.

“For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.” (Matthew 25:29)

Ariel nodded. “Jesus wants us to use what He’s given us to serve others and build His kingdom.”

The Final Judgment *(Matthew 25:31-46)*

Finally, Jesus described the final judgment when He returns in glory:

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.” (Matthew 25:31)

He will separate the righteous from the wicked, saying to the righteous, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matthew 25:34)

Ryan looked at Ariel and Alice. “The key to this judgment is how we lived our lives—whether we served others in love, as Jesus did.”

Returning Home: Live in Readiness

Back in the garage, the Time Audit Machine powered down, leaving the family reflective. Ariel flipped through her notes, while Alice arranged her stuffed animals to be “ready” for the royal feast.

“Jesus didn’t give us a specific date for His return,” Ariel said, “but He showed us how to live in readiness.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “We need to live with humility, faith, and love, serving others and trusting that Jesus will return when the time is right.”

Reflection: Living in Light of the End Times

That evening, Ariel read aloud from Matthew 24:

“‘Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.’”

The family sat quietly, reflecting on the importance of being prepared.

“Jesus wants us to live as if He could return at any moment,” Ryan said. “So, we must live with purpose, helping others and sharing His love every day.”

Ariel nodded. “And when He comes back, we’ll be ready to celebrate with Him.”

Alice hugged Mr. Fluffernutter tightly. “I think Jesus is coming back soon, and we’re ready!”

Takeaway: Be Ready for His Return

Jesus’ teachings on the end times in Matthew 24-25 call us to live in constant readiness for His return. By being faithful with what He has entrusted to us, loving and serving others, and staying alert, we can be prepared when He comes in glory. While no one knows the exact day or hour, we are called to live with the hope and anticipation of His return, knowing that our actions today matter for eternity.

