

REAWAKENING TO CHRIST'S RETURN**MATTHEW 13 | ERIC SIMPSON | FEBRUARY 6, 2022**

- **What is the "Return of Christ"?**

Acts 1:11

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Incarnation – Crucifixion – Resurrection – Ascension – Christ's Return

"Believing in the second coming affirms that Jesus remains sovereign and will return at last to put everything right. This putting right (the biblical word for it is justice) is the sort of sign-of-relief event that the whole world, at its best and at many other times too, longs for most deeply."

– N.T. Wright

- **How did Jesus speak about the signs surrounding his return?**

1. False teachers

Mark 13:5-6

5 Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 6 Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many.

Some things done in Jesus' name, don't have anything to do with Jesus.

2. Wars, global conflicts, natural disasters

Mark 13:7-8

7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

3. Persecution of Jesus-followers

Mark 13:9,11

"You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them...11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

4. Gospel access to all people, everywhere

Mark 13:10

And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.

- **Why is this matters for us today?**

hope = confident expectation that goodness is coming

It means that history is flowing in the direction of hope.

It means that "what is" is not "what will always be."

Christ's return promises us the restoration of the life we have always longed for but never had.

"Finally, the totality of our being will be saturated only with goodness. Think of it—think of all that you're not going to have to wrestle with anymore. The fear that has been your lifelong battle, the anger, the compulsions, the battles to forgive, that nasty root of resentment. No more internal civil wars; no doubt, no lust, no regret; no shame, no self-hatred, no gender confusion. What has plagued you these last many years? What has plagued you all your life? Your Healer will personally lift it from your shoulders."

– John Eldredge

Near the end of the "Return of the King", the ring is finally destroyed at Mount Doom, Sam wakes up from his sleep surprised he is alive and surprised to see Gandalf.

"Gandalf! I thought you were dead! But then I thought I was dead myself.

Is everything sad going to come untrue? What's happened to the world?"

"A great Shadow has departed," said Gandalf, and then he laughed and the sound was like music, or like water in a parched land; and as he listened the thought came to Sam that he had not heard laughter, the pure sound of merriment, for days upon days without count. It fell upon his ears like the echo of all the joys he had ever known.

– J.R.R. Tolkien