

Later, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?"

Matthew 24:3 NLT

The idea of the 'end of the world' often conjures up images of catastrophe and fear. However, for God's children, the end of the world signifies the transition to an eternal Kingdom led by Jesus. He Himself speaks openly about it, and through His words, we can draw valuable lessons for our lives today.

And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don't panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately. Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

Matthew 24:6-8 NLT

Jesus emphasizes that events such as wars, famine, and natural disasters are merely the beginning of a birthing process. They are signs that something greater is unfolding or about to happen, but these signs themselves are not the end.

"Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Matthew 24:9-13 NLT

Jesus describes a period of persecution and indifference where many will turn away from the faith and betray one another. However, He assures us that those who stand firm until the end will be saved. He also points out that His return will be unexpected, occurring during a time of apparent peace and security, similar to the days of Noah.

"However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

"When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah's day. In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. People didn't realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.

Matthew 24:36-39 NLT

This calls us to be prepared at all times, knowing that only the Father knows the exact day.

Jesus' teaching about the end of the world is not meant to instill fear, but to energize our faith and commitment. It reminds us that, in the end, it is not about the chaotic events of the world that matter, but about our faithful response to the mission entrusted to us. Let us actively reflect the Kingdom of God in our lives, bringing the gospel to all those with whom we cross paths.

And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:14 NLT

The true sign that the end is near is when the gospel of the Kingdom has been preached throughout the entire world. It is not merely about preaching salvation or prosperity, but about the fullness of God's Kingdom and His Justice .

Each day gives us the opportunity to be ambassadors of that Kingdom, living with love, justice, and purpose. Let us face the future with confidence, knowing that Jesus will return to establish His Kingdom, which will have no end. In the meantime, may our lives always reflect that we are ready and looking forward to that glorious day.

## **Application**

Sharing the Gospel of the Kingdom: It is clear that the task that Jesus left us is to preach the gospel of the Kingdom. This involves not only speaking about God but also demonstrating His love through acts of justice, mercy, and reconciliation in our various spheres of influence. Consider your own 'nation' or community: How can you be a witness to His Kingdom there?

Be Spiritually Prepared: Spiritual preparation is not about knowing exact dates or prophecies, but about living each day as if Jesus were to return tomorrow. This involves living in holiness, manifesting the love and justice of the Father, and ensuring that our priorities reflect God's heart, living everyday for His purpose.

## Reflection

How can I remain strong in my faith and live each day prepared for Jesus' return? To which 'nation' or group can I bring the gospel of the Kingdom in my current context?