

BIBLE READING DAY 37, MONDAY: APRIL 4

Holy Week, Tuesday evening: Jesus Previews Last Days Events on the Mount of Olives

Matthew 24:3–51; Mark 13:3–37; Luke 21:7–36; John 8:1

As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately and said, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

“Take heed that no man leads you astray,” Jesus replied, “for many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for it is necessary that these things happen, but this is not yet the end of the age. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in different places. But all these things are only the beginning of the sufferings.

“Then they will hand you over to persecution and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. And in those days, many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another, and many false prophets will rise and lead many astray. And because wickedness will prevail more and more, the love of many will grow cold, but he who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

“Therefore, when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore, if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles and vultures will be gathered.

“But before all these things,” said Jesus, “they will lay hands on you and persecute you, handing you over to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. This will be an opportunity for you to bear testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts not to meditate beforehand how to answer, for I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. But you will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all men for my name’s sake, but not a hair of your head will perish. By your steadfast endurance you will win your souls.

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city depart, and those in the country, let them not enter the city. For these are the days of vengeance, that all the things that have been written may be fulfilled. But woe to those with child and to those giving suck in those days, for there will be great distress throughout the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away as captives among all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

“At that time will be great tribulation such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be. And if those days were not shortened, no one would survive; but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then will the sign of the Son of Man appear in heaven, and all the nations of earth will mourn and will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send forth his angels with a great trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

“Now learn a lesson from the fig tree,” said Jesus. “As soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. In like manner, when you see all these things, know that he is near, at the very gates. I tell you truly, this generation will not pass away till all these things are fulfilled. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But no one knows that day and hour, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. But as the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then will two men be in the field; one will be taken, and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

“But take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be overwhelmed with indulgence and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all who dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch and pray continually that you may prevail to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.

“Take heed and watch, for you know not when the time will be. It is like a man taking a journey into another country; leaving his house in charge of his servants, each with his work, he commands the doorkeeper to keep watch. Watch therefore, for you do not know when the head of the house will come—in the evening, or at midnight, at cockcrow, or in the morning. Watch, lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. What I say to you, I say to all: Watch!

“But know this, that if the householder had known what time of night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you, too, must be ready, for at an hour when you do not expect him, the Son of Man will come.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has placed in charge of his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find doing as instructed. I tell you truly, he will place him in charge of all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says in his heart, ‘My master delays,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him, and at an hour of which he is unaware, and will cut him asunder and assign him his place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Approximate Timeline of Jesus’s Public Ministry														
EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	FIRST PASS-OVER	SUMMER	FIRST BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASS-OVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	FINAL PASS-OVER

DEVOTIONAL DAY 37 (MONDAY APRIL 4)

Holy One of Israel

Based on Matthew 24:3–51; Mark 13:3–37; Luke 21:7–36; John 8:1

When I read these words in today's Scripture passages my thought turns to those I love. Since the time is short, I especially think of those I love who do not know the Lord Jesus.

How often should I witness to them? If too often, the relationship may be broken. If too little, they may never know the Lord. I am of a mind that you have to witness to them every time the occasion arises. You do not want it to be on your conscious not having done something.

Remember, the Lord said the world will hate you because you are not of this world. Hate and love in the Holy Bible are action words not feeling words. When you love someone, you act out that love. You hate the sin not the sinner. You have the Holy Spirit within you. The Holy Spirit convicts not just you but also the world. Through you, you bring conviction into this world. So, hopefully, by your being obedient (love) to the Lord, your loved ones will come to know Him.

So, we "watch". Not just for the Lord's coming but also those opportunities that may arise to witness to your loved ones as well as any that may come your way.

Many of you know that I am a Gideon. Yes, our organization is responsible for those Bibles in hotels and given out by the hundreds of thousands at schools, with the military, and around the world. Jesus said, *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."* Our hope and prayer is that by distributing the good news of the kingdom through the Bible, we are a part of that testimony to all nations. It is our part of "watching" for opportunities to share.

I also noticed our Lord said some who seek to distract us will say, "look here!" We cannot be distracted by false Christs, or worldly or sinful distractions. We must keep our eyes on Jesus. When the Apostle Peter got out of the boat to walk on water as the Lord called him to do, he got distracted by the wind and afraid of the waves (see Day 17). What caused that? He took his eyes off the Lord. He started to sink but he remembered to cry out, "Lord, save me!" and what happened? The Lord lifted him up.

There is another thing Jesus said we must do with our eyes. We must not close them in sleep. We cannot shut our eyes in slumber. We must stay awake and be vigilant, watching for Him, looking for witnessing opportunities, not looking at the distractions, but also not falling asleep.

In John 10:10, Jesus warned us that the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy (Day 24). So many homes these days have doorbells and cameras that alert us when someone is at the door or alarms when someone is trying to break in and rob us. What if a homeowner just hit the "snooze" button when the alarm system went off?

The enemy wants to lull us to sleep, to not protect our families, to not be ready for the Lord's return. With the events of the past two years, we as a church need to be more on the alert than ever. With the world's largest military base at our doorsteps we have a great opportunity to share the gospel as the world literally comes to us. Let us wake up.

We need to stay focused on the task at hand. The time is short. Watch and pray.

Holy One of Israel, You are a merciful God. Help us as Your people to not only watch, but remind us to pray. We need to be on the lookout for those who are lost, those who want to distract, those who are being lulled to sleep. But most of all, we need to be on the lookout for You to come. Until then, we will watch and pray.

--By Ed Hulse

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

A

C

T

S