

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Luke records that every day Jesus was teaching in the temple (Luke 21:37). Jesus was two days away from being crucified, and rather than isolating himself from the people, he spent every moment he had reaching out to them in love. I praise you today as the God of mercy and compassion. You knew that Israel would reject your Son, but you loved them so much that you sent him to the temple to spend his last days teaching and preaching the gospel—and Jesus was glad to obey! I say, Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me the conclusion of the Olivet Discourse. Jesus had just finished giving his disciples a sweeping overview of the future, from the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 to his return at the end of the Tribulation. He concluded the discussion by giving them three marching orders: stay awake, be faithful, and prepare for judgment. This shows me that prophecy is not given simply to fill my head with knowledge about the future. Rather, it is given to motivate me to live a holy, godly life in the present. Jesus' first command—Stay awake!—teaches me that the cares of this life have a way of weighing down my heart (Luke 21:34). If I'm not careful, I can become entangled in fleshly pursuits, and that day will come upon me suddenly like a trap. I need to be sober and vigilant, praying for strength to follow your commands. Jesus' second command—Be faithful!—reminds me of the importance of being a faithful steward of the gifts, talents and skills you have given me. The parables Jesus told warn me of the danger of living only for the moment, with no thought given to the wise management of what you have entrusted. I need to live each day as though your coming was imminent. If I do, I will not be caught unaware. Jesus' last command—Prepare for judgment!—impresses on me the necessity of living a righteous life. It's not enough to claim a right relationship with you. I must be active in the work of your Kingdom, serving and ministering to those who are in need. If I ignore the hungry, the sick, and the imprisoned, I will discover to my shame that I ignored my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Reflection

As I read, I was struck by Jesus' emphasis on his coming judgment. The one who came with grace and truth will one day come with power and judgment. Therefore, I must pay close attention to what I have heard, lest I drift away from it, for how shall I escape if I neglect so great a salvation? (Heb 2:1–3).

Request

Father, there is a real place of eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, and those who reject your offer of salvation willfully choose to join the enemy in its flames. May your grace save me from such a fate! Help me cling to you in love and reject the passing pleasures of sin. I never want to hear you say, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire..." (Matt 25:41).

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the stern warnings of Jesus to be watchful and on guard against the corruption of this present world! You have told me plainly of things to come, and I'm grateful for the exhortation that urges me to stay awake!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: "[Watch, for the Savior Is Coming](#)" – Barney E. Warren.

Meditation Verse: Luke 21:34.