

## **Call to be watchful**

And while he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, facing the Temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew questioned him when they were by themselves, 'Tell us, when is this going to happen, and what sign will there be that it is all about to take place?' Then Jesus began to tell them, 'Take care that no one deceives you. Many will come using my name and saying, "I am he," and they will deceive many. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this is something that must happen, but the end will not be yet. For nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is the beginning of the birth-pangs. 'Be on your guard: you will be handed over to sanhedrins; you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as evidence to them, since the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. 'And when you are taken to be handed over, do not worry beforehand about what to say; no, say whatever is given to you when the time comes, because it is not you who will be speaking; it is the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will come forward against their parents and have them put to death. You will be universally hated on account of my name; but anyone who stands firm to the end will be saved. 'When you see the appalling abomination set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then those in Judaea must escape to the mountains; if a man is on the housetop, he must not come down or go inside to collect anything from his house; if a man is in the fields, he must not turn back to fetch his cloak. Alas for those with child, or with babies at the breast, when those days come! Pray that this may not be in winter.

For in those days there will be great distress, unparalleled since God created the world, and such as will never be again. And if the Lord had not shortened that time, no human being would have survived; but he did shorten the time, for the sake of the elect whom he chose. 'And if anyone says to you then, "Look, here is the Christ" or, "Look, he is there," do not believe it; for false Christs and false prophets will arise and produce signs and portents to deceive the elect, if that were possible. You, therefore, must be on your guard. I have given you full warning. 'But in those days, after that time of distress, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will come falling out of the sky and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send the angels to gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the world to the ends of the sky. 'Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. So with you when you see these things happening: know that he is near, right at the gates. In truth I tell you, before this generation has passed away all these things will have taken place. Sky and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 'But as for that day or hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; no one but the Father. 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from his home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own

work to do; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow or dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I am saying to you I say to all: Stay awake!

Mark 13: 3-37 in the Bible of Jerusalem's translation