

Sermon Title: **“Gethsemane-Awaken, Oh Church!”**

Sermon Series: The Final Hour

Text: **Matthew 26:36-46**

Speaker: Pastor Damian Mericka

## **I. Introduction: Sleeping Disciples**

**Matthew 2:36-46.** In a very intimate moment between the Son and the Father, Jesus leads His Disciples into the Garden of Gethsemane. It is here He draws the three closest to Him to follow deeper than the others into this moment. Here the Son is preparing for the suffering that is soon to be upon Him.

And the Disciples slept. Even after the nudging of Jesus to awaken and pray three times, they didn't understand what was taking place. They would be found unprepared for what events were to unfold. In their unpreparedness, they would try to take matters into their own hands, fail, and ultimately flee. Peter would deny Jesus three times.

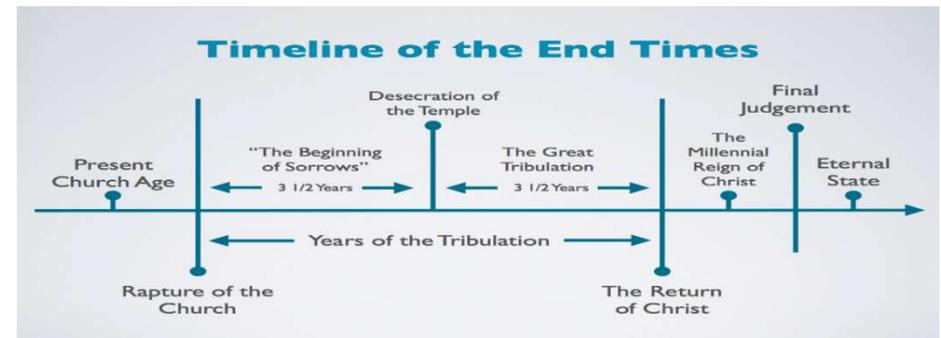
After the Resurrection, Jesus would lead them back together, being the Good Shephard that He is. Peter would specifically find forgiveness which would become the catalyst for his words,

***“I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles” -2 Peter 3:1-2***

*Holy Prophets* refers to the writings of the Old Testament, *the commandment of Jesus through the Apostles* refers to the now 260 chapters spread across 27 books of the New Testament with over 300 references to the Second Coming.

As we talk about the **Second Coming of Jesus**, we need to understand how the Bible talks about this. Specifically, how the New Testament shows Jesus' Coming in two events:

- 1) The **Rapture**. This will be to **receive** the believers before the time of Tribulation. The **Tribulation** is a specific, 7-year period in which many events will unfold over all of the world leading into a time of Great Sorrow as God's Judgments against sin are unleashed. In the middle of this Seven Year Tribulation will be the time of **Great Tribulation**, or the time of Jacob's Trouble.



- 2) The **Return**, or **Glorious Appearing**. This will be when Jesus **Returns with** those Raptured and usher in His Millennial Reign over all the earth. This **Millennial Kingdom** will see Christ reigning for 1,000 years as Satan is shackled. After this will be the **Great White Throne Judgment** and the removal of sin before the New Heaven and the New Earth are established with the Saints and their God together forever.

## **II. Interpreting the Times**

- **Matthew 24:36-37**

While Jesus does not give the day or hour, He affirms signs that point to this event in His reference to the days of

Noah. The key to understanding the times is to see what is going on with *Israel*, the *Gentile Nations*, and the *Church*.

1. **Israel.**
  - a. **-Zechariah 12:2-3**
2. **The Gentile Nations.**
  - a. **-Matthew 24:6-8**
3. **The Church.**
  - a. **-Revelation 3:14-22**

### III. A Beautiful Temple & A Decorated Tomb (Matthew 23:29-24:2)

- a. **23.29-30.** The Final Woe from Jesus to the Scribes & Pharisees is one that calls out their false confidence; their hypocrisy and what its real cost is to them, their families, and their Nation.
- b. **23.31-36.** To Follow Jesus is to be His Voice in a world that will persecute us for it. This present generation would bear the Wrath of God against their sin of killing God's Prophets. Our world will work toward the ultimate pouring out of God's Wrath against sin.
- c. **23.37-39.** God does love; but He does not force a response to His love. It is the sorrow as the Father over children who refuse His love, mercy, grace and embrace destruction. It is the justice in His Wrath against what they do in their brokenness to hurt those of His family. *If God spared not any of the Nation of Israel outside of Christ, there certainly is no mercy for any nation outside of Christ! **Saint, keep praying, keep sharing, keep trusting for those who have yet to receive Jesus!***
- d. **24.1-2.** Can it really be that bad? Sure, the leaders may be wrong, but look at this Temple? It has a history! Surely that amounts to something, *right Jesus?!*

### IV. A Sleeping Faith is as Powerful as a Dead Tomb?

- **Luke 18:8**
- **Mark 13:32-37**

### V. Conclusion

This brings us full circle in this message for today. Presently, are we asleep while Jesus is inviting us to see and understand the signs all around us for His Return? Have you ever wondered what life would be like if God afforded us one redo? I think Peter's would not have been to keep his eyes on Jesus so as to walk on water, nor would it had been anything other than this. If Peter could have one redo, I believe it would have been to stay awake and pray with Jesus through the final hours before His suffering rather than sleeping.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we are afforded no redo's in this life. But we do have the witness and petition of Believers before us...*be in God's Word, be in Prayer, grow into all of Jesus to share Him with all of the world!*

#### Going Deeper

#### **Questions for Reflection and Application**

1. What stood out to you about this message and why?
2. What did Jesus find the Disciples doing when He was praying in Gethsemane?
3. What are the two appearances of Jesus referred to in His Second Coming?
4. Does anyone know when Jesus will Return?
5. What are the three keys to interpreting the signs of the times from Scripture for our world?
6. What are the similarities between a beautiful Temple and decorated tomb? What are the differences if God is in them? How does this relate to the Pharisees and Scribes of Jesus' day?
7. What does man look at? What does God look at?
8. How is sleeping faith as powerful as a dead tomb?
9. What does Jesus want us to be found doing at His Return?
10. How can we be found obedient to Jesus?