

November 28, 2021 St. Peter Lutheran Church, Doss, TX, Advent 1

Good News, Chariots Coming

Luke 21:25-36 Jesus said, *“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time, they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”* He told them this parable: *“Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. “I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that Day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”* And Paul closes our second lesson with these words, *May He strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones.*

Jesus isn't trying to scare people into following Him. He came once that first Christmas. It was a time of peace with angels singing and a time of war on children with Herod killing off little boys the age of the promised Messiah. Jesus' life reflects

peace and grace as He taught and healed, but it was a time of jealousy that led to the violence of the cross preceded by disciples running away. What is the time that we live in? We have local peace but violence in other parts of our state and country. There is no major war going on though the economy looks like it is being destroyed. There is violence in the fabric of our society in school shootings, family violence, deaths of unborn, persecution here and there and the ongoing poverty and persecution in the poorer countries that we don't see up close. Whatever the good and bad of the time, Christ is coming back as He promised. He returns to "complete His work of rescuing humankind, which began with His first coming. (Heb.9:26-28) He will come to pass judgment on the whole human race (Matthew 25:31ff), to welcome into His presence those who have lived by trust in Him, (Mark 13:27), while those who have rejected Him will find themselves shut out (2 Thess.1:7-10). Thus, His coming will mark His final conquest over evil (1 Cor.15:24-25) and the realization of His kingdom of peace, righteousness and love." (Scofield Reference Bible, p. 685)

Advent is a time of expectation of Christ's coming and can mean that Christ 'comes to us' in our decision for Him and His rule in our lives. Peter deals with that impatience in II Peter 3:2-13 where he says, *"I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' He promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's Word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these*

waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed (when evil abounded). By the same Word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the Day of God and speed its coming. That Day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.”

Isaiah prophesied, (24:23) The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders, gloriously.

Ezekiel prophesied (32:7) When I snuff you out, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not give its light.

Daniel prophesied, (12:1) “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--everyone

whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered. In Joel, we hear (2:30-31) *I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the LORD.*

In Matthew's account, Jesus said, (24:29) *"Immediately after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'*

John in his Revelation (20:11) wrote: *Then I saw a great white throne and Him Who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.*

We as Lutheran Christians confess the Apostles' Creed that we believe in Jesus Christ, (Who) sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty from where He will come to judge the living and the dead.

We need not fear His coming, but look forward to that day with hope. Know that you are loved dearly. You can confess your sins and mistakes and repent or make amends in your life. Peter wrote: *You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the Day of God and speed its coming.* (2 Peter 3:11f) Paul said, *"May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones."* (1 Thess.3:13) And when He comes, our task is to respond with praise and if there is any chance of inviting someone else to follow, we need to do so in love. Bring home as many as the lambs who have strayed from the Good Shepherd. May the trumpet call of Christ fill your heart with joy! Amen.