

Your Redemption is drawing near

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost) is Luke 21:5-28. This reading includes 4 different narratives. They all deal with end times, both of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

Verses 5-9 focus on the temple's beauty and Jesus giving the disciples about what was to come and their being prepared. One stone at the southwest corner was some 36 feet long. "Whatever was not overlaid with gold was purest white" (Josephus, *Jewish War*, 5.5.6.). Herod gave a golden vine for one of its decorations. Its grape clusters were as tall as a man. The full magnificence of the temple as elaborated and adorned by Herod has only recently come to light through archaeological investigations on the temple hill. (CSB)

When Jesus speaks of the temple's destruction, the disciples ask him when this is all going happen. Jesus gives them things to look for so they will not be led astray. The signs he gives them should also be heeded by us concerning the end times.

Verses 10-19 are filled with a long list of happenings that can be signposts for the disciples that they will experience in their lives. These signs lead up to the destruction of the temple (AD 70); similar signals will occur before the end of the world. They will be persecuted but Jesus promises them spiritual protection at all times.

Verses 20-24 speak of the destruction of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's destruction is a preview of the world's end. Rome's encirclement meant Jerusalem's end was near. The city was leveled in AD 70, with much of its population killed. (TLSB)

Verses 25-28 tell of Jesus foretelling of the time when he will come in judgment at the end of time. These verses describe a world that is coming apart. Everything that was dependable is no longer so. Even scientific laws don't work in this end time scenario. The disciples asked for signs, and here they are, signs in sun, moon, and stars. We are experiencing these signs already.

While unbelievers cower in fear and hide their faces from the signs in the heavens, Jesus' disciples are to stand erect and lift up their heads to see the Son of Man coming to liberate them. (CC p. 786)

Jesus points to signs preceding His return. Today, fear and uncertainty should lead us to focus on His redemption. Pray earnestly for that day. Jesus' return brings us full deliverance from all evil of this world.

Prayer: Lord, keep us always expectant as we anticipate Your return. Amen. (TLSB)