

Notes for Next Sunday

Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost

The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (Daniel 12:1-3). The long discourse of the man clothed in linen (chs 10–12) concludes with encouragement for Daniel. He is assured that Michael is in charge of Israel; the people will be delivered; and those whose names are written in God's book will rise to everlasting life in the end. Believers have always been curious about when the end of the world is coming.

Epistle (Hebrews 10:11-25). Christ offered up only one sacrifice for the sins of the world—Himself. He “perfects” or completes us by applying the benefits of His sacrifice to us in Holy Baptism and in His Holy Supper. Whenever you study the Word or hear it at church, expect the Lord to change your life and strengthen your faith, for He desires to change your heart and mind by grace. All Christians need patience through many sorrows. God calls us to do His will, bearing our crosses patiently, and He equips us with His Word and Spirit. He has promised eternal salvation to all who steadfastly confess Christ.

Gospel (Mark 13:1-13). Jesus warns His disciples about the coming troubles they will face as they bring the Gospel into the world. He encourages them to trust God and rely on the Holy Spirit, especially when they face opposition and persecution. Nobody likes to be shown his or her sin. As Christians proclaim Law and Gospel, they need to be ready to endure the loss of everything, including their lives. Because God wants all people to hear the Gospel, He prolongs the NT age so that the Church may witness to all the earth. To Him alone we owe the survival of our personal faith as well.

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

OLD TESTAMENT – Daniel 12:1-3

“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. ² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

12:1 at that time. These words connect this passage with the preceding one, which had pictured the destruction of the Antichrist at the end of the world. (PBC)

12:1 Michael. Michael was charged to care for Israel but this reference may include “new Israel,” the Church. (TLSB)

12:1 time of distress. Jesus quoted from this verse in speaking about events leading up to the final judgment. Matthew 24:21-22 “For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. ²² If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.” (PBC)

12:1 book. God's Book of Life, listing those who remain faithful. (TLSB)

12:2 who sleep. The dead will be raised to live again. (TLSB)

12:3 those who are wise. With so much coming at a person at all at once it is difficult to always make wise decisions. One way to help the decision-making process is to be in the Word constantly.

12:3 will shine like brightness of the heavens. They will live in the glory of heaven getting their light from Christ.

12:3 those who lead many to righteousness. These are those Christians who by word and example have brought others to faith in Christ Jesus.

EPISTLE – Hebrews 10:11-25

¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, ¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. ¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: ¹⁶ “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.” ¹⁷ Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin. ¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching

10:11 offers the same sacrifices. Because these sacrifices were unable to accomplish what they signified. They could not remove sin, and thus had to be offered over and over again. (CSB)

10:12 he sat down at the right hand of God. Christ sits, showing that His atoning sacrifice is finished. However, He continues to pray for us as our own High Priest. (TLSB)

10:13 enemies to be made his footstool. In biblical times, the conqueror placed his foot on his enemies to indicate triumph. (TLSB)

10:15 the Holy Spirit also testifies to us. Note the present tense, “testifies,” reminding us that the Spirit not only authored what was written in the past but also witnesses through it in the present. (PBC)

10:19 enter the holy places. Into heaven to God, our heavenly Father. (TLSB)

10:20 the curtain, that is, his body. † When Jesus died, the curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place was “torn in two from top to bottom” (Mk 15:38). The curtain symbolizes the body of Christ in the sense that just as the holy of holies was entered through the veil in the temple, so we now have access into the presence of God in heaven through the flesh of Christ offered as an atoning sacrifice for sin. (CSB)

10:22 hearts sprinkled ... from a guilty conscience. Total freedom from a sense of guilt, a freedom based on the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. (CSB)

10:23 he who promised is faithful. He uses the present tense to remind us such holding is ever to continue. We might have expected him to write “faith,” but he uses “hope” to lift our eyes to the future. From Christ comes not only pardon for sins in the present, but glorious hope for the future. Heaven is our sure home. (PBC)

10:24 how we may spur one another on. No Christian lives on an island or for himself alone. With his attitudes and actions he has an effect on others. The present tense again stresses continued action. “Consider” means putting our mind on others, carefully noting their needs. As one body in Christ we need to spur each other on “toward love and good deeds.” The word “love” in the Greek is agape, the highest kind of love, which loves the undeserving and unlovable. (PBC)

10:25 not give up meeting together. God requires Christian to gather and hear His Word preached, receive the Sacraments, pray, sing, and give thanks. Those who despise the Church easily fall from faith. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Mark 13:1-13

As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”² “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately,⁴ “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”⁵ Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you.⁶ Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many.⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.⁸ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.⁹ “You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them.¹⁰ And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.¹¹ Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.¹² “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.¹³ All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

13:1 massive stones. According to Josephus (*Antiquities*, 15.11.3), they were white, and some of them were 37 feet long, 12 feet high and 18 feet wide. (CSB)

13:2 not one stone ... left. Fulfilled literally in A.D. 70, when the Romans under Titus completely destroyed Jerusalem and the temple buildings. Stones were even pried apart to collect the gold leaf that melted from the roof when the temple was set on fire. (CSB)

13:8 birth pains. Birth pains typically become more frequent and intense as the time of delivery approaches. So also it will be in the end times. The severity and frequency of cataclysmic events will increase. (TLSB)

13:9 Persecution of Christians was common in the first century and is still common today in parts of the world. (TLSB)

13:9 flogged. Infraction of Jewish regulations was punishable by flogging, the maximum penalty being 39 strokes with the whip. (CSB)

13:9 stand before governors and kings as witnesses. After trial before the Jewish courts, they will be turned over to the Gentile authorities, presumably as disloyal provincials who disturb the peace and incite to riot. The double reference, “kings and governors,” serves to designate all men of authority, it may also look beyond this local situation to the experience of arrest throughout the Empire. (Lane)

13:10 must be preached to all nations. "Must" denotes the necessity caused by the will of God. Look at Matthew 24:14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world for the purpose of a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." (Buls)

13:12 brother will betray brother. Anti-Christian sentiment would divide families, even to the point of close relatives handing over loved ones for execution. (TLSB)

13:13 all men will hate you. This is so because God's Law offends and because Jesus claimed to be the only way to salvation. (TLSB)