

*“The Son of Man”**Jeremiah 33:14-16; Luke 21:25-31*

November 17, 2019

PRAYER:

O Lord, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight. Pour out upon us the spirit of wisdom and understanding, that being taught by you in Holy Scripture we will be opened to know the things pertaining to life and holiness in Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

INTRODUCTION:

Great things often have their origin in humble beginnings. Soon we will enter into Advent as a time of preparation to celebrate the humble birth and life of Jesus. His Hebrew name is “Yeshua,” meaning “the one who comes to save.” Promised by God through the Prophets, the birth of Jesus is God’s gift of hope that we are not condemned and abandoned to mortal death. Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s Word, through his Prophet Jeremiah, 600 years before his birth. In Jeremiah 33:14-16 the Prophet announces the day is coming when God will fulfill his Covenant promise of the Messiah. Jesus will establish his reign in the hearts of believers. He will be the ultimate King of God’s Kingdom through the line of David as redeemer and savior. His mission from God will be to execute justice and righteousness throughout all lands and among all peoples.

Beginning in our Luke 21 text through Luke 22, we find Jesus in Jerusalem preparing his disciples for what is to come. Soon he will be betrayed by one who was by his side for three years and whom he considers his brother. He knows he will be arrested and die a cruel, torturous death. Jesus prepares his disciples for the culmination of his ministry on the cross and beyond the tomb. He talks to them of things they do not comprehend. Jesus speaks of the signs for the end of times. He prophesies his resurrection, ascension and return in judgment and glory as King of a new Kingdom of God as “The Son of Man.” Jesus will give new life to those who hear and know his voice.

His message blows the disciples’ minds! They cannot understand why! Why must their master, teacher and friend whom they have seen perform many healing miracles and raising the dead, now need to die? They are uneducated and do not know the prophecies of his life, death and return in power, glory and majesty. They do not understand the sacrifice he will make, what it means and how it will change the world for believers to be born again into new life. And, the most confusing statement for his disciples to understand, and for some of us today, is Jesus calls himself “The Son of Man.”

BODY:

Jesus identifies himself with the prophecies of Daniel 7: 13-14 (NIV). “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a Son of Man, coming with clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

Jesus promises he will return to us in glory and righteousness at the End of Times when all humanity will stand before him. On a day of God’s choosing and by his sovereign will, the Son of Man will sit in judgment. In Luke 21 and Matthew 24 Jesus tells us to look to the heavens and at the conditions around us of fear and dread for the future as signs of his imminent arrival. Nations will wage catastrophic wars causing death, destruction and misery. There will be great natural disasters from earthquakes and hurricanes, floods and famines, plagues, and devastating diseases. The Church and Christians will be persecuted even unto death. False teachers and Messiahs in cults and false religions will deceive many to turn away from faith in the Triune God, Father-Son and Holy Spirit. Do you think the signs indicate we are approaching the End of the Age?

There are those who rightly say these conditions have been with humanity since the beginning. My sense is Jesus speaks of the dramatic increase in the level of intensity of these warning signs as indicators of his return. Only God knows when the End of Times will arrive. Jesus warns us not to be lulled into complacency. Be spiritually ready faithfully living his Gospel by doing the works commended to us by Christ. Jesus says in Luke 21:36 (NIV), "Be always on the watch, and pray that you will be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

We should live without fear of death, of the end times, and the second coming of Christ. Jesus tells us to be faithful and anticipate this day with heart-felt joy. We can confidently approach this life and the next because our redemption and salvation is in the hands of our Lord and Savior. When we see the heavenly and earthly signs he predicted to his disciples, then we can look forward to the Son of Man returning because our "redemption is near."

This promise of Jesus is also revealed in a vision he gives to John. In Revelation 21: 1-4 (NIV), we read: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first earth and first heaven had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Amen! O Lord, bring it on!

God in His Holy Word teaches that beyond the grave, beyond the end of time, stands Jesus Christ the Son of Man. In the midst of natural and man-made disasters of every type and description surrounding us, we are comforted in the knowledge the "Anointed One of God" is by our side.

We must never forget that as we await his return, Jesus expects us at Cook's Church to "Live in the Spirit" and "Run the Good Race" of our faith. We can live abundantly, filling each day with works of faith to fulfill God's purpose. He expects our commitment to carry his Gospel to all people who need his saving grace. Ask yourself: How well am I sharing the love of God with my neighbor?

ILLUSTRATION: There is a story on the internet, which I hope is true. It is about the man pictured in our bulletin. He looks down and out and possibly homeless. He walks into Church about 30 minutes before the service while the sanctuary is filling up. Only three people say hello. He asks for change to buy food but no one responds. He moves to the front pew and after a few minutes is asked politely by the ushers to sit in the back. As he moves to the back, he greets people to be greeted in return with judgmental stares and dark looks.

The Elders with enthusiasm begin a litany of welcome for the new pastor. "We would like to introduce to you Pastor Jeremiah Steepok." The congregation applauds with joy and anticipation. The homeless man stands and walks down the aisle to the pulpit. The clapping stops and all eyes are on him. He recites Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25:31-40 (NIV), the Parable of the Sheep and Goats. This text is about the Son of Man sitting on his throne of glory and judgment. Jesus tells the sheep, his followers, they have inherited the Kingdom because when he was hungry, they fed him, gave him drink when he was thirsty, welcomed him as a stranger, cared for him when he was sick, and visited him in prison. His sheep ask him: "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink ...or a stranger and invite you in...or sick needing care... or in prison and visited you?" He replies: "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." For the goats who do not love God by serving the poor and needy, Jesus gives a stern command in verse 41 (NIV), "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Many in the congregation begin to cry, and others bow their heads in shame.

The Pastor dismisses them asking for their commitment to share the Gospel with those spiritually lost and with the needy. What an uplifting message for those who live in and serve the Lord. What a sad outlook for those who lack faith and do not live the faith they profess. The condemnation of the goats is not the fate Jesus wants for us. He is not asking us to do anything he did not do himself in bringing love, peace and hope to all people. Sermon. Luke 21:25-31.111719. Cooks

What are you doing to bring the good news of Christ to others? Will you embrace **all whom** you meet as your brother and sister in Christ?

CLOSING:

Jesus promises to come back in glory on a day of his Father's choosing to judge the wicked and redeem the righteous. Look for his return by cosmic signs in the heavens and signs in the condition of our world prophesied by Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Joel. Jesus warns us not to be lazy in our faith, but to **be prepared**! Be spiritually ready by loving God and your neighbor and, as his disciple, by living up to his expectations. Read your Bible and pray daily for faith and strength to live his Gospel of love and service. Give thanks to our Heavenly Father for his promise that the Son of Man will return to bring us new life in his new Kingdom of God. Amen.