

Populus Sion
St. Luke 21:25-36
December 4th, 2022
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Heavens Shall Be Shaken

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

^{21:25} “And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; ²⁶ men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. ²⁷ And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Cleanse our conscience, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, by the daily visitation of Thy grace, that, when Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall come, He may find us fit for His appearing, and ready to meet Him without spot, in the company of all His saints; Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

It is amazing, but there are people in this world who are actually surprised to find that evil exists in this world. This is the result of the false notion that people are basically good. If people are basically good, then evil would be viewed as an aberration. But the adverse is actually true: people are basically evil. Without the constant grace of the Lord God; without Him daily sending His Holy Ghost into this world to convict people of sin—to convict us of sin—there would be utter chaos. Without the Lord God continuously guarding and protecting us against all the evil in this world that seeks to destroy the Church, and everyone and everything in it, we would be living in a literal Hell. Hell is the place where the Lord God does not exist.

The evil in the world is meant as a reminder to us that the Lord God does exist in this world; that He is indeed protecting us and guarding us from so much more evil than we can barely imagine. If we begin to think that the world has become so corrupt that we cannot live in it, well then remember, my dear friends, that things could be a lot worse. As this world continues to reject the Lord God; as it continues to reject the only means of its salvation in the Lord + Jesus Christ, we draw nearer and nearer to the Last Day—to the Day of Judgment. Evil in the world is our reminder that Lord + Jesus will return to us just as He left. This corrupt world is our reminder that the Lord God does love us very much, for if He was not with us, we would be plagued with so many more evils that we would not even be able to withstand them.

This is why the Lord + Jesus continues to come to us daily and often. He comes to us by His Holy Ghost through the means of grace. The Lord + Jesus comes to us through the continuous pure

preaching of the Gospel, and through the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments. This is why we strive to keep these things as pure as humanly possible, because our Lord comes to us through these means when they are pure. His grace, mercy, and love are shown to us ever more clearer when the Gospel is pure, and when the Sacraments remain used according to His institution.

Our Lord comes to us in these means, but they are only a shadow of how He will come to us on the Last Day. These means are but a cloud in which our Lord + Jesus is hidden. This is also for our benefit. On account of our unrighteousness; on account of unrighteousness in this world, we would not be able to withstand the full holiness and righteousness of our Lord + Jesus. Therefore, He comes to His people wrapped in a cloud—shrouded in means. Even has He came veiled in our flesh, and born of the Virgin Mary on Christmas Day.

As we prepare for our Lord's first coming to us veiled in the cloud of our flesh; veiled in the cloud of the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, He comes to us today veiled in the clouds of the preaching of the Gospel, and the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments. Even these two ways in which our Lord + Jesus came has shaken the Earth; has shaken the powers of the heavens. For when He was born, magi came from the East looking for Him, and supposing He would be born in Jerusalem—the place of the kings of Israel—Herod, and all Jerusalem with him were troubled.

This world is still troubled by the coming of the Lord + Jesus in His preaching and Sacraments. Mankind does like being told that they are not basically good people. This is why they are amazed and surprised when evil things happen in this world. It is why we are *not* surprised when evil befalls this evil world, because evil will evil whenever it is allowed to evil. We should not be surprised when this world acts according to its nature. Nor should we be surprised at our own corrupt deeds. We have been born in sin. We bear the original sin from our first parents. From our conception we have been born in sin, and continue to commit sinful acts, think sinful things, and speak sinful words. These things shake us to our very core. Even this world is shaken when it sees corruption in this world.

We have an advantage over the world, however, because when we sin, we do not despair, but we cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus. Evil in this world is our reminder to cling ever more dearly to the salvation found in the Lord + Jesus alone. We confess our sins, and amend our sinful lives, and desire to be free from sin. We desire not to just be free from the penalty of sin, but from committing sins in the first place. This faith in our Lord + Jesus urges us to cry desperately for our Lord + Jesus to come. He certainly comes to us whenever two or three are gathered in His Name around the means of grace. He comes to us with the good news of salvation in His works and merits. He comes to us with forgiveness, life and salvation in His Blessed Sacraments.

But we also cry out for our Lord + Jesus to come to us in our flesh once again. Even as He went up in a cloud on the day of His Ascension into Heaven, He will come again on the Last Day in a cloud. When He ascended into Heaven, He went veiled in our flesh. He went masking His true glory and might. When He comes on the Last Day, He will not come veiling His glory and might. He will come in a cloud with power and great glory. He will come to take us from this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven. He will come to free us at last from every bond of sin. We will be free from death, and the power of the devil. We will no longer be plagued by the evil in this world. We will no longer be plagued by evil within us. This will be a Day of great joy for all those who cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus.

This is will be a Day of great mourning and sorrow for all those who rejected the Lord + Jesus in this life. For they will on that Day see just how corrupt this world truly is. They will see this very evil world for what it is. They will realize that without the Lord God's presence in this world, things would be much worse. They will be sent to the place where the Lord God does not exist—they will be condemned to Hell. Then all the powers of darkness in this world, which had been restrained by the Lord's grace and mercy, will fall upon them with a great and terrible crash. They will live in eternity with weeping and

gnashing of teeth.

This is why our Lord + Jesus continues to send us signs while we live in this life. This is why we are allowed to glimpse the evil of this world. The corrupt world may be surprised by this evil, but we are not. We know just how sinful we truly are; what we think, what we say, what we do. We know how scared and put off our friends and family would be if they caught even a glimpse of the thoughts that plague us on a daily basis. Therefore, for our benefit and to continuously call us back into repentance and faith in our Lord + Jesus alone; so that unlike this fallen world, we turn from our false gods to the One True Triune Lord God, there are signs in this world pointing to our Lord's second coming.

Our Lord + Jesus promises us that there will be signs in the sun and moon. There will be distress of nations. There will be perplexity over the roaring of the seas and billows. Men will faint for fear, and for the expectation of things coming on this world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. These things are happening to us right now. These things have always been happening in the world. They are our reminders that the Lord + Jesus is coming to us soon. When we see evil in this world; when we see these things happening, we should look up and rejoice, for this means our redemption draws near.

When we see evil happening in this world, this is our clue, our sign, that our Lord + Jesus is quickly coming to take us from this vale of tears to Himself in Heaven. The Day of our redemption draws near. The Son of Man will soon come to us in a cloud with power and great glory. He will no longer come hidden in means. He will no longer come veiled in the clouds of the means of grace. He will no longer come veiled in the cloud of our flesh. He will come in His full power and glory. We will join Him in Heaven for all eternity. We will be free from sin and shame and free from death eternally.

Therefore, my dear friends, we keep watch—we take heed—that we do not allow our hearts to overcharged with surfeiting, drunkenness, and the cares of this life. But we watch daily in prayers and supplications, praying that we would not be drawn away from the Lord + Jesus on account of the evilness of this world. But rather that we prevail and escape all these things which will come to pass before the great and awe-full coming of the Last Day. We pray daily that our Lord + Jesus would preserve us through His means of grace—keeping us steadfast in the one true faith—so that we may stand before our Lord + Jesus on the Last Day, and receive from Him the crown of everlasting life. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!