



# ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 1, 2013

## SCRIPTURE

### LUKE 21:5-19

5When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, 6"As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

7 They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" 8 And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them."

9 "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." 10 Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; 11 there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

12"But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. 13 This will give you an opportunity to testify. 14 So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; 15for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. 16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17 You will be hated by all because of my name. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By your endurance you will gain your souls."

## DEVOTIONAL

I write this devotion on a beautiful mid-October day. The season is obviously changing as we experience shorter day light, chilly nights, cool mornings, and sunny or rainy afternoons. In the marketplace, the aisles of Halloween items are all but depleted, Thanksgiving supplies are on display, and Christmas decorations and paraphernalia are being placed on the shelves. These are the world's signs that Christmas is on the way.

Most are not ready to rush into Christmas celebrations, gift buying, and over indulgence; for Christmas is much more than the worldly signs, conspicuous consumption. This season is a time of expectant anticipation and preparation for the coming Messiah, Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, Comforter, and King. In the Luke passage discussion of the signs of the time, Jesus shares when we experience or hear of nations against nations, kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes, famines, and plagues, these do not denote the end is at hand. Instead, these signs provide opportunities for believers to testify to all they have experienced, and to witness to the kingdom of God being among us.

The Advent signs of the season are: darkness cannot overcome light, poverty cannot overcome provision, ignorance cannot overcome wisdom, sadness cannot overcome joy, and hopelessness cannot overcome the hope we have received in Christ Jesus, who is and is to come.

## PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, as we continue in this time of Advent, we pray for a faith that does not require signs of the time, but a faith that rest in the assurance that God's Son has come that we might live this day as the called of God; witnessing to God's goodness, grace and mercy manifest in the gift of God's son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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