

Opening Prayer: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast to the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. *Amen.* The Book of Common Prayer, Proper 28, page 236. Alternative prayer: page 159 or 211.

Review of Last Week’s Lesson: Last week’s lesson proclaimed the Lord as the supreme ruler over all the kings of the world. In Daniel 7, we found prophecies that God would defeat the evil people in the world and that one like a son of man will rule the universe. Psalm 93 emphasized God’s majesty, strength and power over the earth. In Revelation 1, the author told us that we are members of Christ’s kingdom. In John 18, Jesus declared to Pilate that he was a king, but that his kingdom was not of this world. These verses challenged us to look at our citizenship in the Kingdom of God and to ask ourselves if anyone would ever know from our actions and attitudes that we are indeed, citizens of his kingdom.



**Year C, Lesson 1
First Sunday of
Advent**

TODAY’S SCRIPTURES:
Zechariah 14:4-9
Psalm 50
I Thessalonians 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-31

TODAY’S THEME:
Always be prepared
for the return of
Christ, the Lord.

MEMORY VERSE:
Luke 21:36



Background Notes: Zechariah 14:4-9 ✠ Zechariah prophesied from about 520 to 518 B.C., after the exiles had returned from Babylonia. In Chapter 14, Zechariah described a future time of struggle when evil would be destroyed and God’s goodness would prevail. In today’s verses we study a prophecy that describes the second coming of Christ.

Questions:

1. Who will stand upon the Mount of Olives on that day? (Zec. 14:1-4)

2. Point out the Mount of Olives on a map of Jerusalem.
3. Describe the changes that will happen to the Mount of Olives. (Zec. 14:4)

4. What are the people to do in order to safely escape these cataclysmic events?
(Zec. 14:5) _____

5. Who will come after this occurs? (Zec. 14:5) _____

6. Describe the unique weather and lighting conditions that will occur on this day. (Zec. 14:6-7) _____

7. What do you think is meant by living water ? (Zec. 14:8; Jer. 2:13; John 4:10, 14; Rev 22:1) _____

8. What will be very special about that day? (Zec. 14:9) _____

9. What do you need to do to be ready for the Lord s return? _____



Background Notes: Psalm 50 ❖ In this psalm God explained that he would come to earth to judge the people with whom he had made a covenant. They had forgotten the original purpose of the sacrificial offering. God had been patient with his people, but they had misinterpreted patience to mean God s acceptance of their actions. The purpose of this psalm was to reaffirm God s intentions.

Questions:

1. What will we see when God comes to earth? (Ps. 50:1-3) _____

2. Why will God come to earth? (Ps. 50:4-6) _____

3. Whom will God judge when he comes? (Ps. 50:4-7) _____

4. Why didn t God need the animals that were sacrificed to him? (Ps. 50:9-13) _____

5. Why did God ask the people to provide animal sacrifices to him? (Ps. 50:5, 14, 23) _____

6. What had the people done to gain the disapproval of God? (Ps. 50:16-20) _____

7. In what way did the people mistake God's intention? (Ps. 50:21) _____

8. What would the consequences be if the people did not reform? (Ps. 50:21-22) _____

9. What did God's people need to do in order to obtain salvation? (Ps. 50:23) _____

10. Since we do not sacrifice burnt offerings today, what do you need to do to apply the lesson from this psalm to your spiritual life? _____



Background Notes: I Thessalonians 3:9-13 ✝ While Paul, Silas and Timothy were in Corinth they wrote this letter (epistle) to the Thessalonians. The Thessalonians were Gentiles (non-Jews) and probably did not have the background to know about the Old Testament prophecies. These verses encouraged the Thessalonians to be prepared for Christ's return.

Questions:

1. What did Paul, Silas and Timothy feel about the new Christian church in Thessalonica? (I Th. 3:9) _____

2. For what did Paul and his companions pray? (I Th. 3:10-13) _____

3. For whom could your church pray this prayer? (I Th. 3:11-13) _____

4. What could your church do to prepare for the return of the Lord? _____



Background Notes: Luke 21:25-31 ❖ The majority of this chapter describes Jesus using parables to indicate the time when he will return to earth. In previous verses, Jesus warned that many false prophets will come claiming to be Christ, but the faithful are cautioned not to be deceived. There will be famines, pestilences, earthquakes and persecutions. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles. Verse 25 continues the description of signs that will precede Christ's return.

Questions:

1. Before the Son of Man (Jesus) returns, what bodies in the sky will provide signs? (Lk. 21:25-26) _____

2. Describe the sea and its effect on people. (Lk. 21:25) _____

3. How will men react to these signs? (Lk. 21:26) _____

4. Describe Christ's second coming. (Lk. 21:27) _____

5. What did Jesus tell us to do when we see these signs? (Lk. 21:28) _____

6. How will we know that the time is near for Christ's second coming? (Lk. 21:29-31) _____

Closing Prayer: Lord, we praise you for your sovereignty over the universe. We thank you for telling us what to expect before and during your second coming to earth. Please help us to do the things you want us to do to prepare for your arrival. Help us to share our Christian beliefs with others so that more people will be a part of your kingdom when it is established on earth. We thank you for your promise of our future eternal life with you in heaven. We look forward to celebrating your birth as we approach the Christmas season. *Amen.*

Application: Are you ready for Christ and the kingdom of God to return? Why or why not? What would you do if you knew the Lord would return very soon? Do you need to do this now? Why?