

Sunday next before Advent :-

Christ the King:-

This week we take a look at the Theme and Readings for Sunday. It is often known as “Stir up Sunday” from the opening words of the Collect from the Book of Common Prayer. (*“Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord the wills of thy faithful people;”*)

The set Gospel Reading makes a good opening. – Read Matthew chapter 25, verses 31 – 46.

Matthew chapter 25, verses 31 – 34:-

It is vital that we recognise that the “*Son of Man*” in verse 31 is identified with “*the King*” in verse 34. This is only possible when we accept that this passage is about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory at the end of time.

His first coming at the Incarnation was to redeem the world - “*God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*” (Gospel of John chapter 3, verse 17). At his second coming at the end of time he comes as King and Judge! The whole creation waits with eager longing for that Day when all things shall be made new – see Romans chapter 8, verses 18 – 25.

Christ’s Kingship is the fulfilment of God’s purpose for His creation. It is prophesied in all Biblical history from “*In the beginning*” (Genesis) to “*the holy city, New Jerusalem*” (Revelation chapters 21 – 22).

After the disobedience of Adam and Eve, the Lord God promises that there will be one of their offspring who will conquer the Evil One - Genesis chapter 3, verses 14 – 15. Again in Genesis chapter 12, verses 1 – 3 we see the promise of the Lord God to Abraham that through him “*all the families of the earth will be blessed.*” Moving on to Numbers chapter 24, verses 15 – 19 there is the prophecy of Balaam. The promise of a ruler who will overcome all Israel’s enemies.

The promise of a coming One who will inherit the throne of David and unite God’s people is a central theme of many of the prophets in the Old Testament. For example see Isaiah chapter 9, verse 2 and verses 6 – 7; Isaiah chapter 11; Amos chapter 9, verses 11 – 15 and Micah chapter 5, verses 2 – 4.

All these prophecies find their culmination in the person of “*one like a son of man*” in Daniel chapter 7, verses 13 – 14. Remember that “*the Son of Man*” was the title that the Lord Jesus Christ took for himself!

Read Revelation chapter 1, verses 10 – 18:-

Again the description “*one like a son of man*”. A powerful picture of might, majesty and power, the writer trying to describe the indescribable! A picture of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ in all his glory.

To close, a reminder of the glorious prayer of the Apostle Paul, see Ephesians chapter 1, verses 15 – 23. Please make this yours in your personal prayer time. Asking God the Father to equip the Church and all those who are called into leadership with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit as they seek to do His will.

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory: even the Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.”

(Psalm 24, verses 9 – 1, Book of Common Prayer.)