



ADVENT MESSAGE FROM THE PRIMATE OF THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH



ADVENT as we know is a time of prayer and penitence, a time of joy and hope, as we eagerly await the greatest gift of all, God's only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. He is the Light who shines in the darkness; He is the hope of the world; He is the salvation of mankind. In this holy Season, we join the angels and the saints in proclaiming the great wonders God has worked among us. We hear anew the prophecies of old; and we are renewed in our faith at the promise of our Lord's return, when He shall wipe every tear from our eyes, and make all things new.

As Christians, you and I, who love God and are loved by Him as His very own, should anticipate the Coming of our Lord in glory as a child anticipates Christmas morning. For the holy Season of Advent is not only a time of preparation but also a time of joyful anticipation. As we anticipate the joys of the Christmas Season about to come upon us, so we anticipate the joy of that glorious day when we shall behold Jesus coming with power and great glory. When we shall look up and behold our redemption drawing nigh. There is a joy to this Season; and a thrilling expectation of all that is to come in God's time and in God's way.

In the ancient world, history was regarded by the Stoics as being circular. They held that every three thousand years or so the world was consumed by a great fire, then it started all over again and history repeated itself. That meant, of course, that history was going nowhere and mankind was tramping round on a kind of eternal treadmill. Fortunately, this is not the understanding of history revealed by Jesus Christ to His disciples.

The Christian concept of history *is* that it is going somewhere; that history has a goal, and that goal is Jesus Christ. At the Second Advent of Christ history will cease. There will be a consummation of the ages; however, this consummation will not bring about a repetition of the past but a new and glorious age. For some, this consummation will bring redemption and everlasting life; for others (by their own choices and decisions), it will bring fear and foreboding in the face of God's judgment in righteousness.

We do not know when the consummation of the world will take place nor what it will be like; that is not ours to know. But what we do know is that, as Christians, we live in the shadow of Cross, and in the certainty that we are loved by God. We are being prepared by Him to dwell forever in the glory of His everlasting Kingdom.

In Saint Luke's Gospel there is a passage describing how Jesus would spend the days teaching in the Temple, but at night would go out and stay in the Mount of Olives. This is not just a filler but a profound statement of how we should spend *our* time if we are to be prepared for the day of redemption. Jesus spent the day amidst the crowds of the Temple; He spent the night beneath the stars with God. He gained strength to meet the crowds through His quiet time alone with His Father. He could face the day-to-day world because He came to it each day from God's Presence. This is how we too must face our world: coming to each day from God's presence. Prayer, meditation, and quiet reflection are the cornerstones of our Christian life that prepare us for today, for tomorrow, and for eternity.

The Season of Advent is for us a time of prayer and penitence, a time of waiting, a time of quiet reflection. We look with all our hearts and souls for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, both in time and eternity. In turn, the Season of Christmas is a time of prayer and giving, when we celebrate the greatest gift God could give to His people – the gift of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

As we now enter into Advent, please allow me to wish each of you a holy and prayer-filled Season; and with the coming Season of light and joy, my prayer is that you, your family and friends, and fellow Christians, may experience a blessed, holy and happy Christmas. May God bless us all.

*Archbishop Shane B. Janzen
Primate of the Traditional Anglican Church
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