

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“Behold, the days are coming...”, declares the Lord. Seven centuries before the Holy Incarnation of the Son of God, the same God spoke through Jeremiah and made a great promise: He would institute a New Testament. He had made a Testament with Israel before. God remained faithful. He was a Husband to them, He declares. He delivered them. He protected them. He provided for them. He saved them. But His Old Covenant with Israel was broken because Israel was unfaithful. They wandered. They did not keep the Covenant.

From Moses to Malachi the Law, the Psalms, the Writings and the Prophets all pointed to a Savior. The Savior would be the Seed of a woman. He would be born of a virgin. The Savior would be a Man, from the tribe of Judah, descendant of David and yet David’s Lord, raised up from among His brethren. The Savior would be God, the Arm of the Lord made bare, and yet He would be the Rod from the stem of Jesse, a Branch from out of his roots.

He would come to reign as Lord of heaven and earth. He would come to judge the world. He would come to be smitten and stricken. He would come to suffer and die, the Servant of all. He would die on a cross. Not one of His bones would be broken. He would be pierced. He would be placed in a tomb. He would be preserved from decay. He would defeat death. He would fulfill the sign of Jonah. All this is clearly promised in the Old Testament.

The Law and the Prophets, the Writings and the Psalms, describe the Savior perfectly. They promise that He will save His people. And they promise most of all that He will come. And those who believed in Him, those who believed that He would come, those who believed in the Promise, were saved by grace, through faith in the Coming One.

Half a millennium before the Holy Incarnation of the Savior, as the exiles were returning from Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem, the Prophet Zechariah described the Coming of the Savior: “Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

And 550 years later, the Savior born of the virgin rides in as the Prophet foretold, to do what He had promised. St. Matthew understood. He begins his Gospel record with a genealogy, because by Divine Inspiration he knew he was writing the continuation and fulfillment of the Old, even as he quotes Zechariah in reporting the Triumphal Entry of the Christ.

And the people knew. They knew the Savior had been promised. They saw the appointed signs. So as He rode in to Jerusalem they cried out “Save Now!” They called Him by His Messianic Title “Son of David”, for now the True Shepherd King of Israel rides in. He comes in “the Name of the Lord”, for He is the Sent One, the One whose Name is Divine, the One whose Name is Lord, the Coming One.

With the ancient voices of the Old crying out, as the Old bears testimony to His coming, now the New rides in. He is the Promised One. All the signs bear witness. He heals, He blesses, He foretells what is to come and it comes, He raises the dead with a Word, He commands wind and wave and they obey.

He rides in to institute the New Testament, the New and Better Testament God promised through Jeremiah. It will not be like unto the Old. It will be a Testament, a decree of a Man about to die regarding His Kingdom. It will be instituted by the shedding of Blood and a miraculous Meal.

In the New Testament, the Testament the Savior Institutes, the Law will no longer be external, graven on tablets of stone. The Law will be written in the hearts of His heirs by the work of the Holy Spirit. And those whose hearts are thus inscribed will have their iniquity forgiven, their sins forgotten. That is more than God's Promise to them. It is God's promise to you. Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord! For He brings you true salvation. He brings you reconciliation with God. He brings you a life that cannot be taken away.

"Therefore", the Apostle writes, "let us cast off the works of darkness." If the True Light has shined, how can you dwell in darkness anymore? He admonishes you to live in a way that shows that you believe that Christ has come. "Let us walk properly", the Apostle exhorts. Let us conduct our lives as those who live between His Comings, who live by His Comings, those who have the richness of the Old, those who have the fulfilment of the Old and the eternal blessings of the New.

Let us live as those for whom the Savior was Promised, those for whom the Savior came, those to whom the Savior comes, those for whom the Savior will soon come again. Live as in the Light, walk properly, and "make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." Do not forget the Israel of Old, who broke His covenant. They received God's Gifts and deliverance, but they wandered. And so it was that those who did not perish under cruel Pharaoh, perished in the desert. They received the due penalty for their sin.

So do not be like them. And take heart, O Redeemed of Christ. Take heart, you who believe the Promises of God. For now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for your Salvation is nearer than when you first believed. The Coming One who came comes to you. It is you, who, as the Apostle writes, "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." For it is to you that He comes now in watery font, in Holy Absolution, and in His Word as it enters your ear and is written in your mind and on your heart, according to His Promise.

It is to you that the Coming One comes now, not treading on tree branches or cloaks laid on the road, but upon Bread and Wine in Paten and Chalice. The Promised Savior comes to you and enters you. Believing, you have what was promised: because He shed His Blood for you, your iniquity is forgiven, and the Lord remembers your sin no more. Because He took up His life again, you are reconciled to God. God kept His Promise! The Savior has come! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!

The seal of the Holy Spirit marks you as the heirs of His New Testament, you who are the recipients of the eternal riches of the Kingdom of Heaven, you who repentantly, reverently prepare for the celebration of His Holy Nativity. And soon, the Promised One, the Coming One who came, the Coming One who now comes, the same Savior will come again to take His Church home. Savior of the Nations, come!

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