

The Season of End Times

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

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Reformation Sunday (The First Sunday of End Times)

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Lesson

Daniel 6:10-12, 16-23

¹⁰Now, when Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house. It had windows on its upper story that opened toward Jerusalem. Three times each day he would get on his knees and pray and offer praise before his God. He continued to do that, just as he had been doing before this. ¹¹Then these men came as a group and found Daniel praying and seeking favor from his God.

¹²They then went and asked the king about the decree. “Your Majesty, did you not sign a decree that anyone who prays to any god or person for thirty days except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the den of lions?”

The king answered, “Indeed I did. The order is established as a law of the Medes and the Persians that cannot be revoked.”

¹⁶Then the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you.” ¹⁷A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the pit. The king sealed it with his signet ring and the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing could be changed with regard to Daniel’s situation. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace. He spent the night without food, and no entertainment was brought before him. But he could not sleep.

¹⁹At dawn the king arose as soon as it was light and hurried to the lions’ den. ²⁰As he came near the pit, he cried out in a fearful voice. The king said to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God, whom you serve continually, able to rescue you from the lions?”

²¹Then Daniel spoke with the king. “Your Majesty, may you live forever! ²²My God sent his angel and shut the mouth of the lions. They have not hurt me because he found me innocent in his presence. Also before you, Your Majesty, I have committed no crime.”

²³Then the king was very glad and said that Daniel should be brought up from the pit. So Daniel was brought up from the pit, and he was unharmed because he trusted in his God.

Second Lesson

Galatians 5:1–6

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not allow anyone to put the yoke of slavery on you again. ²Look, I, Paul, tell you that if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. ³I testify again to every man who allows himself to be circumcised that he is obligated to do the whole law. ⁴You who are trying to be declared righteous by the law are completely separated from Christ. You have fallen from grace.

⁵Indeed, through the Spirit, we by faith are eagerly waiting for the sure hope of righteousness. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matters. Rather, it is faith working through love that matters.

Gospel

Matthew 10:16–23

¹⁶“Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷Be on guard against people. They will hand you over to councils, and they will whip you in their synagogues. ¹⁸You will be brought into the presence of governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹Whenever they hand you over, do not be worried about how you will respond or what you will say, because what you say will be given to you in that hour. ²⁰In fact you will not be the ones speaking, but the Spirit of your Father will be speaking through you.

²¹“Brother will hand over his brother to death, and a father will do the same with his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ²²You will be hated by all people because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved. ²³And when they persecute you in one town, flee to the next. Amen^a I tell you: You will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Last Judgment (The Second Sunday of End Times)

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First Lesson

Daniel 7:9-10

⁹I continued to watch until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days was seated. His clothing was white as snow, and the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne was flames of fire. Its wheels were blazing fire. ¹⁰A river of fire flowed out from his presence. Thousands upon thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and books were opened.

Second Lesson

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

Concerning the times and dates, brothers, there is no need to write to you, ²for you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When people are saying, “Peace and security,” destruction will suddenly come on them, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will certainly not escape. ⁴But you, brothers, are not in the dark so that this day takes you by surprise like a thief, ⁵for you are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep like everyone else, but rather let us remain alert and sober.

⁷To be sure, those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹You see, God did not appoint us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰He died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are also doing.

Gospel

Matthew 25:31–46

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. ³⁶I was lacking clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’

³⁷“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or lacking clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

⁴⁰“The King will answer them, ‘Amen^a I tell you: Just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.’

⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you did not give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you did not give me anything to drink. ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, lacking clothes and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not take care of me.’

⁴⁴“Then they will also answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or lacking clothes or sick or in prison and did not serve you?’

⁴⁵“At that time he will answer them, ‘Amen I tell you: Just as you did not do it for one of the least of these, you did not do it for me.’ ⁴⁶And they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Saints Triumphant (The Third Sunday of End Times)

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First Lesson

Isaiah 52:1-6

Wake, awake!

Clothe yourself with strength, O Zion.

Put on your beautiful garments,

Jerusalem, you holy city,

for never again will the uncircumcised

and the unclean enter you.

²Shake off the dust.

Get up and take your seat, Jerusalem.

Loosen the chains from your neck,

you captive daughter of Zion.

³Yes, this is what the LORD says.

You were sold for nothing,

and you will be redeemed without money.

⁴Yes, this is what the LORD God says.

In the beginning, my people went down to Egypt to stay there for a while.

Later Assyria oppressed them without cause.

⁵Now what do I have here? declares the LORD.

Indeed, my people have been taken away for nothing.

Their rulers howl with mockery, declares the LORD.

My name is continually despised all day.

⁶Therefore my people will know my name.

So on that day they will know that I am the one—

the one who is saying, “Here I am!”

Second Lesson

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

¹³We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you do not grieve in the same way as the others, who have no hope. ¹⁴Indeed, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then in the same way we also believe that God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

¹⁵In fact, we tell you this by the word of the Lord: We who are alive and left until the coming of the Lord will certainly not go on ahead of those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet

call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them, to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore, encourage one another with these words.

Gospel

Matthew 25:1–13

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish ones took their lamps, they did not take any oil with them; ⁴but the wise took oil in their containers with their lamps. ⁵While the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ ⁷Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise answered, ‘No, there may not be enough for us and for you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰But while they were away buying oil, the bridegroom came. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. ¹¹Later, the other virgins also came and said, ‘Lord, Lord, let us in.’ ¹²But he answered, ‘Amen^a I tell you: I do not know you.’ ¹³Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Christ the King (The Fourth Sunday of End Times)

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First Lesson

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24

¹¹For this is what the LORD God says. Here I am. I myself will seek the welfare of my flock and carefully search for them. ¹²As a shepherd searches for his flock when his sheep that were with him have been scattered, so I will search for my flock and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own soil. I will shepherd them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys, and in all the settlements of the land. ¹⁴I will lead them into good pasture, and their grazing land will be on the high mountains of Israel. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and they will pasture on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will shepherd my flock. I myself will let them lie down, declares the LORD God. ¹⁶I will seek the lost. I will bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured. I will strengthen the weak. I will destroy the fat and the strong, and I will shepherd them with justice.

²³Then I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he will tend them. My servant David will tend them, and he will be their shepherd. ²⁴I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be the prince among them. I, the LORD, have spoken.

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:20–28 (EHV)

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. ²²For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ as the firstfruits and then Christ's people, at his coming. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has done away with every other ruler and every other authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign "until he has put all his enemies under his feet." ²⁶Death is the last enemy to be done away with. ²⁷Certainly, "he has put all things in subjection under his feet." Now when it says that all things have been put in subjection, obviously that does not include the one who subjected all things to him. ²⁸But when all things have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him, in order that God may be all in all.

Gospel

Matthew 27:27–31

²⁷Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort of soldiers around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. ²⁹They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, knelt in front of him, and mocked him by saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰They spit on him, took the staff, and hit him repeatedly on his head.

³¹After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.