

MIDWEEK ADVENT II POPULUS ZION

Text: Romans 15:4-13

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE ✠ SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

Our text tells us: *“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”* But just in what does our hope lie, and what was it that was written beforehand?

For Saint Paul, that which was written beforehand would have been what we now know as the Old Testament. They are Moses and all the Prophets. These are what informed the life of the faithful in days of old. But just how did they inspire hope and nurture patience?

They would have done so, because they speak the promise of the coming One who would crush the head of Satan, the old evil foe, and set God’s people free. The faithful of the Old Testament believed what we believe, but had not yet been fulfilled. They believed that God would send His MESSIAH, His CHRIST, His SON, to take on human flesh. That His temple would no longer be one of stone, but one of flesh, taken from a young Jewish virgin maiden, that He would tabernacle among us in a tent of human likeness.

Our ancient forefathers in the faith believed that this MESSIAH would come not with great power and might, but with meekness and humility, lowly, and riding on a donkey. Holy Scripture told them that He would suffer for the life of the world and that by His stripes He would save us all from sin, Satan, and the grave. So, you see, they also believed that this promise was not only for them, but for all nations, and they rejoiced that the glory and mercy of God would be made known to all peoples.

We are those peoples; it is for us they rejoiced, and so too, do we. *“For unto us a CHILD is born, Unto us a SON is given,”* our *“MIGHTY GOD,”* our *“PRINCE OF PEACE.”* These are the things written beforehand, *“written for our learning....”* *“These are written that you may believe that JESUS is the CHRIST, the SON of GOD, and that believing you may have life in His Name.”*

For all that has been written, has been written for your benefit, to give you hope in the midst of this dying world; this vale of tears. But we, unlike our ancient brothers and sisters in the faith, have more than the prophecy; we have more than Moses; we have the Word and promises of God fulfilled; we have the Gospel. The ancients looked forward to the Day of their salvation. We have that day fulfilled in God’s SON, His promised MESSIAH, His CHRIST, our JESUS. *“For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the LORD our God will call.”*

JESUS, indeed, is our Salvation—the promise and Word fulfilled!

Therefore, JESUS is ours and we are His. We are blood-bought, having been redeemed by His sacrifice. And as brothers and sisters of our SAVIOR, we wear His righteousness and are co-heirs with Him, *“glorified together.”* For in CHRIST JESUS you, who once were afar off, have been brought near to God by His Blood. You are CHRIST’s, *“and if you are CHRIST’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*

This, too, has been written *“for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”* In this, we greatly rejoice... *“Though now [we] do not see Him, yet believing, [we] rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of [our] faith—the salvation of [our] souls.”*

So now, just as our Old Testament brothers and sisters awaited with longing hearts the fulfillment of the long promised SAVIOR, so we, today, await His long promised return on the clouds of heaven, knowing that we have been justified by His grace as heirs according to the hope of eternal life, being *“filled with all joy and peace in believing, that [we] may abound in hope by the power of the HOLY SPIRIT.”*

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE ✠ SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

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12/13/23 A✠D