

COP26 is now over

And we are not left with much hope at the end of it.

The government minister in charge wept at the end of it all in sadness and frustration when the deliverance on coal was watered down so much.

Is there any hope for the world's climate

Will change come about to slow down or reverse the climate changes we have all seen and experienced

(pause)

There were a few signs of hope

A few shoots of hope breaking through the gloom and despair

An especial hopeful sign is the number of young people who are so engaged

and who do want to work to make things better  
in the world

(pause)

There was such a big build up to COP26

So much hope invested in it

So many people feel let down

and are still filled with hopelessness as the  
politicians let us down,

yet again.

(pause)

As we enter the season of Advent we must not  
let despair overwhelm us

And remember

and know

that we can put our hope in Jesus

And know that he is coming soon

to save us and the world

(pause)

In the words of **Jeremiah 33.14-16**

The Lord said, "The time is coming when I will fulfil the promise that I made to the people of Israel and Judah. At that time I will choose as king a righteous descendant of David. That king will do what is right and just throughout the land. The people of Judah and of Jerusalem will be rescued and will live in safety. The city will be called "The Lord Our Salvation.'

(pause)

**Let us pray**

The word of the prophets is coming true:  
now is the time for preparing,  
now is the time for seeking,  
now is the time for expecting.  
Incarnation.  
Emmanuel.

God in flesh.

Come Lord Jesus come. **Amen.**

We are entering the time of advent

a time of hope

a time of expectation

Jesus will soon be here

(pause)

The time is coming.

We know the time is coming for Christmas.

We're reminded of that day by day by day in the adverts we see on television.

All we see is people buying and unwrapping Christmas presents.

We see the food shopping being done.

The parties and fun that people have on Christmas day.

It's still more than three weeks to go but the media have been preparing us for weeks now.

(pause)

The time is coming to celebrate together.

But what are we celebrating.

That God has fulfilled the promise he made – he has sent a saviour.

What are we celebrating?

That God has chosen a King.

A righteous descendant of David.

What are we celebrating?

That we have all been rescued.

That we live in safety.

(pause)

The people of Israel waited a long time for God to fulfil his promises.

Many generations of exile before they saw any light.

Before they got to return to the promised land and build the temple once more.

A long time passed before the promises were fulfilled.

And the people struggled to hold onto their faith.

Struggled to hold on to their trust in God.

We struggle to hold onto the promises that Jesus made to us.

We struggle to hold onto the idea that He is going to return one day.

We'll be thinking about that today as we explore this passage from Luke's gospel

**Luke 21.25-36 -**

"There will be strange things happening to the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth whole countries will be in despair, afraid of the roar of the sea and the raging tides. People will faint from fear as they wait for what is coming over the whole earth, for the powers in space will be driven from their courses. Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your salvation is near." Then Jesus told them this parable: "Think of the fig tree and all the other trees. When you see their leaves beginning to appear, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the Kingdom of God is about to come. "Remember that all these things will take place before the people now living have all died. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

"Be careful not to let yourselves become occupied with too much feasting and drinking and with the worries of this life, or that Day may suddenly catch you like a trap. For it will come upon all people everywhere on earth. Be on watch and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all those things that will happen and to stand before the Son of Man." **Amen**

## **Reflection**

The time of our Saviour is coming,  
the time of our rescue.

The time of 'The Lord our Salvation'

As Jeremiah put it.

(pause)

Or as the angel put it to Mary.

"Don't be afraid, Mary;



God has been gracious to you.

You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus.

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God.

The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was,

and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever;

his kingdom will never end!"

(pause)

A King is coming.

The angel promised it to Mary.

Jeremiah prophesied it.

A King is coming who will be our Saviour.

(pause)

We need to prepare for this coming.

The coming of our King.

The coming of our Saviour.

(pause)

Yes we have to prepare in so many other ways.

Yes we have to get the presents,

Buy the food,

Send the cards.

We can be overwhelmed by all that needs done to have this celebration on Christmas day.

Especially if you have kids

Or large numbers of family and friends coming to celebrate with you.

(pause)

But we also need to make time to prepare for Jesus our Saviour.

We need to make time to reflect on who this baby is.

Who this baby is going to grow up to be.

What this baby is going to do with his life.

(pause)

In Advent we prepare for the coming of our King.

We prepare for our Saviour to be born.

And as our reading from Luke tells us,

We are also preparing for his return.

(pause)

The Gospel reading is set in Holy Week, a day or two before the arrest of Jesus.

He had caused uproar in the Temple and spoken to the crowds.

Both sets of religious leaders,  
the Sadducees and the Pharisees,  
tried to trap Jesus in arguments.

(pause)

At first glance this passage can seem full of big,  
threatening images.

Yet, if we keep reading, we see the signs of  
hope:

the buds on the tree heralding summer;

the signs of God's kingdom;

and the encouragement to 'raise your  
heads' (v.28).

(pause)

The time is coming when Jesus will return.

We wait for his return in glory.

'Be on watch and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all those things that will happen and to stand before the Son of Man.'

(pause)

The time of waiting has begun.

The time of watching.

The time to be alert.

The time for looking for the Son of Man appearing.

(pause)

"Be careful not to let yourselves become occupied with too much feasting and drinking

and with the worries of this life,

or that Day may suddenly catch you.'

(pause)

We need to be careful not to get so caught up with the festivities.

With the feasting and the drinking.

That we are not ready for what is the important thing that is coming.

The birth of our Saviour.

(pause)

We need to be careful not to get so caught up with the festivities.

That we are not ready for Jesus' return.

(pause)

Jesus will return to be with us once more.

He promises us that here in our reading from Lukes gospel.

(pause)

So as we celebrate his birth in the stable in Bethlehem.

Let us also remember to celebrate that he has promised to come again to us.

(pause)

So in this time of Advent,

This time of getting ready.

Let us make time to reflect.

To remember

To believe,

That the Son of Man will appear one day soon.

That he will come in the clouds with great power and glory. **Amen.**

**Let us pray**

God of promise,  
giver of hope,  
source of inspiration,  
bringer of joy,  
bless us and sustain us.

God of promise,  
healer of our hurts,  
forgiver of our wrongdoing,  
light of our darkness,  
bless us and sustain us

God of promise  
Born as a baby  
Died on a cross  
Help us today to trust in your promises,  
To believe in the coming of the Son of Man

(pause)

The Time is coming.....

We know that Father.

The time is coming for our Saviours birth.

The time is coming when the Son of man will  
appear coming in a cloud with great power and  
glory.

Help us to be ready for that time Father.

(pause)



God of hope,  
help us to bring your hope to the world.  
Help us to be your hope to each other.  
Help us to root our hope in you. **Amen.**