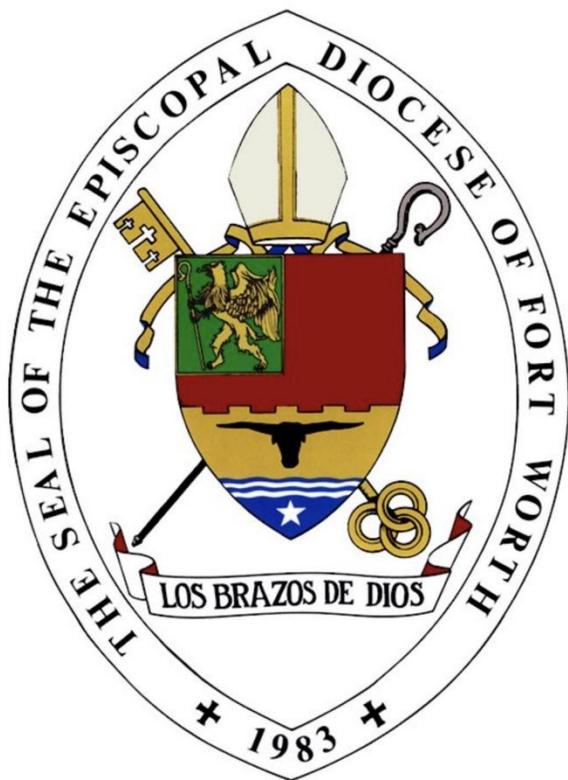


EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

A lectionary-based Sunday school curriculum for Pre-K through High School



**PROPER
28**

**Sunday from
November 13 to
November 19**

A free resource created by the Christian Education Commission
of the Anglican Diocese of Fort Worth

Sunday School Curriculum for Proper 28 - Year C

Sunday from November 13 to November 19

Lectionary Texts:

Malachi 3:13 - 4:6

Psalm 98

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Luke 21:5-19

Malachi 3:13—4:2a, 5-6

3:13 “Your words have been stout against me, says the LORD. Yet you say, ‘How have we spoken against thee?’ 14 You have said, ‘It is vain to serve God. What is the good of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts? 15 Henceforth we deem the arrogant blessed; evildoers not only prosper but when they put God to the test they escape.’”

16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another; the LORD heeded and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and thought on his name. 17 “They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. 18 Then once more you shall distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

4:1 “For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. But here is what will happen for you who have respect for me. The sun that brings life will rise. Its rays will bring healing to my people. You will go out and leap for joy like calves that have just been fed. 3 Then you will stomp on sinful people. They will be like ashes under your feet. That will happen on the day I judge,” says the Lord. 4 “Remember the law my servant Moses gave you. Remember the rules and laws I gave him at Mount Horeb. They were for the whole nation of Israel.

5 “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. 6 And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”

Psalm 98

- 1 Sing a new song to the Lord.
He has done wonderful things.
By the power of his right hand and his holy arm
He has saved his people.
- 2 The Lord has made known his power to save.
He has shown the nations that he does what is right.
- 3 He has shown his faithful love
To the people of Israel.
People from one end of the earth to the other
Have seen that our God has saved us.
- 4 Shout to the Lord with joy, everyone on earth.
Burst into joyful songs and make music.
- 5 Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; *
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
- 6 Sing to the Lord with the harp, *
with the harp and the voice of song.
- 7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
shout with joy before the King, the Lord.
- 8 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
the lands and those who dwell therein.
- 9 Let the rivers clap their hands, *
and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord,
when he comes to judge the earth.
- 10 In righteousness shall he judge the world *
and the peoples with equity.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is living in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, 8 we did not eat any one's bread without paying, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you. 9 It was not because we have not that right, but to give you in our conduct an example to imitate. 10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: If any one will not work, let him not eat. 11 For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. 12 Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work in quietness and to earn their own living. 13 Brethren, do not be weary in well-doing.

Luke 21:5-19

5 And as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, 6 “As for these things which you see, the days will come when there shall not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” 7 And they asked him, “Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign when this is about to take place?” 8 And he said, “Take heed that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time is at hand!’ Do not go after them. 9 And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified; for this must first take place, but the end will not be at once.”

10 Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; 11 there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. 12 But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. 13 This will be a time for you to bear testimony. 14 Settle it therefore in your minds, not to meditate beforehand how to answer; 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. 16 You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they will put to death; 17 you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By your endurance you will gain your lives.

Overview of the Texts:

By and large, today’s texts concern “the Day of the Lord,” a somewhat enigmatic prophetic device used throughout the canon of Old Testament prophets to describe the singular, cataclysmic end of history when God would visit final justice on the world, separate the righteous from the wicked, and consume the world in fire. It’s a scary thought, really. The set up for the Day of the Lord, which runs through all four passages of scripture today, is a picture of the world divided between a majority that forgets God, and a minority of the righteous persecuted by the wicked. We see this in Malachi 3:13-17, Luke 21:10-19, and, in a more cryptic way, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 11-12. The idle “busybodies” against whom St. Paul speaks were people who assumed the Day of the Lord was immanent, and so they stopped working and started free-loading.

Following this set-up, we see Malachi and our Lord give a description of the agony of this Day of the Lord: fire, destruction, war, and persecution. God’s final judgment will not, in short, be pretty. But set as a counterpoint against this is some good news. First, God will give us some forewarning: Malachi warns that Elijah will return as a sign (Jesus

later identified the returning Elijah as St. John Baptist); and our Lord's own warning about the terrible conditions preceding the destruction of the temple.

Moreover the Psalm today makes it clear that the final judgment of God is a matter of rejoicing for those patiently waiting the coming of the Lord (Ps. 98:5-9). So, we derive from today's texts a three-fold call: to watch for the Day (Mal. 4:5-6; Luke 21:8-9), to wait patiently for its coming (2Thess. 3:6,12-13; Luke 21:10-19), and to rejoice when it gets here (Ps. 98:5-9) - provided we hold with endurance to the confession of Christ Jesus.

PreK – Kindergarten Lesson Plans:

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer

Memory Verse: "In righteousness shall he judge the world * and the peoples with equity." Ps. 98:10

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Copies of the icon (in color if possible), tracing paper, pencils, colored pencils.

Preparation: Make a tracing set-up for the kids - cut out the square icon from the printed pages, leaving about a half inch of border around the image, one for each child; cut out a matching square of tracing paper; staple the tracing paper to the icon with either one staple in the top center, or two staples on one of the edges. Regardless of how you staple it, you want to be able to turn the tracing paper page away from the icon and back again as necessary. For very young children, you may wish to trace the basic outline for them and then allow them to color it in, using the copy of the icon as a guide.

Lesson:

- Read the children Malachi 4:5-6 from the lectionary above. Then ask them if they know who Jesus said this "Elijah" was.
- Read the children the following verses from St. Matthew's Gospel: "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come."
- "And the disciples asked him, "Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" He replied, "Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever

they pleased. So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.”

- Ask again: So, who is Elijah who is to come?
- They should answer “John the Baptist”
- *Transition to Craft:*
- To reinforce this idea, pass out the tracing set-up.
- Ask the kids to trace and color in the icon.
- When they’ve done that, ask them to identify which is Elijah, and which is John the Baptist. Is it hard? There’s a reason for that: in the Church, we make them look similar so it’s easy to tell that they’re related to one another.

Closing Prayer: Our Father

Elementary Lesson Plans:

Opening Prayer: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be

Memory Verse: “In righteousness shall he judge the world * and the peoples with equity.” Ps. 98:10

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Copies of the icon (in color if possible), tracing paper, pencils, colored pencils, three sheets of paper for Bible texts.

Preparation: Make a tracing set-up for the kids - cut out the square icon from the printed pages, leaving about a half inch of border around the image, one for each child; cut out a matching square of tracing paper; staple the tracing paper to the icon with either one staple in the top center, or two staples on one of the edges. Regardless of how you staple it, you want to be able to turn the tracing paper page away from the icon and back again as necessary. For very young children, you may wish to trace the basic outline for them and then allow them to color it in, using the copy of the icon as a guide. Prepare three sheets of paper with the texts of Malachi 4:5-6, Matthew 11:12-14, and Matthew 17:10-13 by cutting the provided sheet into three, or note cards with the citations on them.

Lesson:

- Hand the pages with scripture on them to the first three children to enter the room (or better readers, at your discretion). You may also wish to give them just the citations on an index card and have them find it in the Bible (be sure to have Bibles on hand for this option).

- After prayer, ask the first child to read Malachi 4:5-6 from his/her sheet, or Bible. Then ask them if they know who Jesus said this “Elijah” was.
- Ask the second child to read the text of Matthew 11:12-14: “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.” (Matt 11:12-14)
- Ask the third child to read the text of Matthew 17:10-13: “And the disciples asked him, “Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” He replied, “Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.” (Matt 17:10-13)
- Ask again: So, who is Elijah who is to come? They should answer “John the Baptist”
- *Transition to Craft:*
 - To reinforce this idea, pass out the tracing set-up.
 - Ask the kids to trace and color in the icon.
 - When they’ve done that, ask them to identify which is Elijah, and which is John the Baptist. Is it hard? There’s a reason for that: in the Church, we make them look similar so it’s easy to tell that they’re related to one another.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

Junior and Senior High Lesson Plans:

Opening Prayer: Our Father, Hail Mary, Apostles’ Creed

Memory Verse: “In righteousness shall he judge the world * and the peoples with equity.” Ps. 98:10

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: None

Preparation: Read the notes below to become educated and comfortable with what you will be teaching today.

Teacher Notes:

A little background on a common misconception about Christian teaching: The “End Times,” as we often hear it called, has become a prominent area of concern for many Christians, and particularly those working to evangelize and teach teenagers about the

Christian Faith and Morals. The problem, of course, is that most Protestant (and pop culture) teaching on the matter fall into one of several versions of the “End Times” teaching that our tradition does not espouse. So, let’s take a moment to look at what we hear, where it misses the mark, and what the Church has to say.

What we hear: statements such as “these are the last days!” or, “we are living in a time of the fulfillment of bible prophecy!” or larger statements such as, “Before Jesus comes again, there will be a period of tribulation, but the righteous will be spared this tribulation by being taken up to Jesus.” (called “pre-tribulation Rapture”) or “There will be a period of tribulation, and after it, the righteous will be taken up...” (called “post-tribulation Rapture”) and a number of things about a thousand years of peace, and so on. The pre-tribulation Rapture is the one featured in the popular *Left Behind* series.

Where these miss the mark: Most of these statements misconstrue not so much the facts of Scripture as the purpose toward which the facts of scripture are oriented. God doesn’t tell us how the Day of the Lord will come in order to present us with a solvable puzzle, but rather so that we will have the assurance of the final vindication of righteousness, and a warning to guard our souls against that day so that we will be counted among the righteous.

What the Church Teaches: As above, the teaching of the Church is not about how the last days play out, but about how we are to prepare for their coming, whenever they get here. The Church teaches, against the largely meaningless arguments about when the “tribulation” will happen, or how the “rapture” will occur (we have good evidence from Scripture, actually, that the “rapture” presented to most of us won’t happen), that every Christian is called to a life of preparation for the second coming of the Son of God by Prayer, Patience, and Faithfulness.

Lesson:

- The object of today’s lesson is an open discussion about the kinds of things your kids have heard or learned about “the day of the Lord” or the end times.
- Read through the lectionary from Malachi.
- Let them go at it with some starting questions: “What have you heard about the end of the world?” “Ever heard of the Rapture?” Help keep the conversation moving, especially if your students are reluctant.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

