

Reflection on Luke 21:25-36 at Gisborne, 28 November 2021

May your word be a lamp to my feet and a light to my path in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Luke 21:25-36

Be alert at all times

There is a saying in Korea that you can survive even if you are cornered by a tiger if you keep your cool. In today's reading, Jesus is technically saying a similar thing but for the life in the eternal. In the case of being cornered by a tiger, you may only rely on your wit and sensory functions. There is no guarantee if you will be able to escape from the tiger either. But Jesus says that being alert in faith at all times will save us when we experience all the natural disasters and cosmic disruptions, including the coming of the Son of man. It should be noted that those who will see the coming of the Son of man is not us, but 'they (will see: ὄψονται).'¹ The identity of 'them' is found in v26 in that "People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." They will fear for the powers of the heavens shaken because they don't believe in God and God's promise of salvation through the Son. When they see the coming of the Son of man, where are we and what are we doing then? While people - the rich or the powerful, and everyone - slave or free try to hide in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,² we stand up and raise our heads as we know we are saved already. We can only do such things through incessant prayers and alertness as they give us the strengths to overcome all these things. Being alert at all times means that we have faith in God through Christ, who is the love that came down from heaven. What this love does is to make us be restored and make us whole. In our story time, we heard a story about *Wonderful Baby*.

A baby was born in a bleak mining camp where men were rough with full of wickedness. The mother died after she delivered the baby, who was left behind in the hands of these rough men. They didn't know what to do with it. Fortunately, one of the men said that they couldn't let the baby die. They began to feed the baby, pick it up and cuddle it and care for all its needs. Strangely enough, the men's hearts were touched by while caring for the baby, and made them want to do still more for it. In short, "Love was beginning to work." What the baby did was just be there, smiling at the men, cooing, sometimes crying for milk or changing nappies. The presence of the baby made the men alert at all times. They were vigilant to keep the baby safe

¹ ὄψονται - ὁράω to see; Future, Middle, Indicative, Third-person, Plural

² Revelation 6:15

and happy. In doing so, they were transformed by love. Isn't it what happened when the baby Jesus came to live among us? In this Advent season, may God help us be alert at all times so that we can recognize the Son of God who is coming in the most vulnerable form indeed. Amen.