11/15/26

Sermon Title: Lift Up Your Heads, for Your Redemption Is Drawing Near

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Luke 21:10-28

10 Then he said to them: “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against
kingdom.
11 There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and
fearful events and great signs from heaven.
12 “But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you
over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings
and governors, and all on account of my name.
13 And so you will bear testimony to me.
14 But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves.
15 For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able
to resist or contradict.
16 You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends,
and they will put some of you to death.
17 Everyone will hate you because of me.
18 But not a hair of your head will perish.
19 Stand firm, and you will win life.
20 “When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its
desolation is near.
21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get
out, and let those in the country not enter the city.
22 For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written.
23 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!
There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people.

[24] They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
[25] “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.
[26] People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.
[27] At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
[28] When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

We offer our 2026 Thanksgiving worship service to God the Father, the King of kings.

We quiet our fearful and trembling hearts, look only to God, our Savior, and lay everything before Him.
And no matter what may happen, we trust in God, who will bring our salvation to completion on the last day, and offer Him our thanksgiving and praise.

We are witnessing terrifying events in the world today, events unlike anything we have ever experienced before.

News of wars is being heard from all corners of the world.
The outbreak of World War III appears to be imminent.
The United States, the United Kingdom, China, Japan, and European nations have issued unprecedented advisories urging their citizens to prepare at least three to ten days' worth of food and emergency supplies, with some countries recommending supplies sufficient for a month or even longer.

On November 17, FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) and the FCC (the Federal Communications Commission) conducted a test of the EAS (Emergency Alert System), the nationwide emergency broadcasting system.

Military tensions between Iran and the United States have reached their highest levels, and military tensions in the Strait of Hormuz have escalated once again.
On November 15, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) launched a drone attack on a U.S. military base in Bahrain.
On November 17, the United States deployed three aircraft carriers and launched massive attacks in the southern part of the Strait of Hormuz, near Qeshm Island, where Iranian missile bases are located.
On November 18, Iran resumed military attacks after nearly two months, bombing U.S. allies in the Middle East, including Kuwait and Bahrain.

On November 16, CNN reported that U.S. intelligence officials had received information that Iran was planning to detonate a dirty bomb—a radiological dispersal device or chemical weapon—in Washington, D.C., in an attempt to assassinate senior U.S. government officials.
Iran, having been subjected to an unprecedented economic blockade in American history and having nothing left to lose, is reportedly planning a limited-scale conflict on U.S.
The moment Iran carries out this plan, the entire world could be plunged into war in an instant.

In addition to reports of war, major U.S. infrastructure systems have been experiencing repeated disruptions, raising suspicions of a series of cyberattacks. Beginning on November 12, for approximately 36 hours, major Microsoft 365 business services—including Outlook, Teams, Exchange Online, SharePoint, and Copilot—were disrupted across more than 70 countries worldwide.

On November 17, Apple's online services, including iCloud, the Apple Store, Apple Pay, and Apple Music, also experienced outages.
On the same day, NSA Net, the National Security Agency's highly classified intelligence-sharing network, headquartered at Fort Meade, Maryland, went offline.
Microsoft, Apple, and intelligence officials have stated that these incidents were caused by technical problems, not cyberattacks or AI malfunctions.
However, many people remain skeptical of these explanations.

Furthermore, beginning in the afternoon of November 13, all aircraft departures across the United States were completely grounded for four hours and twenty minutes, resulting in massive disruptions to air travel.
This was the first nationwide ground stop of all aircraft departures since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.
The White House announced that the incident was not caused by a cyberattack or hacking, but rather by a communications failure that occurred when L3Harris, a U.S. government contractor, was replacing aging copper cables in the aviation communications network with fiber-optic cables and installing new routers, which overloaded the existing air traffic control system.
However, the FBI stated that a cyberattack had occurred.

In particular, United Airlines experienced another disruption on the afternoon of November 16 due to an internal computer system error, resulting in the cancellation of 25 flights and delays affecting hundreds more.
The airline announced that a technical error had occurred in its aircraft weight calculation system, which determines the final weight of each aircraft before departure. But who knows...

The banking system has also experienced problems.

Beginning on the morning of November 16, a computer system outage at JPMorgan Chase, the largest bank in the United States, caused major delays in online banking and money transfers not only at Chase but also at Bank of America, Wells Fargo, U.S. Bank, and other financial institutions.
JPMorgan Chase stated that the incident was not related to a cyberattack or external hacking, but it seems that very few people are willing to accept that explanation at face value.
People are deeply concerned as they think about the recent situation in Paraguay.

I am not bringing up these events to create social anxiety or fear.
All of these incidents have been reported through public news broadcasts.
The reason I am emphasizing them again is to awaken our brothers and sisters in Christ and remind them to remain vigilant.
The purpose is for us, as believers, to remain spiritually awake, recognize the ultimate direction toward which all these events are pointing, and be prepared.

Do not be afraid.
Remember the words of Jesus: "When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."
The faith of those who await the Second Coming is not a faith that trembles in fear of the end of the world and stockpiles emergency food inside their homes.
The faith of those who await the Second Coming is a faith that lifts up its head.

Let us revisit the words Jesus gave us concerning the days of tribulation.

These are His words concerning the signs of tribulation.
He tells us that there will be wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, terrifying events, and great signs from heaven.
10 Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

[11] There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

And then He tells us that before all these things take place, believers will face persecution.

[12] “But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name.
[13] And so you will bear testimony to me.
[14] But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves.
[15] For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

At that time, God will give us wisdom that none of our adversaries will be able to resist or refute.

He also tells us that we will face persecution even from those closest to us, including our parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends.

[16] You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.
[17] Everyone will hate you because of me.
[18] But not a hair of your head will perish.

Yet He assures us that not a hair of our head will perish.
This means that nothing can happen outside the providence of God.

He promises that if we stand firm in our faith and endure to the end, we will be saved.

[19] Stand firm, and you will win life.

Then Jesus goes on to prophesy the destruction of Jerusalem.

[20] “When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near.

Because of its naturally steep and rugged terrain, sophisticated water supply system, and multiple defensive walls, the city of Jerusalem was regarded as an almost impregnable fortress from ancient times through the Middle Ages.
For this reason, the destruction of Jerusalem was virtually unimaginable to the people of that time.

Jerusalem was situated at an elevation of approximately 750 meters (2,460 feet) above sea level in the highlands of the Judean Mountains.
Three sides of the city were surrounded by deep and steep valleys: the Kidron Valley to the east and the Hinnom Valley to the south and west.
In addition, the people had carved a tunnel through the bedrock, known as Hezekiah's Tunnel or the Siloam Tunnel, to channel water from the Gihon Spring—the city's only water source outside the city walls—to the Pool of Siloam inside the city.

They had also constructed enormous underground cisterns throughout the city to store rainwater.
These systems enabled Jerusalem to withstand sieges lasting several months or even years without running out of drinking water.

Furthermore, throughout different periods of its history, including the reign of Herod the Great during the Roman era and that of Suleiman the Magnificent of the Ottoman Empire, thick, towering stone walls and watchtowers were constructed to strengthen the city's defenses.

Nevertheless, Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled exactly as He had foretold.
In A.D. 70, Roman forces led by General Titus destroyed Jerusalem.

Jesus warned those inside the city to flee from Jerusalem, and those outside the city not to enter it.

21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city.

According to the records of the Jewish historian Josephus, many people who heard the Lord's warning were able to escape danger by leaving Jerusalem and fleeing to the region east of the Jordan before the city was besieged.
Those who remained inside Jerusalem were brutally slaughtered by the Roman army.
According to historical sources, more than 1.1 million Jews were killed by the Roman army at that time, and approximately 97,000 were taken captive.

Jesus said that this would be the day of "vengeance" upon Jerusalem.

22 For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written.
23 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people.
24 They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

This would be the tragic day of judgment that Jerusalem would face for rejecting the prophets sent by God.

Jesus says that on that day, even pregnant women and nursing mothers with infants living in Jerusalem would be mercilessly killed, and those who survived would be taken into captivity.

He also says that Jerusalem would be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
The expression "the times of the Gentiles" carries a twofold meaning.

It refers, on the one hand, to the period during which Jerusalem would be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, and on the other hand, to the period during which the gospel would spread to the Gentile nations.
Therefore, “the times of the Gentiles” can also refer to the present age in which we are living.

Biblical prophecies often have a twofold fulfillment.
Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem is also a prophecy with a twofold fulfillment.
It refers not only to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman forces under General Titus in A.D. 70, but also points forward to the end times.
Therefore, Jesus does not limit His discussion to the signs surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem.
He goes on to speak of signs on a cosmic, universal scale.
25 “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.
26 People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.
The heavenly bodies will be shaken, and signs of Jesus' Second Coming will appear on the earth and in the sea.
Matthew describes these events by saying, “The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky” (Matthew 24:29).

Jesus then declares that when all these signs take place, people will see Him coming again in a cloud with power and great glory.
27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
Unlike His first coming, the Second Coming of Jesus will be visible to all humanity.

Jesus tells us that when these events begin to take place, we should recognize that the time of our complete redemption is drawing near.

28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Therefore, while these events may fill those who do not know Jesus Christ with terror, they should become a source of hope for those of us who believe in and follow Him, because we know that they are signs that the kingdom of God is drawing near to its fulfillment.

Beloved members of Church of Godly Dreams,
The day Jesus foretold is drawing nearer and nearer.
Do not be afraid as you see the things taking place in the world today.
These are the very things Jesus has already told us would happen.

For those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, that day will be a day of fear and tribulation.
But for those of us who wait for the Lord in faith, it will be a day of joy and overwhelming gladness.
On that day, we will see the kingdom of God, for which we have patiently waited through tears, brought to its full completion.
In that kingdom, ruled by God Himself, righteousness and peace will abound. There will be no more death, no more sorrow, no more tears, and no more pain. Therefore, let us all wait for the day of the Lord's return, not with fear but with hope, not with despair but with joy.

With eager anticipation, let us look forward to the day when our salvation will be brought to completion.
May we hold high the banner of victory and be ready to welcome the Lord when He comes again.

Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!