

## Devotion for Wednesday in Holy Week

### Psalm 89:20-27

**I have found David my servant; with holy oil I have anointed him, so that my hand shall be established with him; my arm also will strengthen him.**

The enemy shall not outwit him; the wicked shall not humble him.

**I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.**

My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

**I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers. He shall cry to me, "You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation."**

And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 10:21-11:10 *The Plague of Darkness*  
New Testament Reading: Matthew 24:1-51 *Signs of the Close of the Age*

### Signs of the Time

Jesus spent His last days in Jerusalem teaching the people and instructing His disciples. Jesus taught publicly in the temple courts, so that through His wisdom He would reveal Himself as the successor of David, heir to his kingship and the promise of an everlasting kingdom. Solomon distinguished himself as the heir to his father's throne through the wisdom God gave him. Jesus showed Himself greater than Solomon, by expressing an even greater wisdom and more profound insight into the heart of humans and the mind of God, expressed in the Scriptures. His opponents were left speechless and the people delighted in His words.

Jesus instructed His disciples in the signs that would precede His second coming as King and Lord of all. He warned them of wars, famines, natural disasters and persecutions. He warned them in advance, so that when hardship and suffering came they would remember His words and remain strong in faith, by looking to Him for strength. To show that His words would come to pass and that He would return according to the Father's will He said Jerusalem would be surrounded and the temple destroyed. These things happened within 40 years, so that they and we would know that His words will come to pass and that He can be trusted to bring us through all things and bring our faith to fulfillment in eternal life.

The focus of Holy Week is not only the past, but also the present and the future. We remember Jesus' words, His suffering and death, so that we would find strength and have encouragement, as we deal with death and the struggles of our daily lives. We remember Jesus' words about the fulfillment of faith and His return, by paying attention to the signs of the times. These things (perplexing to understand, difficult to experience and part of life) remind us of Jesus' promise to return and the promise of life in the presence of God, where, sin, devil and death are no more.

### Nearer My God to Thee (Public Domain)

**Nearer, my God, to thee, Nearer to thee!**

**E'en though it be a cross That raiseth me;**

**Still all my song shall be: Nearer my God to thee,**

**Nearer my God to thee, Nearer to thee!**

**Nearer, my Lord, to thee, Nearer to thee,**

**Who to thy cross didst come, Dying for me!**

**Strengthen my willing feet, Hold me in service sweet**

**Nearer, O Christ, to thee, Nearer to thee!**

**Nearer, O Comforter, Nearer to thee,**

**Who with my loving Lord Dwellest with me!**

**Grant me thy fellowship! Help me each day to keep**

**Nearer, my Guide, to thee, Nearer to thee!**

**But to be nearer still, Bring me, O God,  
Not by the visioned steeps Angels have trod.  
Here where thy cross I see, Jesus I wait for thee,  
Then evermore to be Nearer to thee!**

**Prayer**

Merciful God, you gave Jesus to be our King by humbling Himself to the suffering of His cross. In this way He came into His glory and claimed the throne of David. Bless us to follow in the way of His cross as we make our pilgrimage through this life. May we find strength and receive encouragement in His words. Bless us to fix our eyes on Jesus in faith and be mindful of the signs of the times, until that time we see Him with our eyes in your kingdom in His resurrection. Amen

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

**Catechism for Lent: The Sacrament of the Altar**

Whoever believes the words has what they declare and bring. Because Christ offers and promises forgiveness of sin, it cannot be received except by faith. This faith He Himself demands in the Word when He says, "Given and shed for you," as if He said, "For this reason I give it, and ask you to eat and drink it, that you may claim it as yours and enjoy it." Whoever now accepts these words and believes what they declare is true has forgiveness. Large Catechism V 35

**Benediction**

**Psalm 115:14-15**

"May the Lord give you increase, you and your children!  
May you be blessed by the Lord, who made heaven and earth!"