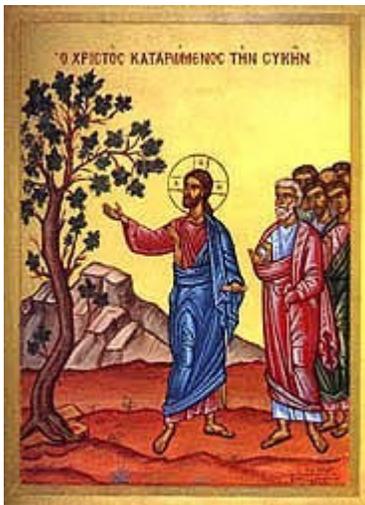


*Behold the fig tree, and all the trees: when they now shoot forth their fruit, you know that summer is nigh... Luke speaks of all the trees, refers to when the fruit is green on all the trees, and the fig tree branch is likewise in bloom, as when every tongue doth confess the Lord, and confessing also is the people of Israel, we are to hope for the Lord's Coming, in which as in summer time the fruits of the Resurrection shall be gathered in... for the judgment is approaching: for the Lord is hastening to reward faith, and to make an end of wrong doing.*

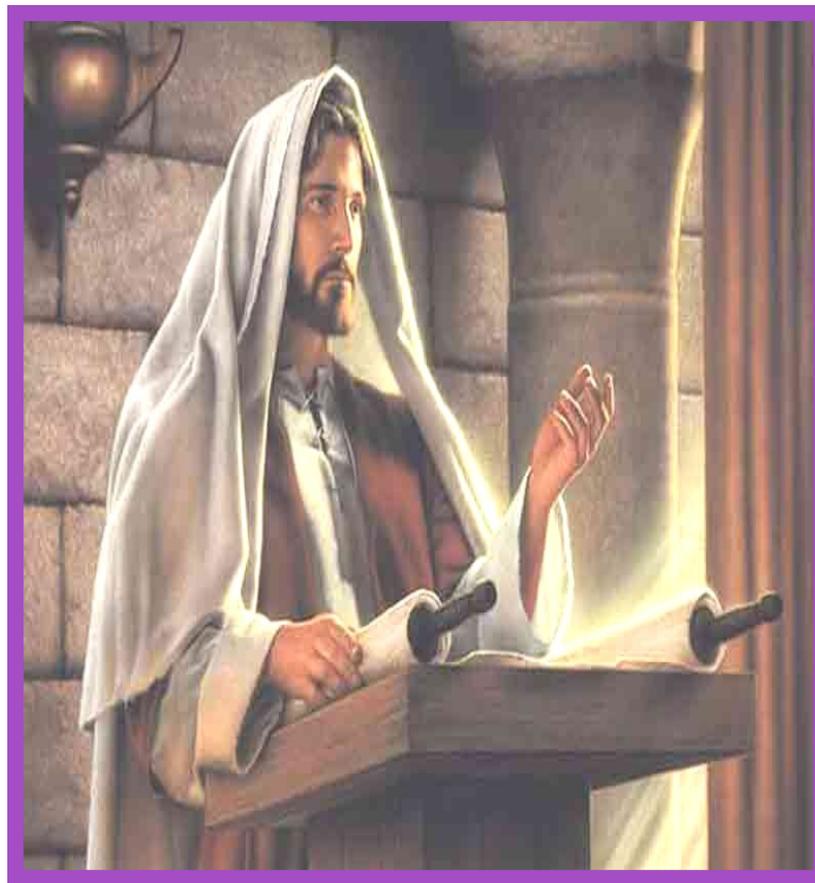


The fig tree has a two-fold meaning, either as meaning when the hard fruit grows tender, or when sin abounds. For by the faith of those who believe, that which withered shall blossom; and account of their offenses, sinners shall grow boastful. In the one is the fruitfulness of faith, in the other the wantonness of apostasy. The husbandry of the dresser of the vineyard promises me fruit of the fig tree; nor must we lose hope if sinners clothe themselves with the leaves of the fig tree, as with a garment of deceit, that they may hide their conscience; mistrustful leaves without fruit. Such garments had they who were cast forth from paradise (Gen. iii. 7).



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**SERMON ON  
THE SECOND COMING AND LAST JUDGMENT  
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH  
# 124 - 1**



**JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

## Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

Volume 1 - Page 1053 (1962 edition)

Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 21: 25-33

by: Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor

*And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon...* Here is a linked chain of prophecy, and the reason of the mystery why the Jews, already twice led captive, to Babylon and to Syria, will again be captive in all the world: because they have denied Christ; and why Jerusalem, as was later seen, was to be laid waste by an invading host, and her people fall by the edge of the sword. Also, why all that was Judea was to be vanquished by the believing nations, by the sword of the spirit, which is the two-edged word of God.

There will be diverse signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars. These signs are expressed more clearly in Matthew: *then, he says, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven* (Mt. xxiv. 29). For, many falling away from Christianity, the brightness of faith will be dimmed by the cloud of apostasy; since the heavenly Sun grows dim, or shines in greater splendor, according to my faith. As when many together look at the rays of the earthly sun, it will seem dim or bright according to the eye of the beholder, so does the light of the spirit fill each one according to the measure of his faith... so likewise the Holy Church, when the vices of the flesh stand in the way of the celestial light, can no longer borrow the splendor of His divine light from the Sun of Christ... for the love of this life keeps out the light of the Divine Sun.

*The stars shall fall*, that is, men now shining in the praise of their fellow Christians, even such as are lights to the rest of the world, who possess the word of life, and of whom it was said to Abraham that, *they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament* (Dan. xii. 3). Many esteemed as the Patriarchs shall fall, prophets shall fall, should the sharpness of the persecution mount up, which must come to pass. Until the fullness of the merits of the Church be made up in all her members, and in each one singly; for so the good are proved... So oppressive will be the unrest of souls... unhappily aware of the multitude of our offenses, the dew of the sacred baptism will dry up in the fear of the judgment to come...

*For the powers of heaven shall be moved: and then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud.* In like manner the coming of the Son of man is longed for, so that by His presence there may be accomplished in the whole world of angels and of men, that which is wrought in single souls, who, with all fitting dispositions, receive Christ. So the Powers of heaven, at the Coming of the Lord of salvation, will also attain to an increase of grace; for He is the Lord of the Powers as well, and they will tremble at this appearance among them of the fullness of the glory of the divinity. Then too the Powers that *proclaim the glory of God* (Ps. xviii) shall also tremble before this fuller revealing of His glory, as they gaze on Christ.

David has told us in what manner these Powers are moved, saying: *Come ye to Him, and be enlightened* (Ps. xxxiii. 6); Paul also tells how we may see Christ: *for when they shall be converted to the Lord, a veil shall be taken away, and you will behold Christ* (II Cor. iii. 16). You will behold Him in the clouds... for then shall He set His Tabernacle in the sun (Ps. xviii. 6)...

There are clouds which serve to veil the splendor of the divine mystery. There are also clouds which moisten with the dew of spiritual refreshment. Consider the cloud in the Old Testament: *He spoke to them in the pillar of the cloud* (Ps. xcvi. 7). He spoke through Moses, and by the mouth of Joshua, who bade the sun stand still that he might have the light of the lengthened day. So Moses and Joshua were clouds. Observe also that the Holy Ones are clouds, *who fly as clouds and as doves to their windows* (Is. lx. 8)... The prophets are all clouds; in these clouds Christ came. He came in a cloud in the Canticle, serene and lovely, refulgent with the joy of the Bridegroom (Cant. iii. 11). He came *in a swift cloud*, becoming Incarnate through the Virgin, for the prophet saw Him come as a cloud from the east (Is. xix. 1)... Consider the cloud in which the Holy Spirit descended, and from wherein the power of the Most High shadowed forth (Lk. i. 35). Therefore, when Christ appears in the clouds, the tribes of the earth shall mourn; because there is a certain number of offenses, a certain number of sins against God, which will suddenly be interrupted by the advent of Christ.