

# Heads Up: Scott Hahn Reflects on the First Sunday of Advent

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Readings:

[Jeremiah 33:14-16](#)

[Psalm 25:4-5,8-10,14](#)

[1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2](#)

[Luke 21:25-28, 34-36](#)

Every Advent, the Liturgy of the Word gives our sense of time a reorientation.

There's a deliberate tension in the next four weeks' readings—between promise and fulfillment, expectation and deliverance, between looking forward and looking back.

In today's First Reading, the prophet Jeremiah focuses our gaze on the promise God made to David, some 1,000 years before Christ. God says through the prophet that He will fulfill this promise by raising up a "just shoot," a righteous offspring of David, who will rule Israel in justice (see [2 Samuel 7:16](#); [Jeremiah 33:17](#); [Psalm 89:4–5](#); [27–38](#)).

Today's Psalm, too, sounds the theme of Israel's ancient expectation: "Guide me in your truth and teach me. For you are God my savior and for you I will wait all day."

We look back on Israel's desire and anticipation knowing that God has already made good on those promises by sending His only Son into the world. Jesus is the "just shoot," the God and Savior for Whom Israel was waiting.

Knowing that He is a God who keeps His promises lends grave urgency to the words of Jesus in today's Gospel.

Urging us to keep watch for His return in glory, He draws on Old Testament images of chaos and instability—turmoil in the heavens (see [Isaiah 13:11, 13](#); [Ezekiel 32:7–8](#); [Joel 2:10](#)); roaring seas (see [Isaiah 5:30](#); [17:12](#)); distress among the nations (see [Isaiah 8:22](#); [14:25](#)) and terrified people (see [Isaiah 13:6–11](#)).

He evokes the prophet Daniel's image of the Son of Man coming on a cloud of glory to describe His return as a "theophany," a manifestation of God (see [Daniel 7:13–14](#)).

Many will cower and be literally scared to death. But Jesus says we should greet the end-times with heads raised high, confident that God keeps His promises, that our "redemption is at hand," that "the kingdom of God is near" (see [Luke 21:31](#)).

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Scott Hahn". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letter 'S' being large and looping around the rest of the name.

Scott Hahn