



I<sup>1</sup> gton, DC for our holidays. We were hoping to enjoy the museums and the sights in the national capitol of the USA, and we were not disappointed. The museums were very well done, impressive buildings of great artistic worth in and of themselves, but what really impressed me were the monuments in and around the National Mall.

The World War II monument was my favourite, but there was no way people could come away from the Lincoln Memorial without feeling small against the great triumph of democratic ideals, or feeling very humble by the stark black obsidian marble of the Vietnam Memorial. This entire park with all the monuments was built with the singular purpose of impressing each and every visitor with the idea that this is a place of great importance and honour. It succeeded!

It is not my place to comment politically of our neighbours to the south, but it is hard to stay away from the news of the chaos that media loves to report on almost daily. That media chaos is a stark juxtaposition against those impressive monuments. Buildings of such size and intricacy speak of wealth, power, prestige, and honour; the news speaks only of chaos, worry, and strife.

But that kind of news is not unique to our US neighbours. Canada is rife with worry as politics of personal individuality, 21<sup>st</sup> century values, and supposed choice overtake the value of life, family, and mutual respect of one another as human beings. Maybe it's always been this way, but it surely seems to be getting worse, to the point that I rarely even want to hear the news for fear of being sucked into more worry than I have emotional time to spare.

Perhaps you have felt this, too. We are not alone! During the prophetic ministry of Isaiah, news came to Jerusalem that the northern Kingdom of

Israel had joined forces with Syria and were planning on attacking the south. This didn't just worry the King, but all of Judah with him! Politically, things were very bad, knees were knocking, hearts were melting, yet worst of all, the King on David's throne was an apostate! A heathen and a heretic! Ahaz, the king who moved the altar of the Lord aside to put up an altar to Baal before the Temple!

What were the people to do in their worry? Pray! For as bad as things were in Jerusalem and throughout Judah, the Lord their God was still in their midst, calling them all back to Himself in repentant faith, including that worthless king. For it was to King Ahaz that the prophecy was given: ***"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,"*** (Isaiah 7:14 ESV) which means, God with us!

Our heavenly Father always has His eye on all we do; He is never sleeping, He is never far away. Even during the worst kingship of Israel, the Lord continued to preach His promise of salvation! So too, in the midst of all our worries of political strife or even of religious persecution, we know that our Father in heaven is still watching over us. Because that promise of old was fulfilled in the manger of Bethlehem.

The Virgin Mary bore a son, the miraculous son who was both God and man! God with us! To the shepherd watching their flock by night, the angels sang: ***"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,"***

(Luke 2:10-11 ESV). This son of man and Son of God grew in stature and offered Himself upon the cross to save a fallen world. He is not just Lord, but Saviour and King! For you, for me, and for a badly hurting world!

As we approach the dark days of winter, we have the great feast to look forward to, the Christ-Mass! The birth of our Lord, the Saviour who

comes to save us! All that we fear, all that we worry about will find their hope of salvation in Jesus! He is with us, no matter what chaos erupts around us, for He is seated upon His heavenly throne watching over us faithfully and from that throne Jesus declares: ***“Behold, I am making all things new,”*** (Revelation 21:5 ESV).

Fear not, dear brothers and sisters in Christ!  
Trust not in princes, but in Jesus, your Lord, your Saviour, and your everlasting King of all!

In Christ’s service,

Rev Joel V. Kuhl, Pastor