

We have a set of apocalyptic readings today. Prophet Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, prophesied of the terrible day at the door. However, he concludes it with a promise of ‘the sun of justice with its healing rays.’

In the second reading, St. Paul urges the Thessalonians and us to focus on the essential, that is, to lead a moral life and to work hard for sustenance.

Jesus was in the premises of the Jerusalem temple, the pride of the Jews. Some people around him, probably some of the disciples that accompanied him from Galilee, were astounded by the majesty of the temple, an architectural marvel of that period. His reaction terrified them, “All that you see here- the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down.”

One could accuse Jesus of fear-mongering. He was not spreading fear; he was rather revealing the future. The prophecy was fulfilled in a couple of decades. He was revealing.

What is the take on this revelation?

Jesus particularly warned us of deception. Let us take a look. He particularly warned us of those who would pose themselves as the savior. He warned us of the people who deceive people that this is the time and lead them to catastrophic foolishness.

Despite all such warnings, in the last two centuries alone, we have seen many people who claim to be Messiahs, leading people even to mass suicides. It is not a new phenomenon;

during the last twenty centuries, many claimed to be prophets and deceived millions.

The sixth-century founder of Islam is another such deceiver who claimed to be the last prophet. I don't want to defile the sacred Altar by pronouncing his name. He claimed to be a prophet of the Almighty, but advocated everything satanic, including murdering Christians and Jews. He further promoted war, prostitution, child marriage, and deception for the propagation of their religion.

Hundreds of Christians are murdered daily, especially in African countries like Nigeria and Sudan, or in Asian countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan. Thousands of Christians are persecuted and rendered homeless by the propagators of that religion. Yet they find more sympathizers in the Western Hemisphere than the poor persecuted Christians.

As Jesus told, 'know them by their fruits.' Be on guard before you welcome the deceivers with a 'green carpet.' Well, the 'green carpet' is not a mistake; they prefer everything painted green.

Be on guard, the deceiver is at the door. It is time to read, reflect, and above all, depend more on Jesus.

If it sounds scary, remember Prophet Malachi: "But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays."

Amen.