

Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

The portion of Scripture before us today is  
found in the book of the prophet Jeremiah the  
thirty-third chapter beginning at the fourteenth  
verse:

***'Behold, the days are coming,' says the  
LORD, 'that I will perform that good thing  
which I have promised to the house of Israel  
and to the house of Judah: <sup>15</sup> 'In those days  
and at that time I will cause to grow up to  
David A Branch of righteousness; He shall  
execute judgment and righteousness in the  
earth. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved,  
And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is  
the name by which she will be called: THE  
LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.' <sup>17</sup> "For  
thus says the LORD: 'David shall never lack a  
man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel;  
<sup>18</sup> 'nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a  
man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to  
kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice  
continually.'"***

Heavenly Father, these are Your words and  
therefore they are the truth. We pray that You  
would increase our faith through them. Amen.

Dear Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb,

Last Sunday was "Christ the King Sunday."  
Today is Advent 1. It doesn't have as splashy  
and catchy a name as "Christ the King Sunday"  
but the theme is all the same. For this week,  
traditionally, the theme of this Sunday has been  
"Jesus, the Coming King." Yes, we just got  
done with the end of the year and many people  
wonder why we end it where we do. They  
figure if we're going to go from Christ the King  
to Jesus, the Coming King... why not just let  
the church year run right up to Christmas. And  
the reason is simple: Trinity is not Advent.

Advent is a time in which we turn our attention  
to the coming Christ child who is going to be  
our King. Instead of focusing on the End of the  
world, we focus on the end of the reign of sin.  
Our focus for advent, then, is on that little baby

that is going to be born, and He is going to be born for us.

Just as God says in our text, “I will perform that good thing which I have promised.” He is going to send His Son, our Redeemer, our Savior, to bring us back from the dominion of satan and of hell. He is going to send salvation... in a child. And we will know that He is our Savior because He is ***The Lord our Righteousness.***

When Jeremiah was prophesying, Judah was taken into captivity. Not because of Jeremiah’s preaching, but he definitely let the Judahites know what was coming. He was sent by God to prophecy and often Jeremiah is seen as the “Lamenting prophet,” or the “weeping prophet.” And when you consider the message that Jeremiah had to deliver to the people of Judah, I think we can understand why he was known as the weeping prophet. He had to tell the people that the Babylonians were coming and that all of Judah would be wiped out. The city of Jerusalem would be burned to the ground and the Temple of the Lord would be

destroyed and burned to the ground. The people would be carried off to far away lands... and before all this happened there would be great loss of life and devastation in the land. Wouldn’t you weep if you had to deliver that message to people?

While I do not weep constantly, there is always a little bit of pain that hits me when I must address sins with people, whether from the pulpit or face-to-face. To come to people and tell them that they are not doing what God would have them do. To come to a person and inform him that he is falling further and further into the camp of satan. To point out a person’s sin and tell them that if they fail to repent they will spend eternity in hell.

Some people think that pastors enjoy being mean to people and that we thoroughly enjoy preaching the law, but nothing is further from the truth. Any pastor would much rather that he only had to preach Gospel to people because all of his people were perfect. However, that is the bigger problem: we are not perfect. We are very far from perfect in fact.

Think about your preparations for church this morning, did they include any sin? Think about your drive over to church, any sin there? Think about your thoughts since you've been in church, any sin? What about your thoughts since this sermon began, how have they been?

The first commandment says that we should have no other gods and this means that we should fear, love, and trust in God above all things... but we can't even get 20 minutes into a church service without fretting about what is going on at home or letting our mind wander to something that is not God.

So you see and agree that we as people are not perfect. We are not giving God our entire heart, soul, and mind. If anything we are giving Him parts... when it is suitable for us to do so. And that is what the Israelites were doing. They were worshipping other false gods and they would not repent and come back to the one true God... so they had to be punished.

This problem goes all the way back to our very first parents also, Adam and Eve. They were not perfect; well, they were but they chose sin over perfection with God. And when that sin was committed it needed to be punished, it needed to be atoned for. And God knew that we, as people, could not save ourselves, we could not make atonement for our sins... and so He made a promise.

He promised to send His Savior into this world. He promised to send someone who would save all mankind from all of their sin. He promised His Son.

As Jeremiah records, “Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah: <sup>15</sup> In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely.”

God knew that He would send His Son when the world needed Him most and Jeremiah was yet again prophesying to this effect. He was letting Judah and Israel know that though their sin was horrible and deplorable in the eyes of God, He would send a Savior for them. He would send someone to redeem them from their sins so that they could be the children of God that they were supposed to be.

And God sent His Son, born of a virgin, born in a stable, laid in a manger. He sent His Son not in royal pomp and circumstance, but in meanness and lowliness. Jesus was born as the Savior of all mankind everywhere. Jesus went on to live the only perfect life. He lived in perfect obedience to God's Word and God's Law. He trusted God, He loved God, He feared God. He did everything that we could not. As He continued in His life He was a perfect son to His heavenly Father and to His earthly father and mother.

Once Jesus had lived the perfect life, He suffered. He suffered and died, because he had to. Jesus lived, suffered, and died because of

our sin. Yes, even as an infant, He lived and suffered for us. When His life was near its end, He called out to his Father for mercy asking God to "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." Jesus did this. Though He was dying because of our sins, He was still concerned for us. And He died for us. He died because of all of the wrong that we do. However, three days later Jesus rose from the dead. He rose to proclaim His victory that He had won for each and every one of us. And it is only Jesus Christ that could be our Savior... no one else. And that was God's plan.

And now that Jesus has lived, died, and risen again... He reigns for all time. He reigns as the perfect lamb of God, the perfect Son of God, the perfect redeemer for all mankind. And in this Advent season we see that Jesus is our coming king.

As we continue to prepare for Christmas and the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, we can spend Advent getting ready for His appearing.

This seems hard to us, doesn't it? We know what is coming. We know that Jesus is going to be born in 24 days. We know that He is going to live and die for us. We know... but do we.

We come together in the season of Advent to prepare for the coming of our Savior. I do this by doing a very foreign work... I preach the Law. I preach the Law and break up our stony hearts, so that they are ready to be replaced by fleshy hearts. I preach the law to break up the rough ground in our hearts and lives so that the seed of the Gospel can grow all the more. I preach the law... so that you understand and appreciate the true sweetness of the Gospel. We journey through Advent so that we can truly appreciate Christmas.

Israel had the promise of a Savior for nearly 5000 years. They had to look forward to that Savior because no one in the Old Testament was alive when Christ was born. We have both the New and the Old Testaments. We have the prophecies about Christ and we have the fulfillment of those prophecies. We have the entire story... but we still spend time in Advent

to prepare for our Savior. Our Savior that God has sent to His people, our Savior that God has promised.

And we know that this Jesus is our Savior. We know this because He is from the line of David. We know this because He was the promised one of God. We know this because Jesus is the only one who can give us the name, "The Lord our Righteousness." Yes, that is a name bestowed upon us because of everything that Jesus Christ has done.

Thanks be to God that He has done so much for us. Thanks be to God for the Law which prepares us for His Son. Thanks be to God for the Gospel which tells us about our Savior. And thanks be to God that He has called us to be His own. Amen.