

SERMON FOR JULY 18, 2021

TEXT: JEREMIAH 23:5-6

THEME: A DIFFERENT KIND OF KING

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. **6** In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’

In the name of Jesus:

You need a king. You might not think so, we Americans don’t like to be ruled by kings. That was one of the points of the Revolutionary War. As Americans we want to be a government by the people, of the people, and for the people. But before the Lord God Almighty, you need a king, God’s kind of king.

You don’t need the world’s kind of king. Kings of the world can be incredibly violent and self centered. Just go back to look at all of the ancient kings of Assyria and Babylon. They were murderers, shedding innocent blood. Of a more recent variety of blood thirsty kings, we can think of Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Chairman Mao among others. These people weren’t interested in serving the public, they were interested in serving themselves.

Remember the saying: “Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely?” It was actually a quote made by Sir John Dalberg-Acton, a historian who lived in the mid 1800’s. He made the quote to an Anglican

priest. The actual quote is : "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men...". And therein lies the problem. Not only are great men bad men, but we too are bad men or a bad people.

That is what the Bible says. "There is no one righteous, no not one." "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." For kings, it is all about power, getting it and keeping it. Worldly kings are all about seeking their own glory and prestige. Many times they don't care about their own people or their people's lives. Ask them what makes their people anxious, afraid, or what troubles them, they really wouldn't have a clue, because in their power they have separated themselves from the reality of daily living.

This then extends to how they rule their people. When the shepherd doesn't care for the sheep, the sheep scatter. Without a shepherd type of king, the sheep wander, going their own way, doing their own thing, getting into all sorts of trouble. Everyone does what is right in their own eyes, instead of doing what is right in God's eyes. It is just as Isaiah wrote about, "We all are like sheep who have scattered, each going his or her own way."

God doesn't want people to live that way, for in doing so we get into all sorts of trouble. That is why He tells Jeremiah that He is going to send a new king, a righteous king, a different kind of king that what the world is used to.

And that king would be none other than Himself, God's Son, Jesus Christ. Hear the Word of the Lord to the prophet Jeremiah and to you and me: "'Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. **6** In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

In love God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, to be the king the world so desperately needs. Through His innocently led life, and by His sacrificial bloody death on the cross, He will bring sinners separated from God back to the Father. Jesus' mission and ministry as king was to come down from heaven, not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom and payment for sin. During His ministry on earth Jesus had compassion on sinners, seeing them as sheep without a shepherd. So He was the Good Shepherd, the One who laid down His life for the sheep.

Jesus is your king, your Shepherd King, the different kind and type of king that you need. He loves you with an everlasting love. He forgives you all of your sins. He knows your needs, for He lived the life that you live yet without sin. He is your ever present Helper in your times of need. He is not detached from you but one with you, sharing your humanity as the sinless Son

of God in human flesh. He invites you to “Come to me, all you who are burdened and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” To live under Him is to be blessed by Him.

He blesses you today with His presence. He speaks to you comfort in the forgiveness of all of your sins. He has made you His own in the waters of Baptism. He feeds you with His true body and blood so that you may be strengthened as His people. He tells you to go in peace, knowing that He is on your side and goes with you wherever you go.

Jesus is the different kind of King that you need, that I need, and that the world needs. By God’s grace through faith in Christ you now belong to Him. And now led by the Holy Spirit, you are empowered to live all the days of your life under His reign. Enjoy His rule now. Continue to be blessed by Him in worship. Seek to serve Him with joy! For King Jesus will come again soon, to take you home to be with Him forever, where you will see Him face to face and rejoice that He has been and always will be the King that you need, the One who lived, died, and rose for you. To His glory and in His name.

Amen