

Second Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 08, 2019

The Collect: Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Isaiah 11:1-10 read from The Revised Standard Version Bible

11 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;

4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.

5 Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist,
and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall feed;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp,

and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

9 They shall not hurt or destroy

in all my holy mountain;

for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord

as the waters cover the sea.

10 In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious.

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Give the King your justice, O God, *

and your righteousness to the King's Son;

2 That he may rule your people righteously *

and the poor with justice;

3 That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *

and the little hills bring righteousness.

4 He shall defend the needy among the people; *

he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.

5 He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *

from one generation to another.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *

like showers that water the earth.

7 In his time shall the righteous flourish; *

there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

18 Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, *

who alone does wondrous deeds!

19 And blessed be his glorious Name for ever! *

and may all the earth be filled with his glory.

Amen. Amen.

Epistle: Romans 15:4-13 read from the American Standard Version Bible

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: 6 that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God. 8 For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given unto the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, And sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith,
Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again,
Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles;
And let all the peoples praise him.

12 And again, Isaiah saith,
There shall be the root of Jesse,
And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles;
On him shall the Gentiles hope.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12 read from the Douay-Rheims Bible

3 And in those days cometh John the Baptist preaching in the desert of Judea.

2 And saying: Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by Isaias the prophet, saying: A voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.

4 And the same John had his garment of camels' hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the country about Jordan:
6 And were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.
7 And seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them:
Ye brood of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come?
8 Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of penance.
9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father. For I tell you that
God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.
10 For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that doth not yield
good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.
11 I indeed baptize you in the water unto penance, but he that shall come after me, is
mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost
and fire.
12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his floor and gather his wheat
into the barn; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.

The Gospel of the Lord

**Closing Prayer: On December 10th we remember Karl Barth Pastor and Theologian.
Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.**

Born at Basel, Switzerland, on May 10th, 1886, Barth studied at several prestigious universities including Tübingen, Germany. After completing his studies, he served as pastor in two Swiss centers, Geneva and Safenwil. The events of the First World War led Barth to critically question the dominant theology of the day, which, in Barth's view, held a too easy peace between theology and culture. In his *Commentary on Romans*, published in 1918, Barth reasserted doctrines such as God's sovereignty and human sin, central ideas which he believed were excluded and overshadowed in theological discourse at that time.

With Hitler's rise to power, Barth joined the Confessing Church and was chiefly responsible for the writing of the Barmen Declaration (1934), one of its foundational documents. In it, Barth claimed that the Church's allegiance to God in Christ gave it the moral imperative to challenge the rule and violence of Hitler. Barth was himself ultimately forced to resign his professorship at Bonn due to his refusal to swear an oath to Hitler.

In 1932, Barth published the first volume of his thirteen-volume opus, the Church Dogmatics. Barth would work on the Dogmatics until his death in 1968. An exhaustive account of his theological themes and a daring reassessment of the entire Christian theological tradition, the Dogmatics gave new thought to some of the central themes first articulated in the Commentary on Romans. In the first volume, "The Doctrine of the Word of God," Barth laid out many of the theological notions which would comprise the heart of the entire work, including his understanding of God's Word as the definitive source of revelation, the Incarnation as the bridge between God's revelation and human sin, and the election of the creation as God's great end.

Karl Barth was one of the great thinkers of the twentieth century. Pope Pius XII regarded him as the most important theologian since Thomas Aquinas. This assessment speaks to the respect Barth received from both Protestant and Catholic theologians and to his influence within both theological communities.

Let us pray: Almighty God, source of justice beyond human knowledge: We thank you for inspiring Karl Barth to resist tyranny and exalt your saving grace, without which we cannot apprehend your will. Teach us, like him, to live by faith, and even in chaotic and perilous times to perceive the light of your eternal glory, Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, throughout all ages. **Amen.**