

Sunday, October 27, 2024 - Reformation Sunday

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Jeremiah 31 is a chapter of hope in the midst of a book filled with judgment and sorrow. The time will come when God will bring His people back home. But they will need to wait.

Jeremiah 29: 10 – Only when Babylon’s seventy years are completed will I visit you, fulfill my promise to you, and bring you back home.

When have you needed to wait?

Here in this same chapter is another word of hope.

31 - The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Covenant vs. contract – a promise and a commitment vs. a negotiated settlement

Genesis 3: 15 – God to the serpent - He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

Genesis 9: 11 – God to Noah - Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.

Genesis 12: 2 – God to Abraham - I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

Leviticus 4: 31 and 35 – God to Moses - Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for the sin that you have committed, and you shall be forgiven.

Leviticus 16: 22 – God to Moses – The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region.

2 Samuel 7: 16 – God to David – Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Luke 22: 20 – This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. Cf. Matthew 26: 28.

32-33 - It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD.

33 - I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.

33 - I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 - I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

Psalm: Psalm 46

1 Samuel 23: 14 – David remained in the strongholds in the wilderness. Saul sought him every day.

1 Samuel 23: 28-29 – So Saul stopped pursuing David and went against the Philistines. David then went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En-gedi.

1 Samuel 24: 22 – So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

1 - God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 - Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,

and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;
3 - though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

7 - The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. *(repeated in verse 11)*

10 - "Be still, then, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth."

Cf. 1 Kings 19: 11-13 – The Lord appeared to Elijah not in the great wind, earthquake, or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence.

How do you do at being still before God so that you can sense His presence and hear His voice?

Second Reading: Romans 3:19-28

Paul's words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings can make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ's death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.

19 - Whatever the law says, it speaks so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

20 - "No human being will be justified in his sight" by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

21-22 - But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

22-23 - There is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

24-25 - They are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith.

25 - He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed.

26 - It was to prove that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

27-28 - Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. A person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

Gospel: John 8:31-36

31-32 - Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

33 - They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

34, 36 - Jesus answered them, "Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."