

LWML Sunday 10/8/23
 Psalm 24:7-10 free text
 The King Is Coming

SERMON TEXT THIS MORNING ARE THE WORDS OF OUR INTROIT, FROM PSALM 24

"Redeem" is a word we often use and hear in the Lord's Church, but what does it mean? Do you know why we use it? "Redeem" means to "buy back." We need to be redeemed – bought back – because of the fall into sin. The Good News for us is that God promised to redeem from all the curse of sin and all its wages of death. This LWML Sunday, we rejoice that God has accomplished our redemption, and returned us to Himself in His own Son, Jesus, who is our Emmanuel, "God with us".

King David proclaimed it this way in our Psalm for today:

Lift up your heads, O gates!

And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!

Lift up your heads, O gates!

And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory! [Ps 24:7-10]

It's obvious that this world needs to be rescued from itself. The onslaught of brokenness, destruction, disease, and death are all around us and we make it worse with our selfish ambitions, hatred of others, and self-centered greed. Genesis chapter 6, verse 5 tells us, *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Ge 6:5).*

The world and our lives bear witness to that evil in our hearts. God has given us narcotics to dull pain and suffering, but they, along with a host of other illegal street drugs, have become a curse upon our sons, our

daughters, our homes. God's gift of sex between husband and wife has been twisted and tainted; in media, and many minds, it has been perverted and become perverse. Many of our nation's schools have become warzones where students must be screened for weapons. And, a large number of homes, designed by God to be places of spiritual refuge and strengthening, have become battlegrounds of selfishness where mothers and fathers are teaching their children to be self-centered, self-indulgent, and self-seeking. And if any Christian voice is raised to say, "*Let the wicked forsake his way, and ... return to the Lord, that (God) may have compassion on him*"; that person is considered hopelessly old-fashioned, unbelievably out of touch, and a dangerous religious extremist (Is 55:7). The only time today's sophisticated and self-sufficient want to talk about God is when they, using the ancient argument of Adam, want to blame the Lord for a tornado, an earthquake, an illness, a cancer. At such moments they challenge the heavens and say, "How can God be so cruel that He would do this? How can God be so uncaring He would allow this?"

We can easily become downcast and heart-broken because of the evil of our world. We could quickly give up because of the constant bad news. But, God gives us Good News in a world of bad news world: Jesus is the King of glory!

God promised in the Garden that our King of Glory would come as the seed of woman. And He did, being born that night the angel chorus filled the skies to announce that our Redemption had come. Oh yes, God did buy us back from sin, death, and the devil, not with gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Jesus. Paul says it this way,

that is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the

message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Co 5:19–21).

The King of glory comes in, with and through the waters of Holy Baptism, as we are buried with Him and raised with Him to a new life (cf. Ro 6). Our comfort and joy come from the words of St. Paul, *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (2 Co 5:17).* As we live this new life as a new creation in Christ, God provides us with all the grace we need to fight off every kind of evil. Through Word and Sacrament, God provides temporal and eternal means for receiving the King of glory right now and throughout eternity, because the Gospel is *the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith" (Ro 1:16,17).* The Gospel is the life-changing message of God for the world. It changed Martin Luther's life from one seeking to appease the wrath of God, by doing good works, to one who received the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and who brought the Gospel back to the Church of God.

This LWML Sunday, we remember the ministry and mission of the LWML, but we also remember that it is the mission work of all God's people to proclaim the Gospel to all the people that God brings into our lives. As we share the Gospel, we remember that these are the words of eternal life, and through them, the King of Glory comes into the hearts and lives of people, making them wise unto salvation in Jesus and making them new creations in the Savior.

The world has been in the misery of sinful behavior since the fall. Oftentimes, we believe our times are the worst of times. Certainly, we have seen horrific and horrible atrocities in our time: yet, the history of mankind is the history of wars, the senseless killings of babies, children and adults; poverty, homelessness, addictions, every kind of evil one can imagine. We would surely give up, but for the grace of God. As Noah found favor in the eyes of God, so we too find favor in our King, Jesus, as we look beyond the brokenness of our humanity to the blessed hope of His coming again.

Like King David, we look to a heavenly King. King David knew a thing or two about a dark, inhospitable world, even in his own life and family. But David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), found hope from the darkness in the light of God's grace. That's why he wrote:

"Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!" The King of Glory is coming again to deliver us from the curse of sin.

A little fearful child, sleeping alone in the darkness of her room, cried out to mom and dad as a storm rolled across her Midwest-town. "Mom, dad," she cried in the dark of night, as the storm rolled and roared as if it was right in the room with her. Mom and dad consoled her and reminded her that they were in the next room and God is in the room with her so she need not fear. They encouraged her to go back to sleep. Awakened again and again by the rolling and roaring storm, she said to her parents the last time they entered her room, "I know you said God is in here with me, but I need someone in here with skin on them. "

As we look through the eyes of faith, even in the darkness of our sinful world, we can see clearly the promise, providence, provision, and protection of God for His people in Christ. A God with skin on Him. A God, who took on flesh and blood and the sin of humanity in His body, made His way down the road of agony, pain, and suffering, nailed to a tree, and died for the sins of the world. May this LWML Sunday remind us to be missionaries and share the Gospel throughout the world so that all will know Jesus, God's coming King of glory who provides redemption from sin, death, and hell to all who believe in Him, now and in eternity. Amen.