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## Outlines on Old Testament Texts (Synodical Conference)

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sends rain and sunshine. He gives health and strength of mind and body. We labor, but He blesses. — God guards and protects; without Him we could not exist. The present plight on earth shows man's woeful weakness and helplessness. If we have not suffered devastations as in other parts of the world, it was not our accomplishment, but God's mercy. With regard to spiritual blessings, we have contributed even less. Christ earned them. The Holy Spirit works the faith within us by which we appropriate them.

Let us declare this before God and men in our services today, in our homes, and wherever opportunity presents itself. Let us show by our life and conduct that we believe this. Give God and His mercy all credit and glory. Cf. Gen. 32:10; Ps. 68:19; 115:1, etc.

"His compassions fail not"—as in the past so also in the future. What comfort in these perilous days! How thankful we should be for this assurance! How fervently we should pray that God might bestow mercy and compassion upon us, our country, our armed forces, the young men and women who are serving our country, the nations of the world, that God might soon bring about a just and honorable peace! We may well pray confidently, for "His compassions fail not."

J. W. BEHNKEN

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## Outlines on Old Testament Texts (Synodical Conference)

### First Sunday in Advent

#### Psalm 24

We have here an admonition addressed to gates and doors. Gates stand for the city and its inhabitants, and the exhortation is addressed to Jerusalem and the whole nation of Israel. From eternity God had chosen Israel to be His own people, Is. 43:21. This admonition has not lost its force today, though Israel has been rejected. The New Testament Church of God is the Church of Jesus Christ, composed of Jews and Gentiles, Eph. 1:3-6; 2:19-22; Heb. 12:22. It is this city, the Church of God, that is exhorted,

#### Welcome Your Coming King of Glory!

We ask with the Psalmist,

1. *Who is this King of Glory?*
2. *Who shall stand in His holy place?*

#### 1

V. 8 a. So asks the Psalmist and answers his own question in triumphant accents, vv. 8 b, 10 b. It is the Lord, the unchanging God, who has Himself defined this name, Ex. 3:14, 15; 34:6, 7. It is



the Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord of all the earth, vv. 1, 2. What a comfort to know that God still rules the world, that our King Jesus sits on His throne and rules the nations according to His will for the welfare of His Church, Ps. 2:6-8; Eph. 1:20-23.

It is the Lord, mighty in battle, He who had battled for Israel held captive in Egypt, Ex. 15:1-11; who protected them throughout their journey to the Promised Land; who in the darkest days of idolatry preserved His Church, 1 Kings 19:18. It is the Lord who fought the battle against Satan in Gethsemane, who still protects His Church against all the attacks of its enemies, Matt. 16:18; Ps. 2:1-5, 9, 10. Lift up your heads, ye children of Zion, rejoice in this mighty King who comes to you. He knows how to protect His Church and all its individual members in these troublous times.

It is the Lord of hosts, v. 10. To Him sang the morning stars, Job 38:7, in His honor the heavenly hosts chanted their joyous song, Luke 2:13, 14. Him the angels serve, Matt. 4:11; Rev. 5:11, 12. Who else has a king so glorious? — These angels He sends out to serve us, Matt. 18:10; Heb. 1:14. Who else has servants of such majesty sent by their and our King of Glory? Lift up your heads, O Christians! Away with sorrow and doubt and fear! Your King of Glory cometh in.

## 2

V. 3. Who shall be fit to receive Him, be accepted of Him and ascend with Him to His royal palace? The answer v. 4. The two external characteristics are placed at the beginning and end of the verse, surrounding, as it were, the two internal marks of God's people. Only he who has a pure heart is ready to receive the coming King. No man can purify his own heart, that vile thing, Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:19. God alone can and must do that, Ps. 51:7, 10. He, as the God of salvation, cleanses our heart by faith in the atoning blood of Christ, Acts 15:9; 1 John 1:7; 1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 9:14; 10:22. The Christian's soul, instead of relying on the vanity of self-righteousness, rejoices in the imputed righteousness of Christ. Is. 61:10.

The fruit of this change of heart and spirit becomes manifest in word and deed. The hands are kept clean, Ps. 26:6, doing only such works as are pleasing to God. The mouth is on its guard against deceit, particularly against using God's name in vain and deceitfully dealing with one's neighbor. Warn here against the sin of cursing, again becoming so common.

V. 5. Such a man relying on Christ for justification and striving after sanctification will receive a blessing from the Lord. This blessing comprises all material and spiritual gifts bestowed in so rich a manner upon His people by the King of Glory. He will give righteousness, will help, instruct, strengthen, preserve them



in holiness, so that they grow more and more unto a perfect man. Eph. 4:13; 2 Pet. 1:5-7. This alone is the generation of seekers after God, v. 6, the true Jacob, servants of God, worthy to stand in God's holy Church on earth and enter with Him into Jerusalem above.

Lift up your heads to meet the King of Glory coming to us! Let us seek His face as He reveals Himself in Word and Sacrament. Let this new church year be a year of diligent hearing, learning, meditating, obeying, doing His Word. Let us re-consecrate our body and soul to His service; trust His grace and power to protect and preserve His Church in these last days of sore distress; commend ourselves and loved ones at home and abroad to His loving care; submit in all things to His holy will, and help to spread His kingdom near and far.

TH. LAETSCH

## Second Sunday in Advent

Deut. 18:15-22

David, the man after God's own heart, was king of Israel and at the same time a prophet, foretelling the life and death and resurrection of his greater Son, Christ Jesus. Like David, his Son, the King, whose advent to His Church we celebrated last Sunday, is at the same time a great Prophet, the greatest of all, prophesied by God 1500 years before His coming into the world.

### God's Promise Concerning Our Divine Prophet

This promise speaks to us

1. *Of a marvelous gift*
2. *Of an unescapable obligation*

#### 1

This prophecy was given when the Law was being proclaimed from Mt. Sinai, vv. 16, 17. Every detail is fulfilled in Christ Jesus and His Gospel of grace and life.

#### A. His person:

1. He was raised from the midst of Israel, vv. 15, 18; the Seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the Son of David, Luke 1:27, 32, 69, etc. The man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 2; Phil. 2:6-8, as such able to have compassion with us, Heb. 2:16-18; 4:15.

2. Like Moses He was a Prophet, Matt. 14:5; Heb. 1:1, 2a; Mediator, 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24; the Deliverer of His people, Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:68-79; 2:11, 29-32.

3. He was greater than Moses, who directs his people from his own person to this greater Prophet, v. 15. Compare Heb. 3:1-6; 1:1-3. Christ performed more miracles than Moses, Deut. 36:10-12 compared with John 20:30, 31; 21:25. With Moses God spake mouth

to mouth, Num. 12:8; Deut. 36:10. Of Jesus we read John 1:18; 3:13. This Prophet is the Son of God Himself.

**B. His message.** — Moses' message was terrifying, v. 16. Ex. 19:16-18; 20:18-21; Deut. 5:25; Heb. 12:18-21. The message of Jesus is grace and truth and peace, John 1:16, 17; Matt. 11:28-30. This message is reliable, for it is God's Word, v. 18; John 3:11; 7:16; 8:26-28.

What a wonderful gift: A Prophet sent of God, the exact image of the Lord of Glory, proclaiming to us God's own plan of salvation which He Himself carried out.

## 2

Unto Him ye shall hearken! V. 15. Here are words of life, Is. 55:1 f., able to save to the uttermost, John 17:20-24; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:24, cleansing our conscience from dead works and enabling us to serve the living God, Heb. 9:14.

This is an unescapable obligation, v. 19. Heb. 2:1-4. Hear this Prophet, and ye shall live. Refuse, reject Him, and you are hopelessly lost. There is hope for a man who transgresses the word of Moses, for Christ came to proclaim salvation for just such men. There is no hope for anyone who will not hear this Prophet, Heb. 10:26-31.

Let us hear Him. Let us not be deceived by false prophets, Jer. 23:16-32; Luke 21:8. Let us hear Him particularly in these times of uncertainty and unrest. Thousands upon thousands run to soothsayers, etc., condemned by the Lord, vv. 21, 22; Deut. 18:9-14; Is. 8:19-22. Let us be satisfied with Jesus' Word. Let us not endeavor to lift the veil which God in His wisdom and love has placed over the future. Our Prophet assures us Luke 12:6, 7; 21:18, 19; Rom. 8:31-39. He teaches us to pray, Ps. 31:14, 15 a; confidently to exclaim, Job 13:15 a; Rom. 14:8. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift, our Prophet, Christ Jesus!

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