

Jesus, the Righteous King

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[0:00] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. So it wouldn't be Advent without John the Baptist, would it?

Now on that note, a friend of mine was recently planning meals for an Advent series at her church and asked people for some suggestions for appropriate food to serve.

She opted not to go with my suggestion, which of course was locusts and wild honey. What could be more appropriate than that? So I was thinking maybe we could implement that during coffee hour here for the remainder of Advent.

I don't want that idea to go to waste. What do you guys think? I just got something yesterday, for today. Enough to share? Okay, enough to share. We're good.

So John the Baptist jumps out to us, not only for his peculiarities, for his prophetic boldness, his uncompromising zeal for the glory of God, and most importantly, for the fact that he was about one thing, and that is pointing people to salvation in Jesus.

[1:32] Now I once heard someone suggest that John the Baptist is the main figure of Advent. Now I think that John the Baptist, were he to hear such a suggestion, would probably be appalled, judging from what we know of him.

His whole ministry was all about pointing beyond himself to the one who was to come, Jesus. And everything that the church does and observes is and should be centered in Christ.

So while I'm actually not going to preach about John the Baptist this morning, I am going to preach about Jesus. So I think John would approve. A prophet like John the Baptist, Isaiah spent a lot of time talking about the one who would come after him.

Even if he was looking to the more distant future, he spent a lot of time talking about Jesus. We see that in our passage for this morning from Isaiah, don't we?

What does it tell us about Christ? Well, let's look and let's find out. In Isaiah 11, we'll start at verse 1. Now we get a hint, knowing what we know about Jesus, who Isaiah is talking about in the first verse, don't we?

[2:50] First verse, which reads, There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. Now who can tell me, who was Jesse?

King David's father. Yes. So we see, right off the bat, this prophecy is about someone from the house of David.

Now why is that important? Well, think about this for a second in connection with what God promised David. With God's covenant with David, which we see in 2 Samuel 7, where the Lord says, Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.

Your throne shall be established forever. Now we know, of course, that King David himself died.

The throne went to his son Solomon, whose reign there toward the end didn't go so well.

And then things generally went downhill from there. But we know that God's covenant with David must be true, must somehow then refer to a future son of David, a future king of David's house.

[4:20] We see that same reality, don't we, in our passage from Isaiah for this morning? And he guesses who this king, the son of David, might be. Looking for the typical Sunday school answer here.

Jesus. Thank you, Pat. Jesus, the son of David, king of kings and lord of lords, he is the one Isaiah is talking about.

The one who will reign, who will sit on the throne forever and ever. He is the fulfillment of the promise, both that David saw and that Isaiah saw, from afar.

His throne shall be established forever. This righteous king, whose kingdom will be glorious, whose kingdom will have no end.

So since we've identified who we're talking about, let's look and see what the remainder of our passage has to say about him. Verse 2, 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.

[5:31] The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. Now, could this be truer of anyone than it is of Jesus? Jesus, on whom the spirit descended like a dove at his baptism.

Jesus, of whom the Father said, This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. It's Jesus, the eternal Son of God and the Son of David.

What will his reign as king look like? How will it be different from the reigns of other kings? Well, other kings might have some measure of wisdom and understanding, if they're good kings. Other kings might have some measure of counsel and might. Other kings might have some knowledge and some fear of the Lord. But this king, the Lord Jesus, here, we are talking about perfect wisdom and understanding, perfect counsel and might, perfect knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

Now, last I checked, we've never had a chance to vote for anyone like that, have we? The amazing thing is that we don't have to vote Jesus into office or wonder if he's going to win the election.

[6:55] His everlasting, glorious, perfect reign is already guaranteed. So the call goes out simply, doesn't it?

To submit to his reign and submit to his lordship, which is already established and is guaranteed forever. The Spirit, the Lord, shall rest upon him perfectly.

And what does that look like in practice? Well, in verse 3, we see, His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide disputes by what his ears hear.

Unlike other kings, other rulers, other leaders, this king perfectly delights in the will of his Father. What else? Other kings can only judge by what their eyes see and decide disputes by what their ears hear.

They are limited. They are not capable of perfect justice. So why? How is he different? Because he is our Lord and our God.

[7:57] And the Lord sees not as man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. So he will judge differently.

He will decide disputes differently. In what way? Well, we see that in verse 4. But with righteousness, he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips, he shall kill the wicked. Now this is not a king who favors the high and mighty, who cares about prestige, who cares about associating with the lofty.

No, here is a king who favors the poor and the meek, who will hear those who know their poverty and cry out to him. Those who are meek because they know who their king is and who they are. The king who is willing and able to lift them up and even forgive their sins when they call to him. That is a different kind of king.

[9:08] And he will take on wickedness not only with the sword as earthly kings do, but with the perfect, unfailing power of his mighty word and his victory will be total.

The forces of this world that oppose his righteous rule, the devil, the spiritual forces of evil, are fighting a losing battle because this king's might and the might of his word are stronger than them. He will destroy wickedness itself. It is a done deal. Sin, death, and the devil are done for. How do we know? Because he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages is to put away sin forever by the sacrifice of himself.

He has put away the sins of all who trust in him through the perfect offering of his precious blood. He, the eternal son of God, humbled himself, taking on flesh and blood that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death.

That is the devil. Deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. So death, not with the reign of this king.

[10:30] It is destroyed through his death and his resurrection. We don't have to be afraid of that anymore. What about the devil? Our king, Christ Jesus, has crushed his head.

Sin, death, suffering. They're defeated. Their defeat is certain, but they are so much a part of this age that we can't imagine what life without those things would be like.

But one day, because of Jesus, because of his coming kingdom, his righteous reign, we won't have to imagine anymore. We look at the world around us and in our own lives.

We see the persecution of believers. We see terrorist attacks. We see political upheavals. We see suffering. We see sadness. We see tears. We see death. We see loss.

All of these things that occupy news headlines and afflict us, one day, these will be gone forever. All of them. Because the victory belongs to our king, Jesus, and will belong to him forever.

[11:41] So his reign will be characterized by perfect righteousness. As we see in verse 5.

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

This king is perfectly righteous, and his righteousness is our hope. As Isaiah will go on to say of Jesus later in Isaiah 53, Jesus, the righteous one, has justified many, has washed away our sins by bearing our sins and giving us his perfect righteousness.

And the king is perfectly faithful. The king, Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He'll never say one thing and do another.

His perfect love is unfailing. He will never forsake those who trust in him. So unlike an earthly king, we can always trust him, brothers and sisters.

His reign will also be characterized by perfect peace, by the absolute overturning of the effects of the fall and sin's entry into the world.

[12:58] Now the next few verses make this point by suggesting that even predators will cease to cause harm or danger. Now, this is mind-blowing to me because every time my greyhound sees squirrels on a walk, she almost rips my shoulder out of socket.

But it says, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

So, if any of you give me grief for being a vegetarian, I will have the last laugh, just so you know.

But in all seriousness, how is that for amazing?

So, verse 9, they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain. And why not? For the waters shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

[14:27] Let that sink in for a second. Can you imagine what that will be like? A world where everyone knows the Lord? A world where everyone loves him and submits to him and obeys him.

We are promised, brothers and sisters, that the gospel will prevail, that Jesus will reign so that the whole earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, filled with righteousness, and filled with the truth.

Brothers and sisters, there is coming a day when the light of the glory of God will fill the whole world. will drive out the darkness forever.

And that day will come when Jesus comes again to take his rightful place as rightful king on his rightful throne, and it will never end.

So, verse 10, in that day, the root of Jesse, which will stand as a signal for the peoples, of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

[15:44] See that the reign of the root of Jesse, of the Lord Jesus Christ, will draw in the nations, so that his renown will draw in the whole world.

Because his name has become and will be the hope of the nations. Isn't that what we see in Revelation 21, when we see the new earth and the new Jerusalem, with the light of the glory of God illuminating everything?

Where we read, by its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day, and there will be no night there.

They will bring into it the glory and honor of the nations, and his resting place, his dwelling place, shall indeed be glorious because he will reign in righteousness, in victory, and in glory forever and ever, and the amazing thing is that he will dwell with us, with his people, the one who loved us, the one who gave himself for us, the one who purchased us with his blood, the one who stands in heaven as our mediator, is coming again to reign forever as our king.

As we talked about last week, Advent is about preparation, preparing to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and preparing to meet him when he comes again in glory to judge the living and the dead and to establish his kingdom forever.

[17:30] So let me ask, are you preparing your heart, am I preparing my heart, to live under the perfect reign of our perfect king, preparing to live in a perfect kingdom forever?

Are we seeking a deeper, closer relationship with the one who will reign and will dwell with us forever as our king? that is the reminder that Advent gives us and the questions that Advent poses. It reminds us to hope because a Savior has come. He was born, born to live and die and rise again to put away our sins forever. And Advent calls us to repentance and a deeper faith in Christ and gratitude for the great salvation.

That is ours as we remember that he is coming back for us to claim us as his own prized possession, to dwell with us forever and to reign forever as our king.

As our psalm appointed for this morning says, may his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun. May people be blessed in him.

[18 : 51] All nations call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.