

Lent Vespers 4
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Concordia Lutheran Mission
Terrebonne, Oregon

“Christ Came to Give Peace with God through the Cross and Save Men through the Gospel.”

Then said I, Lo, I come; in the Volume of the Book *it is* written of Me...¹

Psalm 40:7

Introduction

Here Christ Himself speaks of His First Advent, i.e. His Incarnation and His continuance in the Preaching Office He Himself carries out through His Word and Sacraments, whether Old Testament or New².

Christ says, “I have come”, i.e. He has come into the world by being born of a woman, born of the Virgin St. Mary, in order to be born under the law to redeem all men from the obligations of the law, which obligations of the law they had failed to keep and, consequently, perished..

Christ says His Advent is to be expected by men because He was written about in the Book, i.e. the Bible. Moses records in Genesis Jacob teaching his sons and the entire world to

¹The text is from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 132.

²“Also circumcision and the Passover were, ever since their institution, means of grace for the period of the Old Testament. ... On this account Luther says: ‘It is not true that the Sacraments of the New Testament differ from the Sacraments of the Old Testament as to their signification’ [namely, as God-appointed signs of the *grace* of God] ‘Both our and the fathers’ signs or Sacraments have a word of promise attached which calls for faith and can be fulfilled by no other work. Therefore they are signs or Sacraments of justification.’ ... Both through the Word about the coming Messiah and through circumcision and the Passover, the Sacraments of the Old Testament, the remission of sins was given and, by the believers, appropriated.” The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, pp. 214, 215.

expect the coming of the Messiah, namely, Shiloh, the man who gives peace with God through the forgiveness of sins of the Cross and, thereby, saves.³

Because all of this is written of in the Bible, Scripture speaks of Christ and His Work to save men from their sins. Consequently, we see again, wherever we have Christ's Cross, there also Christ always is preaching the Cross, i.e. His Work to save men from their sins. Through this Blessed Preaching Christ makes the Precious Fruits of His Labors for us ours by faith.⁴

Christ came to give peace to men with God through the Cross and to Save men through the Preaching of the Cross, i.e. the Gospel.

I. Christ Came to Give Men Peace with God through the Cross.

A. Man incurred God's wrath from the beginning through sin and perishes in flight from the wrath of God.

Because sin entered the world through Adam, men have not enjoyed peace with God since the fall of Adam. Consequently, men have sought flight from God. We see the flight of all of us from God in Adam, the father of us all, after he fell into sin. Moses writes:

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.⁵

Here, in Adam's flight from God and His Voice (Word), we see the bias of men against going to Church: *Church is too close to God because in Church God's Voice is heard in His Word and Sacraments; and men, according to their fallen human nature in Adam, are in flight from God.* Luther writes of this flight from God because of sin:

³“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*.” **Genesis 49:10**, underscore added.

⁴“As soon as a person believes in the remission of his sins, he comes, by means of this faith, into personal possession of the remission of sins; in other words, he is justified before God ... The sinner is not called upon to earn the remission of sin, or justification, but God has already forgiven him his sins on account of the life and suffering of Christ and has promulgated this blessed truth in the Gospel in order that men should accept it.” The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 403.

⁵**Genesis 3:8.**

After Adam has become terrified through the awareness of sins, he avoids the sight of God and realizes that not only Paradise but the entire world is too narrow to be a safe hiding place. And now, in that mental agony, he reveals his stupidity by seeking relief from sin through flight from God. But he had already fled too far from God. Sin itself is the real withdrawal from God, and it would not have been necessary to add any further flight. Thus it happens – and this is the nature of sin – that the farther man withdraws from God, the farther he still desires to withdraw; and he who has once fled and apostatized keeps on fleeing forever. And so some also maintain concerning the punishments of hell that this will be the most terrible thing: that the ungodly will desire to flee and yet will realize that they cannot escape. ... So it was with Adam here; although he was caught, nevertheless he does not stop fleeing.⁶

Because Adam cannot survive fleeing the Source of Life, namely, God, he ends up perishing forever⁷, and we, his children, along with him. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned....⁸

Because Adam and all his descendants, including us, incurred God's wrath by his sin, men cannot find peace with God and perish.

⁶*Luther's Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 172, 173.

⁷“It is the death of the soul, or ‘spiritual death,’ i.e., the disruption of the communion of the soul with God. Only by the communion with God, for which it was created, does the soul live – by cleaving to, believing, trusting, and loving God. But sin breaks this communion abruptly. The evil conscience cannot but flee from God. Sin separates the soul from God. By the sin which Adam had committed he was separated from God inwardly, in his soul, to such an extent that he also fled from God outwardly when he heard the voice of the Lord in the Garden. And, as Luther remarks, when Adam fled from God, ‘he was in the midst of hell’ He was brought back from death and hell into spiritual life only by hearing and believing the Gospel of the Seed of the woman, only by having his good conscience restored. In his exposition of the words that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15), Luther says: ‘This text it was that restored Adam and Eve to life and raised them again from death to the life which they had lost by their sin’.... ‘This text is the absolution acquitting him and us all. For if this Seed is so strong that He crushes the head of the serpent, He also crushes all its power; so, then, the devil is conquered, and all damage which Adam suffered is repaired. Adam enters again the estate in which he was before.’” The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 535.

⁸**Romans 5:12.**

B. Christ brings peace with God through the Atonement for the sins of men on the Cross.

How can God ever deal with man when man flees from him like a magnet fleeing a like magnet, like an electron fleeing a like charge, like oil fleeing water? *God comes in a different way, a way that aids fallen man in flight from Him.* Jesus says in today's psalm:

Then said I, Lo, I come; in the Volume of the Book *it is* written of Me....⁹

Christ says, "I come". This expression of Christ's reminds us of the season of Advent. Advent means "to come to", and derives the Latin word *venire*, which means, "to come"¹⁰. Specifically, the Season of Advent in the Church Year refers to the Promise of Christ to come and become man, born of the Virgin St. Mary, to bring peace with God to sinful men by His Work on the Cross.¹¹ The great Patriarch Jacob told his sons and the entire world that the Messiah would come to bring peace with God. Moses writes:

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people be.¹²

The Hebrew word used here for "come" stems from the Hebrew word *bo*, which means "he has come". Advent means "coming". And we translate this Hebrew word into English with "come".¹³ Hence, here in the First Book of Moses, we have one of the earliest uses of the term

⁹The text is from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 132.

¹⁰"**advent**, *n.* [L. *adventus*, pp. of *advenire*; ad, to, and *venire*, to come.] 1. [a-] a coming; approach; visitation. 2. specifically, the coming of Christ." *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, p. 28, s.v. "**advent**".

¹¹"**Then said I, Lo, I come**, a solemn announcement of the Messiah's coming into the world, Mal. 3, 1; **in the Volume of the Book**, in the roll of parchment which is Holy Writ, the one wonderful book of all times, John 5, 37, **it is written of Me ...** ." The Rev. Dr. P. E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible, The Old Testament, Volume II, The Poetical and the Prophetical Books*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924, p. 100.

¹²**Genesis 49:10.**

¹³The Latin Bible, *The Vulgate*, which dates from the fourth century, translates **Genesis 49:10** with "veniat"(subjunctive mood), which means "he come"(subjunctive mood). *Veniat* has the same root word as "advent", namely, to come, *venire*. *The Vulgate* was the translation of the original texts of the Bible into Latin by St. Jerome. "Among Jerome's works, besides the Bible translation noted above, now known as the Vulgate ('the common,' since it was intended for the use of all men) Jerome. One of the Fathers of the Church; b. 331 at Stridon, on the frontiers

advent to express Christ's coming¹⁴, of His Incarnation and His birth in Bethlehem, indicating, once again, that the central theme of Scripture and human history is the Advent of the Messiah.¹⁵ Because of passages like these in the Bible and others, Jesus says today in **Psalm 40**:

Then said I, Lo, I come: in the Volume of the Book it is written of Me.¹⁶

We may translate this a little more simply and say, "I have come".¹⁷ This Coming or Advent refers to Christ's Incarnation, i.e. His conception in the womb of the Virgin St. Mary. After all, because Christ is God, He is everywhere all the time. So when He says "I have come", He refers to His Incarnation, His Coming in the Flesh. For this reason the prophet Malachi writes of Christ coming to His Temple:

Behold, I will send my messenger¹⁸, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant¹⁹, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.²⁰

of Dacia; d. near Bethlehem, in 420 ; of Christian parentage" *Concordia Cyclopedia*, p. 373, s.v. "**Jerome**".

¹⁴"The name 'Messiah' ... is attributed to Him also in many passages of the Chaldaic [Aramaic] paraphrase. Gen. 49:10: 'Until the Messiah comes.'" The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard, *Theological Commonplaces ... On the Person and Office of Christ*. tr. Richard J. Dinda, ed. & annotated by Benjamin T. G. Mayes, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, p. 13, amplification added.

¹⁵"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." **St. John 5:39**.

¹⁶**Psalm 40:7**, text is from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 132.

¹⁷The Hebrew perfect tense is used here. "In Hebrew thinking, *an action* is regarded as being either *completed or incompletd*. Hebrew, therefore, knows of no past, present, or future tenses, but has instead a *Perfect* and an *Imperfect* (which, in a context, lend themselves to a variety of shades in meaning). For the time being, however, the Hebrew Perfect may be taken to represent action in the past ('he kept', 'he hath kept')." *A Practical Grammr for Classical Hebrew*, J. Weingreen, Oxford: Clarendon Press, New York: Oxford University Press, second edition, 1959, p.56.

¹⁸St. John the Baptist.

¹⁹The Angel of the Lord, namely, Christ. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

Christ already dwelled in the Temple because Christ is God and present everywhere. Hence, here the prophet refers to Christ's Incarnation, confirmed by the fact that he also writes of St. John the Baptist, Christ's messenger who preceded him to "prepare the way before" Him²¹.

Christ became man in order give Peace with God by atoning for the sins of men. For this reason Christ is given the name Shiloh. But what does Shiloh mean? Shiloh comes from the Hebrew word *shalah*, which means to be at peace.²² The name emerging from that word is "the Man of Peace." Hence, Shiloh refers to Christ²³ because He brings peace from God to men.²⁴

And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." **I Corinthians 10:1-4.**

"Jesus appears as God on the pages of the Old Testament. He reveals Himself under such titles as 'the Angel of the Lord,' 'Jehovah,' 'Lord,' etc. Whenever in the Old Testament the name 'Lord' occurs, it is pre-eminently not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but the Son of God. Ex. 13:21 Moses writes of the Israelites in the wilderness: 'And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light.' Who is this 'Lord'? Ch. 14:19 He is called 'the Angel of God,' which is a well-known appellation of Jesus in the Old Testament. Here the Angel of God is directly termed 'Lord.' All doubt is removed by Paul (I Cor. 10:3-4): 'Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.' ... Which person of the Godhead summoned Moses to the summit of Mount Sinai and gave him the two tables of the Law? Again it was the Son of God. The evidence is presented in the Ascension Psalm 68; vv. 7-8, and 17-18. And all doubt is excluded by Heb. 12:18-26, especially v. 24. ... Luther writes: 'The God who led Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea; who went before them in a pillar of a cloud and of fire; who nourished them with bread from heaven and did all the miracles which Moses relates in his books; again, who brought them into the land of Canaan and gave them kings and the priesthood and everything, is this God and none other than Jesus of Nazareth, Mary's, the Virgin's, Son, whom we Christians call our God and Lord Again, He it is who on Mountain Sinai gives Moses the Ten Commandments ... Yes, Jesus of Nazareth, who died for us on the cross is the God who says in the First Commandment: "I, the Lord, am thy God."' So then, the same God on Sinai and Calvary. What comfort for the believers! Now the flames of Sinai can no longer fill us with terror. Indeed, we daily transgress the holy Law of Sinai, but we break through its condemnation and flee to the Redeemer on Calvary, who Himself fulfilled the Law for us and paid its penalty." The Rev. Louis E. Roehm, *The Abiding Word*, Vol. 1, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946, pp. 20, 21

²⁰**Malachi 3:1.**

²¹As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." **St. Mark 1:2.**

²²"Luther evidently derives *shiloh* from the root *shalah*, meaning to be secure and at ease or rest, which in turn is related to the Hebrew greeting *shalom*, which corresponds to the Latin

But how does Christ establish Peace with God? Christ establishes peace with God by atoning for the sins of the world on the Cross. There is an old saying that goes, No justice; no peace. God was not at peace with the world because of the injustice of sin done to Him by men. But God reconciled Himself to the world by sending His Only-Begotten Son into the world in

greeting *salve*, both meaning your health, peace, welfare, and prosperity.” *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 45, p. 216, footnote 33.

Even the liberal interpreters C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch concur with Luther based on Hebrew usage: “It only remains therefore to follow *Luther*, and trace [Shiloh] from [shalah], to be quiet, to enjoy rest, security.” *Commentary on the Old Testament, C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Volume 1, The Pentateuch, Three Volumes in One, ... Genesis, Exodus 1-11*, tr. James Martin, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing, First Printing, February 1989, p. 394.

²³The common understanding down through history is that Shiloh is Messiah : “We regard *Shiloh*, therefore, as a title of the Messiah, in common with the entire Jewish synagogue and the whole Christian Church, in which ... there is perfect agreement as to the fact that the patriarch is here proclaiming the coming of the Messiah.” Keil-Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 397.

The Rev. Dr. Alfred Edersheim gives an overview of the Jewish interpreters understanding that Shiloh refers to the Messiah: “*Gen. xlix. 10*. This well-known prediction ... is in *Yalkut*, u. s., applied to the Messiah, with a quotation of *Ps. ii. 9*. The expression ‘Shiloh’ is also applied to the Messiah, with the curious addition, that in the latter days all nations would bring gifts to Him. Alike the Targum Onkelos, Psuedo-Jonathan, and the Jersusalem Targum, as well as *Sanh. 98 b*, the Midrash on the passage, and that on the passage, and that on *Prov. xix. 21*, and on *Lam. i. 16*, where it is rendered *shelo*, ‘whose it is,’ refer the expression “Shiloh,’ and, indeed, the whole passage, to the Messiah Another remarkable statement occurs in the Midrash on the passage , which applies the verse to the coming of Him of Whom it is written, *Zech. ix. 9*. Then He would wash his garment in wine (*Gen. xlix. 11*), which is explained as meaning the teaching of the Law to Israel, and His clothes in the blood of grapes, which is explained as meaning that He would bring them back from their errors. One of the Rabbis, however, remarks that Israel would not require to be taught by the King Messiah in the latter days, since it was written (*Is. xi. 10*), ‘to it shall the Gentiles seek.’ If so, then why should the Messiah come, and what will He do to the congregation of Israel? He will redeem Israel, and give them thirty commandments, according to *Zech. xi. 12*. The Targum Psuedo-Jon. and the Jer. Targum also apply *verse 11* to the Messiah. Indeed, so general was this interpretation, that, according to popular opinion, to see a palm-tree in one’s dreams was to see the days of the Messiah” *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Volume Two, New American Edition, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962, 39th printing, pp. 712, 713.

²⁴“Out of Judah should come the Ruler, the Bringer of Peace, Shiloh, unto Him should the gathering of the people be. *Gen. 49, 10*.” The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Christ in Old Testament Prophecy*, tr. Erwin W. Koehlinger, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, p. 5.

order to atone for the sins of men²⁵. At the birth of Christ the angels sang in the *Gloria in Excelsis*²⁶:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.²⁷

Now, through this Peace of God in Christ, God can approach sinful and fallen men. We have an example of this in the Christmas story from which we just read with this verse. When the angel arrived, his heavenly holiness struck fear and dread into the shepherds that night. The Evangelist St. Luke writes:

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.²⁸

Now, we see here, God's glory and holiness no longer drives away sinful men, but allows God to approach men and heal and deliver them from their sin with the remission of sins won for them by the Babe in the Manger in Bethlehem.

God comes to men in human flesh in order to dwell with them graciously by Atoning for their sin on the Cross. In this way, men no longer flee God in fear and dread because of their sins, but rather are drawn wonderfully to Him. The Apostle St. John writes of the Attractive Power of the Gospel to sinful men:

Jesus answered and said, ... Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.²⁹

²⁵“To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” **II Corinthians 5:20.**

²⁶*The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 17.

²⁷**St. Luke 2:14.**

²⁸**St. Luke 2:8-11.**

²⁹**St. John 12:30, 31-33.**

Christ is called Shiloh because He brings peace with God and with our neighbor through the atonement of sins of all men³⁰ on the Cross. When Christ comes to men, He comes to men as Shiloh, the Man who Brings Peace, the Prince of Peace³¹, because now God can approach sinful men, dwell with sinful men, and save sinful men through the Peace of the Gospel.

II. Christ has Come to Stay in order to Preach the Gospel through His Word and Sacraments to Save and Give Life Eternal.

A. Christ has come to stay in His Word and Sacraments, the Gospel of salvation.

Did, however, Christ come in the flesh in order to depart in the flesh? Certainly not. Once Christ has come in the flesh, He never departs.³² Christ says in our verse for today from **Psalm 40**:

Then said I, Lo, I come; in the Volume of the Book *it is* written of Me³³

“... in the Volume of the Book *it is* written of Me” In other words, in the Bible Christ is written about. Jesus says:

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.³⁴

In other words, Christ dwells with men in His Word and Sacraments, i.e. the Gospel, in order to save and give life eternal. For this reason the Apostle St. John writes:

³⁰Of this peace wrought between men by Christ the prophet Isaiah writes: “and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” **Isaiah 2:4.**

³¹“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” **Isaiah 9:6.**

“... and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* to the ends of the earth.” **Zechariah 9:10.**

³²“... and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” **St. Matthew 28:20.**

³³The text is from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 132.

³⁴**St. John 5:39.**

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ [is come to stay³⁵] in the flesh is of God³⁶

But where does Jesus stay? Jesus stays in His Word and Sacraments, i.e. the Gospel³⁷, in order to dwell with us and bless us. Jesus says:

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.³⁸

Again, Jesus says He dwells with us in the flesh in His Word and Sacraments:

³⁵The translation of the Greek in brackets is mine. St. John the Apostle uses here the Greek perfect tense. The perfect indicates an action that occurs with continuing results. “The Greek perfect tense denotes the present state resultant upon a past action. Examples: (1) Suppose someone asks an official, ‘What is your relation to that prisoner?’, and he replies, ‘I have released him,’ the verb in this answer of the official would be [léluka – I have released]. The perfect would express the present state of the official (with reference to the prisoner) resultant upon his past action of releasing. ... The perfect passive is often much easier to translate into English than the perfect active. Thus [gegraptai] means *it is written* (in the Scriptures). Here the English *it is written* is not present tense at all, but reproduces the Greek perfect very well; the meaning is *it stands written*. Both English and Greek here refer to a present state resultant upon an act of writing which took place long ago.” (The Rev. Dr. J. Gresham Machen, *New Testament Greek for Beginners*, pp. 187, 188) Hence, when St. John the Apostle writes, “Jesus Christ is come [perfect tense] in the flesh,” he is saying, “Jesus Christ is come in the flesh and remains” or we might say, “Jesus Christ come in the flesh to stay.”

³⁶**I John 4:1-2**, translation from the Greek in brackets is mine.

³⁷God’s Word and Sacraments are the Gospel. “But let us speak of the word *liturgy*. This word does not properly signify a sacrifice, but rather the public ministry, and agrees aptly with our belief, namely, that one minister who consecrates tenders the body and blood of the Lord to the rest of the people, just as one minister who preaches tenders the Gospel to the people, as Paul says, I Cor. 4, 1: *Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, i.e. of the Gospel and the Sacraments.* And 2 Cor. 5, 20: *We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in God’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.* Thus the term *leitourgia* agrees aptly with the ministry.” *The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV. (XII.): Of the Mass, Of the Term Mass.* 80, 81, Triglotta, p. 411.

³⁸**St. Matthew 18:20**, underscore added.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.³⁹

Luther writes of Christ dwelling with His Church in His Word and Sacraments:

Christ came into the flesh to be with us in Baptism and at the Holy Supper. Every spirit who is at pains to teach that Christ does everything through the sacraments is of God, is glad to hear about Christ, and gives thanks. For he understands that Christ is his and that He came in the flesh. Therefore this has been stated emphatically: Behold, this is the test of a spirit, whether he is of God or of the devil.⁴⁰

Jesus dwells with us in His Word and Sacraments in order to bless us with the remission of sins and save us. The Apostle St. Peter writes:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.⁴¹

The Apostle St. Paul writes of Christ dwelling with us in the Blessed Waters of Holy Baptism:

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.⁴²

The Apostle St. Peter writes that Christ saves through the Blessed Waters of Holy Baptism:

The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ⁴³

The Apostle St. Paul writes that the Gospel saves and gives life eternal:

³⁹**St. Matthew 28:20**, underscore added.

⁴⁰*Luther's Works*, Vol. 30, p. 286, emphasis added.

⁴¹**Acts 2:38**, underscore added.

⁴²**Galatians 3:26-27**, underscore added.

⁴³**I Peter 3:21**, underscore added.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.⁴⁴

Christ stays with us in the Word and the Sacraments in order to gather His Church through the Saving Gospel. Hence, Jesus says in **Psalm 40** that it is He who preaches in the Church:

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.⁴⁵

The Great Congregation, of course, is Christ's Church down through the ages and across the globe gathered through Christ's preaching the Righteousness of the Gospel, namely, the remission of sins, which saves and gives life eternal.⁴⁶

So Jacob said Christ, who is Shiloh, the Man who Gives Peace with God, would approach men in this way and, thereby, gather His Church:

⁴⁴**Romans 1:16-17.**

⁴⁵**Psalm 40:9-10.**

⁴⁶“That we may obtain this faith, *the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake.” *The Augsburg Confession, Article V: Of the Ministry.*1-3, *Triglotta*, p. 45, underscore added.*

“*Of the Use of the Sacraments* they teach that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them.” *The Augsburg Confession, Article XIII: Of the Use of the Sacraments.*1, 2, *Triglotta*, p. 49, underscore added.

“Although *the Church* properly is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless, since in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful to use Sacraments administered by evil men, according to the saying of Christ: *The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat*, etc. Matt. 23, 2. Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men.” *The Augsburg Confession, Article VIII: What the Church Is.*1-2, *Triglotta*, p. 47.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.⁴⁷

B. Christ Fashioned by His Passion His Blessed Dwelling in His Word and Sacraments to save and give life eternal.

As usual, we see intimately intertwined the Preaching of the Gospel with Christ's Passion. That should not surprise us because Christ Purchased and Fashioned this Blessed Dwelling with men to Save and Give Life Eternal by His Passion. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.⁴⁸

In other Words, Christ fashioned by His Passion the Blessed Waters of Holy Baptism so that He could sanctify and save us. *Notice again who is sanctifying the Church in Holy Baptism*⁴⁹: *It is Christ Himself.* Christ in the Blessed Waters of Holy Baptism still preaching to His Great Congregation, the Church.

Christ, therefore, says in **Psalm 40**:

Then said I, Lo, I come; in the Volume of the Book *it is* written of Me⁵⁰

Christ comes in the Book, i.e., God's Word and Sacraments, in order dwell with men in the Peace of the Cross to save and give life eternal.

Conclusion

⁴⁷**Genesis 49:10**, underscore added.

⁴⁸**Ephesians 5:25, 26-28**, underscore added.

⁴⁹Holy Baptism is God's Visible Gospel. "But just as the Word enters the ear in order to strike our hearts, so the rite itself strikes the eye, in order to move the heart. The effect of the Word and of the rite is the same, as it has been well said by Augustine that a Sacrament is a *visible word*, because the rite is received by the eyes, and is, as it were, a picture of the Word, signifying the same thing as the Word. Therefore the effect of both is the same." *The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XIII (VII): Of the Number and Use of the Sacraments.*5, Triglotta, p. 309.

⁵⁰The text is from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 132.

Christ comes to men in a way that does not drive them away and condemn them because of their sin, but in a way wherein He can come to them, dwell with them graciously, and bless them with salvation and life eternal.

This Blessed Dwelling of Christ takes place in His Word and Sacraments. Christ came in the flesh to die on the Cross so He could dwell with men in His Word and Sacraments to absolve sin, save, give life eternal, and the resurrection of the body.

Amen.