

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, WI
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E.
Schultz

The Second Sunday in Advent WELS
Series A. Isaiah 11:1-10 EHV
December 10, 2017



A shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. ³He will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, nor will he render decisions based on what his ears hear, ⁴but with righteousness he will judge the poor, and he will render fair decisions in favor of the humble of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness will be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his hips. ⁶The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear will graze. Their young ones will lie down together. The lion will eat straw like the cattle. ⁸The nursing child will play near a cobra's hole, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰It will happen in that day that the peoples will seek the Root of Jesse, who will be standing like a banner for the peoples, and his resting place will be glorious.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in Hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Black Friday started Thursday early evening and lasted through Sunday. Then came Cyber-Monday – buying everything on-line – even Northwestern Publishing House had free shipping for orders over \$35. Every day our mail box is filled with catalogs full of wonderful Christmas presents. You can order a germ and mold destroying air purifier! It promises to destroy 99.9% of airborne germs including bacteria, mold, viruses, pet dander, dust mite allergens and pollen without making a sound. No filter to replace or clean – it draws all that bad gunk into a ceramic heating changer that blasts them with 400°F heat. It doesn't make ozone either. For \$299.95 you can clean up a big room in about 4 hours. Or you can get an R2D2 Coffee Press for \$40 or a Hypnotic Jellyfish Aquarium – two jellyfish that go up and down and up and down and changing colors. It automatically turns off after 4 hours and costs \$90! Some pretty neat stuff! The danger is – batteries *not included* – some *impossible* assembly required. It only takes a moment for the puppy to think your new gift is a chew toy or for a grandchild to knock it off an end table and your wonderful present is *toast!* That's the way it is with earthly Christmas "things and stuff". This Advent Time we are reminded from the Scriptures again and again that all that really matters is the ultimate Christmas gift – *the Christ-child*. All that really matters is the fact Jesus is coming again – perhaps very soon – to take us to forever glory and peace in Heaven! Today the Scroll of the Prophet Isaiah reminds us:

The Messiah Brings Incredible Peace!

1. He will crush the wicked

2. He will keep us forever safe

It is tempting to think that this whole *terrorism* thing is something new. It isn't! People back in Old Testament times – some 650 years before baby Jesus was born – understood terrorism. Political and military despots – Kings with absolute power – who were utterly ruthless – in an effort to literally terrorize their neighbors! Wise King Solomon wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit – *you know these words, "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless!*

...there is nothing new under the sun." Ecclesiastes 1:2 & 9b The Assyrians were terrorists. They would use giant fish hooks – to terrorize people they conquered. After a terrible civil war – Israel had been literally torn in two. The Northern Kingdom – Samaria – was ruled by people like Wicked King Ahab and the even more wicked if that were possible – Queen Jezebel! The Assyrians would come and drag off the Ten Northern Tribes into oblivion – scattered and lost for good! The people in the Southern Kingdom of Judah were also falling away. And yet the LORD was exceedingly patient with them. And so – by grace alone Isaiah wrote to the people in the south, **"O my people who live in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians!"** As frightening as it seemed – if you watched the news – or read the papers Isaiah wrote the Gospel promises of God: **"The Lord – that is the King – the Master – the LORD Almighty – that is the Great I AM – the Savior God – and the Almighty – the Creator and Forever Judge – will lop off the boughs of that great power. The lofty trees will be felled, the tall ones will be brought low."** V.33 Again and again God's Word reminds us: God brings down the proud, the arrogant, the puffed up, the self-important. Again and again the LORD lifts up the humble, the gentle, the lowly! The LORD will knock down the giant Sequoia – and lift up the little branch growing from the stump!

A shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit. Again if the first person you met in Heaven was a prophet named Malachi – would you know what to say to him? If when you go home this Sunday – after Church – you could read all four chapters – all 54 verses – in a very short time. 400 years before baby Jesus was born – there was a problem with thank-offerings. It was all about attitude – about the ♥. Malachi was inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell the people – if they didn't want to bring **thank – offerings** it would be better if they didn't! The LORD wasn't interested in their left-overs. In fact the LORD is never in Heaven wishing people would please, please, *please* bring him gifts. Remember Psalm 50? **It is not because of your sacrifices that I rebuke you or because of your burnt offerings that are always in front of**

me. I do not need to take a bull from your barn or goats from your pens, because every animal in the forest is mine, the cattle of a thousand mountains. I know every bird in the mountains, and everything that moves in the field is with me. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, because the world is mine, and all that fills it. Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or do I drink the blood of goats. Sacrifice a thank offering to God, and fulfill your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of distress. I will deliver you, and you will honor me.

Malachi preached a stinging law. Malachi wrote, "Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them... See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will set the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their father; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse." That was that! **I will come and strike the land with a curse!** And for the next 400 years – almost as long as all the way back to the Lutheran Reformation – no new Scripture from the LORD. Then came **Elijah – John the Baptist** – calling out in the wilderness, **"Repent! Repent! Repent!"** Prepare your ♥ to welcome the King! When the family line of King David looked like a stump – the Savior would be born!

²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. Jesus – the very Son of God – born of the virgin Mary was full of the Spirit of the LORD. Jesus was filled with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and the greatest respect for His Heavenly Father! Remember when the 12 year old Jesus was left behind in the Temple? The Scribes, the teachers of the Law – the Rabbis and the Priests marveled at the questions Jesus asked! So deep and thorough was His understanding of His Father's Word and saving plan to rescue us from sin! Jesus would fulfill that plan flawlessly – the Lamb of God – who would take away sins of the World! The Lamb of God – that's

the theme for the Publishing House Lenten Series. The point of Advent is to get ready. February 14th – Wednesday the 14th – will be Ash Wednesday – *and* Valentine’s Day. There has got to be a paragraph – comparing Hallmark Cards and taking your sweet ♥ out to eat – maybe at the new Sprecher’s! No love story in this world – can begin to compare with Jesus’ forgiving love for you. The Christ child was born to die – to redeem me and to buy you back from all your sins!

⁶The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear will graze. Their young ones will lie down together. The lion will eat straw like the cattle. ⁸The nursing child will play near a cobra’s hole, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain...

Snakes! I don’t like snakes. When we lived on Pebble Creek Trail in Loves Park, IL there was a snake in our driveway. I approached Mr. Snake with a shovel with a 6’ handle. The snake gave me a whole bunch of attitude! He got up about 8” and hissssssed at me – his little forked tongue going in and out--in and out! The next moment was all law – no Gospel. Slap! End of discussion! A serpent has slithered out of eternal destruction. He struck Jesus in the heel. Jesus crushed the devil’s head. We are set free even from the fear of death for Jesus’ sake. We need to always be very careful – but never afraid – here or forever!

What to buy for Christmas for that person who has everything? How about the remote Control Abram’s Tank. You can operate it with remote control from 60 feet away. The turret rotates 270° and fires 6mm~diameter pellets up to 20 feet with all kinds of sound effects. It only costs \$280! Or how about a Bluetooth shower mirror radio? It has a fog-free shower mirror radio that plays music wirelessly – a smartphone or tablet – morning music – a mirror for shaving – check the news, weather and traffic while you shower. Only \$100! Or I like this one. A motorized fork for effortlessly twirling strands of spaghetti. 22 rpms – works with spaghetti,

linguini, fettuccine and vermicelli! Detachable prongs dishwasher safe. Requires two AAA batteries! Again – if Christmas were all about “things and stuff” more power to catalog mailers. By the grace of God we know that Christmas is about our Tiny King – the one who came to save shepherds, carpenters and Wisemen – people who were unclean from leprosy – tax collectors and sinners – Pharisees and crippled beggars. Our Tiny King – fulfilled promises His Heavenly Father made some 650 years before he was born. His promise to return could happen this morning. We pray with all the saints – **even so come quickly, Lord Jesus!** Amen!

To God alone all glory!

Rev. Anthony E. Schatz

