



The Sunday Next before Advent.

The Collect.

STIR up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For the **The Epistle.** Jeremiah xxiii. 5.

IN THOSE DAYS, saith the LORD, the days come, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

The Gospel. St. John vi. 5.

AT THAT TIME Jesus lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the

miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

Epistle

The Prophet Jeremiah was writing during the 7th Century BC – a time of corrupt and irreligious kings that led to God's displeasure and the Babylonian Exile and the destruction of Solomon's Temple. He foretells of a new king of the Stem – the house of David – back to their own Land. Christians have long seen this as a foreshadowing of the coming of Christ. We read it on the Sunday next before Advent – the season where we prepare for that very coming.

Questions

The Hebrews experience Exile on a number of occasions. They interpreted this, in their scriptures, as the result of apostasy. Their return to their land was at the hands of saviours – Moses, Cyrus, Churchill/Truman/deGaulle? They missed the point, of course. And they ignored the only true Saviour whose advent the prophets foretold. They never really got back to God – they simply served their sentence and returned – and then got up to apostasy as usual. Rinse. Wash. Repeat.

1. Have you felt exiled? Did you deserve it?
2. Did you return to the same place? How was it different? How were you different?

Gospel

Questions

1. Who were the intended students of the lesson?
2. What were the people hungry for?
3. What was the real miracle that happened?
4. What are you hungry for?



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