

Reading I

Baruch 5:1-9

Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery;
put on the splendor of glory from God forever:
wrapped in the cloak of justice from God,
bear on your head the mitre
that displays the glory of the eternal name.
For God will show all the earth your splendor:
you will be named by God forever
the peace of justice, the glory of God(s) worship.

Up, Jerusalem! stand upon the heights;
look to the east and see your children
gathered from the east and the west
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that they are remembered by God.
Led away on foot by their enemies they left you:
but God will bring them back to you
borne aloft in glory as on royal thrones.
For God has commanded
that every lofty mountain be made low,
and that the age-old depths and gorges
be filled to level ground,
that Israel may advance secure in the glory of God.
The forests and every fragrant kind of tree
have overshadowed Israel at God(s) command;
for God is leading Israel in joy
by the light of his glory,
with his mercy and justice for company.



Reading II

[Phil 1:4-6, 8-11](#)

Brothers and sisters:
I pray always with joy in my every prayer for all of you,
because of your partnership for the gospel
from the first day until now.
I am confident of this,
that the one who began a good work in you
will continue to complete it
until the day of Christ Jesus.
God is my witness,
how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.
And this is my prayer:
that your love may increase ever more and more
in knowledge and every kind of perception,
to discern what is of value,
so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,
filled with the fruit of righteousness
that comes through Jesus Christ
for the glory and praise of God.

Gospel

[Lk 3:1-6](#)

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar,
when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea,
and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee,
and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region
of Iturea and Trachonitis,
and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene,
during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas,
the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert.
John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan,
proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,
as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:
A voice of one crying out in the desert:
“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.
Every valley shall be filled
and every mountain and hill shall be made low.
The winding roads shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

*The Second Sunday of Advent***Scripture Background**

The announcement made in the Old Testament reading today is cause for celebration. Jerusalem is told to take off the garment of sorrow and put on forever the beauty of the glory of God. We are given a sense of relief and excitement. It is time to rejoice in God's promise of salvation.

In the Old Testament reading the people of Israel return to the holy city, Jerusalem, like royalty, robed in justice. Once in mourning and misery, Israel is now being led with joy in the light of the glory of God.

Cause for hope in the saving presence of God is also found in the gospel reading. In today's gospel we are introduced to a most fascinating character, John the Baptist. In the wilderness John receives the word of God. And with total conviction and single-hearted determination, the prophet proclaims a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

The gospel writer quotes Isaiah 40:3-5 when describing the role of John the Baptist in preparing the way for Christ's coming. This description of John the Baptist has us look forward to the coming of the Lord whom he announces.

The coming of Jesus is a saving event for all people. During the season of Advent we take to heart the message of John the Baptist—to make straight our path and prepare for the coming of the Lord.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

1. How can you make straight your path this Advent season?

2. What can you do to help lead others to Christ?

3. Who can you turn to for guidance?

"Through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation."

The prophet John the Baptist announces the promise of salvation. John the Baptist directs us to the object of our longing. He points the way to Jesus, our hope. The Church considers John the Baptist to be the prophet who shows the world its savior.

During the season of Advent we watch and wait. We hope in the promise of salvation. The message of salvation, impressed upon us by the prophets, makes us who we are this Advent -- a people preparing for the day, hoping in God's promise.

4. What can you do to prepare for the coming of Christ this Advent?

5. Who or what helps to point the way to Jesus for you?
