

Christmas Eve (Lessons & Carols)
Kaiserslautern Ev. Luth. Ch.
December 24, 2022

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dearly bought hearers by the blood of Jesus Christ,

This evening is all about one child. Every prophecy we've heard so far points to a promised son, a future descendant.

When man fell into sin at the beginning, God told Eve, the mother of all the living, that her offspring would crush the head of the serpent.

Hundreds of years later, the LORD commanded Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Abraham obeyed, but the LORD Himself provided the sacrifice. Abraham trusted God and so God promised that Abraham's offspring would be as many as the stars of the heaven and as the sand on the seashore. Many offspring, yet only one would possess the gate of his enemies and become a blessing to all the nations of the earth.

The prophet Isaiah says that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light and that God has multiplied the kingdom . . . for to us a child is born, to us a son is given who is called mighty God and who will sit on the throne of His father, King David, forever.

Isaiah also describes the Kingdom of peace this king will usher in: 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 fatted calf together; and a little child shall lead them. All our Old Testament prophecies tonight point to a promised Son, a future descendant. This evening is all about one child.

The lessons we will hear next are all about the fulfillment of those Old Testament prophecies, those ancient promises about a child.

The angel said to Mary: “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son . . . He will be called Son of the Most High . . . and He will sit on the throne of His father, David.” Mary gave birth to her firstborn Son and He was of the house and lineage of David. The angels gave the shepherds a sign: a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Later, on Epiphany, wise men from the east came to find the one born king of the Jews, and so they worshiped the child. This evening is all about that one child, the Christ child, who Himself is Lord of all, the one who became flesh and dwells among us, the one whom we worship now and always.

They called His name Jesus, as the angel said, for He would save His people from all their sins. And so the Christ child grew up that He might die a humble, even humiliating death on the cross. There He hung naked and vulnerable, just as He came into this world, crucified for the sins of the world. They laid Jesus in a dark, gloomy cave, wrapped in swaddling graveclothes, just like at His birth, until He rose from the dead three days later. Even today, Jesus comes to us in humility: wrapped in the swaddling clothes of the Holy Scriptures, the waters of Holy Baptism, the Absolution, and with His body and blood in the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper. In His birth and in His death, and even still today, our Lord comes to us in humility.

But Christmas is not just about the lowly birth of Jesus. The humble Christ child promised of old, that man hanging on the tree, the one who comes to us today in humility is also God the Lord, the creator of all things. The mystery of the incarnation, the miracle of Christ’s birth would take an eternity to unravel. In Jesus, God and man are united. The creator of all things has become a creature. The true Son of the living God has become the child of a woman. He is Immanuel, God with us!

Tonight and all time and eternity are about this one child. He was prophesied from ancient times and fulfilled those prophecies when the time had fully come. He is true man, born of the Virgin Mary, yet also true God, begotten of the Father from eternity. He is the God Man who was born for us, died for us, and rose from the dead that we, too, might rise from the dead and live and reign with Him to all eternity.

This evening is all about that one child, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus,
Amen.