

611 Chief of Sinners Though I Be

- 1 Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine.
- 2 Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me—wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not.
- 3 Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod.
- 4 Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
All my wants to Him are known,
All my sorrows are His own.
He sustains the hidden life
Safe with Him from earthly strife.
- 5 O my Savior, help afford
By Your Spirit and Your Word!
When my wayward heart would stray,
Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply
While I live and when I die.

Text: William McComb, 1793–1873, alt.

Text: Public domain

Stand

Opening Versicles

Lent

LSB 260

- L** This is the day which the Lord has made;
- C** **let us rejoice and be glad in it.**
- L** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**
- L** Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,
- C** **slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil.**
- L** Jesus said: If any man would come after Me,
- C** **let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.**
- L** Christ was wounded for our transgressions.
- C** **He was bruised for our iniquities.**
- L** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**
- C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;**
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Old Testament Canticale

LSB 261

C The Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.

With joy will you draw water from the wells of salvation.

And you will say in that day:

**“Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name,
make known His deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that His name is exalted.”**

The Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.

Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously;

let this be made known in all the earth.

Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitants of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

The Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.

Sit

Readings From Holy Scripture**Reading**

2 Chronicles 14:1–7; 16:1–13

L A reading from 2 Chronicles, the fourteenth chapter.

¹ Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land had rest for ten years. ² And Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God. ³ He took away the foreign altars and the high places and broke down the pillars and cut down the Asherim ⁴ and commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to keep the law and the commandment. ⁵ He also took out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the incense altars. And the kingdom had rest under him. ⁶ He built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest. He had no war in those years, for the LORD gave him peace. ⁷ And he said to Judah, “Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours, because we have sought the LORD our God. We have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side.” So they built and prospered.

¹ In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ² Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the LORD and the king’s house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, ³ “There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me.” ⁴ And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. ⁵ And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. ⁶ Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

⁷ At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, “Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. ⁸ Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand. ⁹ For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars.” ¹⁰ Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time.

¹¹The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ¹²In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians. ¹³And Asa slept with his fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalms, hymns, or choral music may be sung between the readings.

Responsory

Lent

LSB 263

L We have an advocate with the Father: Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

C He was delivered up to death; He was delivered for the sins of the people.

L Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

C He was delivered up to death; He was delivered for the sins of the people.

L We have an advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

C He was delivered up to death; He was delivered for the sins of the people.

Stand

Ten Commandments

C You shall have no other gods.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

Honor your father and your mother.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Christian Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life \dagger everlasting. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,

**Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Sit

575 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

- 1 My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim
But wholly lean on Jesus' name. Refrain
- ref On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.
- 2 When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil. Refrain
- 3 His oath, His covenant and blood
Support me in the raging flood;
When ev'ry earthly prop gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay. Refrain
- 4 When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found,
Clothed in His righteousness alone,
Redeemed to stand before His throne! Refrain

Text: Edward Mote, 1797-1874, alt.

Text: Public domain

Sermon

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

On Ash Wednesday, we began considering the good kings of Judah with King David. Tonight, we skip forward to David's great-great-grandson Asa. As we heard, "Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God" (14:2) as compared to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon and grandfather of Asa who "did evil, for he did not set his heart to seek the Lord" (12:14), dividing the kingdom into Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Israel and Judah were constantly at war. Egypt also came up against Judah. Although Jerusalem and Judah retained strength from the days of Kings David and Solomon, there was no rest or peace in the land that God had given them. Abijah, Asa's father, also "walked in all the sins that his father did . . . and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God" (1 Ki 15:3).

So King Asa ascended to the throne in a difficult time, but as it is written, "The land had rest for ten years" (2 Chr 14:1). Asa understood why: "We have sought [the Lord], and he has given us peace on every side" (14:7). Ten years of peace must have seemed like an eternity for the Judeans, who constantly struggled to gain and retain the Promised Land. Peace was a gift of God, not from Asa's strength or faithfulness. Then an army of a million Ethiopians and Libyans, twice the army of Judah, came up against Judah. King Asa cried to the Lord, "We rely on you," and was given a great victory (14:11).

After thirty-five years of ruling, Asa faced a new challenge. Israel, the Northern Kingdom began militarizing the border at Ramah to restrict travel to Judah, suppressing trade. This was a serious act of war, and Asa would not stand

for it.

Rather than turning to God, Asa turned to God's Temple, and its furnishings. Rather than seeking God's mercy or forgiveness, rather than praying or invoking God's name, Asa raided the temple and its treasury. Asa took matters into his own hands to buy Syrian King Ben-hadad's support against Israel, hiring mercenaries to distract Israel's King Baasha, forcing Israel to abandon its military buildup at Ramah. King Asa turned the temple treasury into blood money, buying the lives of his enemies. And somehow, even though it was wrong, it worked.

Unbelievably, after facing down a massive army with the Lord's protection, Asa plundered the house of God to buy protection from a pagan king. When Hanani the seer came to call the king back to God, rather than repenting, Asa threw the prophet in prison. Hanani had revealed that God would have given Asa victory over Israel *and* Syria if only the king had inquired. Alas, in his latter days, King Asa grew more hostile to the Word of God and inflicted cruelties on Judah.

As an illustration and culmination of his turning away from God, Asa suffered from a debilitating disease of his feet. Scripture says, "Yet even in his disease he did not seek the Lord but sought help from physicians" (16:12). Asa had given up the practice of seeking God and relying on him for every need of body and soul. So, he died of the foot disease and was buried with his fathers.

The kingdom of Asa was good and prosperous. It was not one of the bad times in history for Judah. And yet King Asa couldn't provide a lasting peace. He couldn't even survive a foot disease. How success, peace, and rest had corrupted the heart of King Asa! As for so many of us, success became a stumbling block that led him to trust in himself and his resources in a time of trouble.

Still, the Lord supports the faithful. Hanani told Asa, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him" (16:9).. We don't know about the foot disease, but certainly Asa could and should have called on the name of the Lord in that trouble as well. God hears the prayers of His people.

God will provide rest and peace for his people. Asa couldn't do it. Even good King Asa's heart was not pure before the Lord, nor could his body withstand the ravages of sin. To have the peace of God, we need a king to lead us into paths of righteousness. This king was promised to David as his son who would reign forever. This king was promised to Isaiah as the Prince of Peace.

This Son of Asa, Jesus, came into Jerusalem and brought peace to his people. He took our illnesses and bore our diseases (Mt 8:17). And having shouldered the burdens of the bodily manifestation of sin, and after he was acclaimed the Son of David and King of Israel on Palm Sunday, Jesus went into the temple during Holy Week Jesus saw the animal sellers and money-changers, those exchanging Roman coins which were only 80% silver for the more pure Tyrian Shekel which was 94+% silver. Jesus didn't want the money in the temple treasury. Instead, he upset the tables and poured out the coins, upsetting the priests and elders who relied on that money to maintain their position and lifestyle. He had come to cleanse the temple, to turn the house of God from a robbers' den into a house of prayer.

Jesus, the Son of Asa, taught true generosity, praising the poor widow who gave more than the others, not in the size of the contribution, but by sacrificial giving, trusting God to provide. How differently this King viewed the treasures of the temple than his father Asa! He could see past the money, the temple treasures, to the purpose of the temple—forgiveness and peace with God.

For thirty Tyrian Shekels, the cost of a slave, the religious leaders bought the life of Jesus, the Son of Asa. For 30 pieces of silver, Judas Iscariot betrayed his Lord. For 30 pieces of silver, Judas gave Jesus over to the Sanhedrin and to Pontius Pilate who crucified Jesus. When Judas saw what happened because he betrayed Jesus, he tried to return the money. This blood money could never reenter the temple. It had accomplished its unholy purpose and could never be returned to God—as if the rest of the filthy lucre in the temple were not already defiled by the wicked hearts of the chief priests and the elders who controlled the temple.

But God's purposes were not thwarted. The Son of David had come and would be the King of Salem in Jerusalem, the city of peace. From the temple treasury came blood money, which bought redemption. By means of silver from the house of the Lord, the King of the Judeans was crucified for your sins and mine.

All the money in the temple or in all Jerusalem couldn't bring lasting peace. Only Jesus brings lasting peace, eternal peace. Peace in this world is fleeting. Eternal peace comes from Jesus's sacrifice on the cross for your sins and the sins of the whole world. Asa could only temporarily bring Judah peace. The peace we need is with God

which comes only through Jesus.

When the peace of the world is not enough, we see that King Jesus has come to give us the victory over sin, death, and the devil. His blood brings peace and reconciliation with the Father. And this peace is not for ten or thirty-five years, but a peace for eternity, an eternal Sabbath rest for the people of God. We can rely on our salvation and God's peace, the peace surpasses all understanding, given to us by God the Father by the innocent bitter sufferings and death of Jesus.

This is a peace on which we can rely, peace between God and man. There is nothing else in heaven or on earth in which we can trust but the blood of King Jesus, Son of Asa, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

Offering

Stand

Prayer

L In peace let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For the gift of divine peace and of pardon, with all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For the holy Christian Church, here and scattered throughout the world, and for the proclamation of the Gospel and the calling of all to faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For this nation, for our cities and communities, and for the common welfare of us all, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For reasonable weather and for the fruitfulness of the earth, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For those who labor, for those whose work is difficult or dangerous, and for all who travel, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For all those in need, for the hungry and homeless, for the widowed and orphaned, and for all those in prison, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For the sick and dying and for all those who care for them, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L For . . . *[additional bids for prayer may be inserted here]* . . . let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

L Finally, for these and for all our needs of body and soul, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

Collect of the Day

L O Lord God, You led Your ancient people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide the people of Your Church that following our Savior we may walk through the wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to come; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Collect for the Word

L Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Evening Prayer

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.

Blessing

Benedicamus

LSB 267

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

LSB 267

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C Amen.

423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary

- 1 Jesus, refuge of the weary,
Blest Redeemer, whom we love,
Fountain in life's desert dreary,
Savior from the world above:
Often have Your eyes, offended,
Gazed upon the sinner's fall;
Yet upon the cross extended,
You have borne the pain of all.
- 2 Do we pass that cross unheeding,
Breathing no repentant vow,
Though we see You wounded, bleeding,
See Your thorn-encircled brow?
Yet Your sinless death has brought us
Life eternal, peace, and rest;
Only what Your grace has taught us
Calms the sinner's deep distress.
- 3 Jesus, may our hearts be burning
With more fervent love for You;
May our eyes be ever turning
To behold Your cross anew
Till in glory, parted never
From the blessed Savior's side,
Graven in our hearts forever,
Dwell the cross, the Crucified.

Text: Girolamo Savonarola, 1452–98; tr. Jane F. Wilde, 1826–96, alt.

Text: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2023 Concordia Publishing House.