

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

OLD TESTAMENT – Jeremiah 31:7-9

” ⁷ This is what the LORD says: “Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, ‘O LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’” ⁸ See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. ⁹ They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel’s father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son.

31:7 *foremost of the nations.* See Dt 26:19; Am 6:1. Israel was the greatest nation not because of intrinsic merit but because of divine grace and appointment (see Dt 7:6–8; 2Sa 7:23–24). (CSB)

Israel owed its preeminence solely to its choice by the Lord to be His instrument in blessing all nations. This undeserved distinction accounts for similar titles of honor (cf vv 9, 20). (TLSB)

save. The Hebrew for this word is the basis of “Hosanna,” the cry of the people of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (see Mt 21:9 and NIV text note; see also Ps 20:9; 28:9; 86:2; and especially 118:25). (CSB)

remnant. See note on 6:9. (CSB)

31:8 *land of the north.* See 3:18 and note; 4:6 and note; 6:22; 16:15. (CSB)

The direction traveled to Assyria and Babylon. (TLSB)

ends of the earth. See 6:22; 25:32. (CSB)

This meant from its most remote boundaries. (Kretzmann)

blind ... lame. See Isa 35:5–6 and notes; 42:16. (CSB)

This included the poorest and the least important, the very outcasts of society. Matt. 22, 9; Luke 14, 21-23. (Kretzmann)

None are left behind. (TLSB)

31:9 *with weeping.* Contrast Ps 126:5–6; Isa 55:12. (CSB)

They come with tears of mingled joy and penitence, on account of the unmerited grace of God in accepting them into His kingdom. (Kretzmann)

lead them. See Isa 40:11; 48:21; contrast Isa 20:4. (CSB)

beside streams of water. See Isa 49:10; see also 41:18. (CSB)

level path. See Isa 40:3–4 and notes; 43:16, 19. (CSB)

God will lead them on paths of righteousness. (Kretzmann)

I am Israel's father. See 3:4 and note; see also Dt 32:6; Isa 63:16; 64:8. (CSB)

All of His spiritual children being included in these terms.

firstborn son. Cf. v. 20; see Ex 4:22 and note; Hos 11:1–4. (CSB)

Once again God embraces the apostates of the northern tribes, calling Ephraim “my firstborn son.” He restores this son of Joseph who had received the inheritance of the firstborn when Jacob in his old age blessed the sons of Joseph (Gen 47). (PBC)

EPISTLE – Hebrew 7:23-28

²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

7:23 *death prevented them from continuing in office.* Impermanence was further evidence of the imperfection of the Levitical order. (CSB)

7:24 *He continues forever.* Since our High Priest, Christ, has passed through death to life, His priesthood and promises will never end. (TLSB)

7:25 *completely.* May include the ideas of completeness and permanence (see NIV text note). Jesus is a perfect high priest forever; so he is able to save completely and for all time. (CSB)

draw near to God through Him. Through trust in Christ, we have access to all the Father's gifts, including the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:11–13). (TLSB)

always lives to intercede. His people will never be without a priestly representative (see Jn 17; 1Jn 2:1). (CSB)

Jesus presents our needs to the Father, praying on our behalf that we may receive the gift of life to the full (cf Jn 10:10b). Luther: “If here by faith we do not take hold of Christ, who is sitting at the right hand of God, who is our life and our righteousness, and who makes intercession for us miserable sinners before the Father (Heb. 7:25), then we are under the Law and not under grace,

and Christ is no longer a Savior. Then He is a lawgiver. Then there can be no salvation left, but sure despair and eternal death will follow.... [But] I am baptized; and through the Gospel I have been called to a fellowship of righteousness and eternal life, to the kingdom of Christ, in which my conscience is at peace, where there is no Law but only the forgiveness of sins, peace, quiet, happiness, salvation, and eternal life” (AE 26:11). (TLSB)

7:26–27 Luther: “The cross was the altar on which He, consumed by the fire of the boundless love which burned in His heart, presented the living and holy sacrifice of His body and blood to the Father with fervent intercession, loud cries, and hot, anxious tears (Heb. 5:7)” (AE 13:319). (TLSB)

7:26 *meets our need.* Of salvation from sin and its consequences. (CSB)

holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Jesus is holy because He is sinless, innocent because He never had personal guilt, and unstained because He was a spotless victim for His pure sacrifice for sins. A true human being, He is also truly the Son of God from eternity and so is forever without sin. (TLSB)

7:27 *day after day.* A reference to the endless repetition of sacrifices throughout the year (see Ex 29:36–42), evidence that these sacrifices never effectively and finally dealt with sin. (CSB)

first for his own sins. Christ’s priesthood is superior because he has no personal sins for which sacrifice must be made. (CSB)

once for all. A key phrase in Hebrews (see 9:12, 26; 10:2, 10). The Levitical priests had to bring daily offerings to the Lord, whereas Jesus sacrificed himself once for all. (CSB)

The sacrifice of Christ is eternally unique, valid, and effective. (TLSB)

offered himself. Levitical priests offered up only animals; our high priest offered himself, the perfect substitute—Man for man. (CSB)

7:28 *men who are weak.* Because (1) they are mortal and therefore impermanent, v. 23; (2) they are sinful, v. 27; and (3) they could only offer animals, which could never provide a genuine substitute for man, who is made in the image of God (see Ge 1:26–28 and notes). (CSB)

God’s own promise concerning the unending priestly office of Jesus remains eternally in effect (cf 5:5–10; 7:17, 20–21). John Hus: “The apostles did not call themselves most holy popes, heads of the universal church, or universal pontiffs; but, having with them the High Priest even unto the consummation of the age, they called themselves servants of Christ, his companions in tribulation and ministers of the church” (*The Church*, p 122). (TLSB)

made perfect forever. Christ was made perfect in that he faced temptation without succumbing to sin (see notes on 2:10; 5:8). Instead he perfectly obeyed the Father, thereby establishing a perfection that is eternal. (CSB)

Jesus' high priestly perfection comes through His once-for-all sacrifice. (TLSB)

7:11–28 Though the Levitical priesthood could not bring the fullness of God's salvation, Jesus, the sinless and perfect Priest, serves eternally as the one who brings our needs to the Father. In Him we have access to God's blessings. His perfect work reminds us that death will always cut short even the best effort that anyone makes to serve God. However, Jesus freely brings us God's eternal blessings through His sacrificial death. • Father, thank You for providing us with a true High Priest, who serves us with purity and perfection. Amen. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Mark 10:46-52

46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. **47** When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” **48** Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” **49** Jesus stopped and said, “**Call him.**” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” **50** Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. **51** “**What do you want me to do for you?**” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” **52** “Go,” said Jesus, “**your faith has healed you.**” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

10:46-52 The healing of Bartimaeus occurs in the synoptic gospels after Jesus predicts his imminent death (Matt 20:18; Mark 10:32; Luke 18:31), and after the request of James and John to sit beside Jesus in his glory (Mark 10:37). This request results in Jesus' announcement of servanthood: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (v 45). Our text illustrates exactly what Jesus meant by serving. Jesus rebuked the world's pressure not to cry out to him, and called forth a believer to lay aside his old life and be renewed. After the healing of Bartimaeus, Jesus fulfills his mission as he enters Jerusalem to lay down his life for all. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

We need to look at the verbs depicting action in this pericope to understand the dynamics of this Gospel reading. Bartimaeus was sitting by the side of the road and begging (v 46). This suggests that he is idle. *What blindness and poverty keep Christians sitting idly by the side of the road today?* He clearly heard that the person before him was Jesus of Nazareth. He began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (v 47). Bartimaeus acts with the certainty of faith when he asks Jesus for mercy. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

10:46 *Jericho*. A very ancient city located five miles west of the Jordan and about 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. In Jesus' time OT Jericho was largely abandoned, but a new city, south of the old one, had been built by Herod the Great. (CSB)

This ancient city's center had moved to various locations, causing writers to describe it more like a region (cf Lk 18:35). (TLSB)

leaving the city. Luke says Jesus “approached the city” (Lk 18:35). He may have been referring to the new Jericho, while Matthew (20:29) and Mark may have meant the old city. (CSB)

Bartimaeus ... son of Timaeus. Aram *bar* means “son of.” The translation was included to benefit Gentile readers. (TLSB)

a blind man ... begging. The presence of a blind beggar just outside the city gates, on a road pilgrims followed on the way to Jerusalem, was a common sight in that day. (CSB)

10:47 *Nazareth.* See note on Mt 2:23. (CSB)

Son of David. A Messianic title (see Isa 11:1–3; Jer 23:5–6; Eze 34:23–24; and notes on Mt 1:1; 9:27). This is the only place in Mark where it is used to address Jesus. (CSB)

“Son of David” is an important Christological title (cf. Matt 20:29–34; Luke 18:35–43). Bartimaeus associates this title with mercy (v 46, 48). Later, (Mark 12:35) Jesus points out that this title is reserved for the Messiah, the Christ. In Matthew the people use the title to praise Jesus during the passion drama. The chief priests and teachers of the law, however, despised this identification (Matt 21:9, 15). Matthew’s genealogy highlights that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of David.” Jesus fulfills the promise of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:14–17). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

have mercy. Cry for help from God in Ps. (TLSB)

10:48 The crowd that accompanied Jesus included many who rebuked Bartimaeus. The imperfect verb in v 48 signifies that they kept on telling him to stop. They thought that his plea was not important to the Son of David. But Bartimaeus would not be intimidated by the world. He kept on shouting with confidence to the Son of David (v 48). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

10:49 Jesus acted with authority as he ordered the crowd to “call him.” They did. Now the antagonists, conforming to Jesus’ attitude, adopted a new perspective. They no longer rebuked him; they encouraged him, and exhorted him to cheer up, get up, and find Jesus (v 49). Bartimaeus’ blindness and poverty did not hinder his life of faith. He threw his cloak aside, jumped on his feet, and went to Jesus. In spite of his blindness, he acted in a decisive manner, not because he saw physically but because Jesus called him. His eyes of faith perceived his Lord. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

10:50 *cloak.* Folded on the lap to receive alms. He tossed away the cloak in order to get up, not knowing if later he would be able to find the alms and his source of warmth. (TLSB)

sprang. Shows urgent excitement. (TLSB)

10:51 *Rabbi*. Hebrew word for “(my) teacher.” (CSB)

Jesus then questions him, “What do you want me to do for you?” (v 51). Bartimaeus calls him *rabboni*, “Rabbouni.” This title occurs only here and in John 20:16 in the New Testament. It is an intensified form of *rabbi*, “rabbi.” (The NIV translates it as if it simply was “rabbi,” which it is not.) While “rabbi” is the usual Hebrew term for respected religious teachers, the intensified form in our text was usually reserved for God himself in Jewish literature (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6, p. 962). The title may be translated as “my Teacher (capitalized)” or “my Lord” (also in John 20:16, where the footnote in the NIV Study Bible ignores the variant Greek readings which indicate that the word means something like “Lord Teacher”). Bartimaeus therefore confesses that Jesus is more than another Jewish scholar; he is the Son of David who is also David’s Lord and God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

10:52 FAITH HAS HEALED - *Saved by faith*: We need to examine the meaning of Jesus’ words, “Your faith has healed (perfect tense) you.” Should this be translated “your faith has healed you” or “saved you”? The Greek verb can mean either. I believe that both dimensions are important to the story. The main thrust is that the blind man received his sight, but added to that was Jesus’ affirmation based on Bartimaeus’ confession—that he was a member of the community of believers saved by faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

In the healings of Jesus, *sōizō* implies a healing of the whole person. This is significant, for then we can translate the text “your faith has saved you.” We find support for this in a similar encounter in Mark 5:34. (G. Foerster, “*sōizō*,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7, p. 990). See also Luke 7:50; Matt 9:2. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Physical healing is only part of Christ’s work. Jesus rescued Bartimaeus from sinfulness as well as its collateral damage: blindness. (TLSB)

10:46–52 Though Jesus is intent on going to the cross, He pauses to have mercy on Bartimaeus, who can do nothing to solve his problem except cry out to the Lord, “Have mercy!” Like Bartimaeus, learn to call on the Lord and trust in His power to deliver you. Jesus will hear and respond compassionately. • “Lord, Your mercy will not leave me; Ever will Your truth abide. Then in You I will confide.” Amen. (*LSB* 559:4) (TLSB)