

**November 29 2015 “The Days Are Coming!” based on Jeremiah 33:14-16**

Ever wish you kept your mouth shut, especially in speaking about politics? Times when Jeremiah wished he had. Cost him dearly – was physically beaten and publicly humiliated. But he couldn't keep quiet.

- Why couldn't countrymen see the folly of their ways? Greed, disobedience and wrong living led to God's abandonment and being overrun by enemies
- Jeremiah refused to 'rub it in'. Now they needed comfort, grace and hope. And so came the words of our lesson – “Behold, the days are coming ... promise will be fulfilled ... a righteous branch will bring justice and righteousness.”
- Took 600 years, but Messiah came, but not the way they expected.

Jesus showed them what ultimate promise would look like, with justice and righteousness

- Justice. Bad guys punished and good guys rewarded – a society attribute, basic fairness in which all persons live with dignity and freedom. Where are there pockets of injustice around us, and what can we do about it?
- Righteousness. State of our individual souls. Social gospel of reaching out to needy and personal gospel of piety, prayers and moral conduct. Expect exemplary role models, but find greed, abuse, cheating and lack of character. Titanic example – 80% of men gave up escape for women and children; recent poll found 35% would cede lifeboat seats for women and children. Is there a 'me first attitude and the world be damned' approach today? Is there a godless morality that assumes there are no consequences for behavior?

The days are coming, says the Lord through Jeremiah, when justice and righteousness will prevail.

- Not enough to think about peripheral elements of season – lights and candles and trees and gift giving and merrymaking. Need to think about the very heart of the Advent message – the coming Messiah, and God's desire for justice and righteousness.
- Jeremiah was a lonely man, but something deep within him (God's inspiration) led him to speak this crucial message about the coming Messiah (Jesus, we believe).
- We as disciples of Christ need to consider what was meant by “the days are coming, when justice and righteousness will prevail!” Does it matter? What are we doing to help those days that are coming? Are we ushering them in, as followers of Christ?”

May the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.