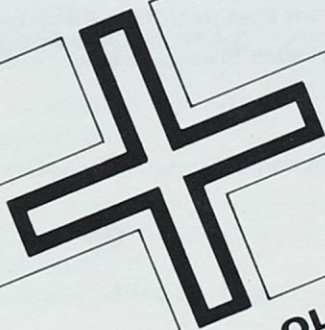


SERMONS ON THE
OLD TESTAMENT LESSONS
FROM THE NEW
LECTIONARY AND CALENDAR

AUGSBURG SERMONS



OLD TESTAMENT
LESSONS

SERIES B

AUGSBURG P
MINNEAPOLIS

HANNA LIBRARY
TRINITY LUTHERAN SEMINARY
2199 EAST MAIN STREET
COLUMBUS, OH 43209

Bx
8066
1A1
A91
Ser. B
C.2

AUGSBURG SERMONS—OLD TESTAMENT LESSONS—Series B

Copyright © 1981 Augsburg Publishing House

Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 81-65654

International Standard Book No. 0-8066-1890-6

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information address Augsburg Publishing House, 426 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415.

Scripture quotations unless otherwise noted are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1946, 1952, and 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches.

Biblical passages marked TEV are from *Good News Bible: The Bible in Today's English Version*, copyright © American Bible Society, 1966, 1971, 1976. JB refers to The Jerusalem Bible, © Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1966.

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Contents

Introduction	11
FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT	
Isaiah 63:16b-17; 64:1-8	
Evangelism for Agnostics	Terence E. Fretheim 17
SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT	
Isaiah 40:1-11	
Dare to Hope!	Carl Graesser, Jr. 20
THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT	
Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11	
What Makes a Forerunner Important?	Ronald M. Hals 24
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT	
2 Samuel 7:(1-7) 8-11, 16	
The Biblical God and His Dagger	John V. Halvorson 29
THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD—Christmas Day	
Isaiah 52:7-10	
Messengers of Peace	A. Joseph Everson 34
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS	
Isaiah 45:22-25	
Amen, Isaiah, Amen	Dawn M. Proux 37

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Isaiah 61:10—62:3

Heavenly Christmas Gifts

Herbert E. Hohenstein 42

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

Isaiah 60:1-6

Dealing with Darkness

Larry W. Smith 46

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD—First Sunday after the Epiphany

Isaiah 42:1-7

My Servant, My Chosen

Karen G. Bockelman 50

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

1 Samuel 3:1-10

God Continues to Call

Robert H. Boyd 53

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Go and Tell

Diedrik Nelson 57

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Somewhere in the World

Foster R. McCurley 60

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Job 7:1-7

It Is Hard to Be a Comforter

Daniel J. Simundson 65

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

2 Kings 5:1-14

Angry Over an Epiphany

David B. Kaplan 69

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD—

Last Sunday after the Epiphany

2 Kings 2:1-12a

God's Seal of Approval

Ralph W. Doermann 73

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Genesis 22:1-18

When Faith and Promise Meet

Paul D. Opsahl 78

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Genesis 28:10-17 (18-22)

The Lord of Our Dreams

Paul D. Hanson 82

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Exodus 20:1-17

The New Model

Mark Hillmer 88

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Numbers 21:4-9

Lifted Up for Life

Herbert C. Spomer 93

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Jeremiah 31:31-34

What's New?

Frederick J. Gaiser 97

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION—Palm Sunday

Zechariah 9:9-10

Worth Cheering About

Omar Stuenkel 99

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Exodus 24:3-11

A Covenant of Togetherness

Walter Wegner 103

GOOD FRIDAY

Isaiah 52:13—53:12

He Wears the Thorns as a Crown

Richard A. Hites 109

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD—Easter Day

Isaiah 25:6-9

An Image of the Future

Morris J. Niedenthal 113

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 148

Twelve Cheers for the Risen Christ

Ralph W. Klein 116

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 139:1-11

Is Anybody Out There?

Vernon Rice 122

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 23

The Lord Is My Shepherd

R. J. Lavin 127

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 22:24-30

He Has Not Hid His Face

Richard Simon Hanson 131

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 98

A New Song—A Love Song

Paul K. Peterson 135

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Psalm 47

The Promise of Certain Victory

Alton F. Wedel 139

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Setting Our Sails to Catch the Wind

Wallace E. Fisher 143

THE HOLY TRINITY—First Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel

Trygve R. Skarsten 148

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Rest and Worship: A Human Need

Paul A. Tidemann 153

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Genesis 3:9-15

Guilt, Consequences, and the Approach of God

Richard W. Nysse 157

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Ezekiel 17:22-24

Hope in the Darkness

Allan H. Sager 160

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Job 38:1-11

Wiser than the Creator?

Alfred von Rohr Sauer 165

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Lamentations 3:22-33

Lament and Live

Lowell O. Erdahl 168

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Ezekiel 2:1-5

A New Address for God

Howard H. Bream 173

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Amos 7:10-15

Our Prophetic Ministry

Frank L. Benz 178

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Come Back Here!

Joyce D. Sandberg 182

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Exodus 24:3-11

Bound for Blessedness

Ralph J. Wallace 185

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Exodus 16:2-15

Slavery with Buffet

Paul W. F. Harms 190

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

1 Kings 19:4-8

From Carmel to Horeb

Carl W. Beyer 194

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Proverbs 9:1-6

Step Right . . . This Way!

Rolf Nestingen 198

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

Responding

H. Dixon Slingerland 204

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

Reverence Life

Albert L. Hock 208

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Isaiah 35:4-7a

The Logic of Hiddenness

David Monge 213

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Isaiah 50:4-10

A Word for the Weary

Terence E. Fretheim 217

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jeremiah 11:18-20

Like a Lamb to the Slaughter

Rodney R. Hutton 221

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29

Let the Believer Be Aware!

Charles H. Maahs 226

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Genesis 2:18-25

One Flesh

Dennis V. Griffin 230

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

Twelfth Hour Warning

James C. Bangsund 235

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Isaiah 53:10-12

Serving Means Suffering

Richard Nelson 240

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Joy in the Morning

Herbert Chilstrom 244

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

To Tell the Truth

Thomas R. Lee 248

CHRIST THE KING—Last Sunday after Pentecost

Daniel 7:13-14

Daniel's Faith and Ours

David Lindblom 252

PREFACE

"Do I dare to preach a whole year's sermons on the Old Testament lessons?" That might seem an appropriate first question for a pastor making plans for an approaching church year. But there is another question which deserves priority, "Do I dare not to?" Theoretically, we confess that the Old Testament is authoritative for Christian faith and life; when it comes to choosing the text for Sunday's sermon, however, it becomes a decidedly second-class citizen all too often. Only you know how it is with your people and with your own heart, but it has often been observed that each generation must do battle against the temptation to demote the Old Testament from any functional place in the canon.

Since 1958 the current generation of Lutherans has made tremendous strides overcoming the dubious heritage of its immediate predecessors which had denied the Old Testament its appropriate place. It was in 1958 that the *Service Book and Hymnal* made the reading of an Old Testament lesson common practice for Lutheranism in America. With the coming of the new three-year lectionary in 1973 an even wider range of Old Testament material became standard diet for our congregations. And now that large numbers of pastors have rejoiced in and profited from working their way through the Gospel and Epistle pericopes, the time is ripe to commit ourselves to preaching on the Old Testament lessons. (In order that Old Testament texts might be provided for the entire year, the Psalms for the Sundays of Easter have been used as sermon texts to replace the lessons from the book of Acts prescribed for that season.)

There will be the same joy and profit to be found here. Actually, both joy and profit will likely be greater! The fact that by and large both pastor and people are less familiar with most Old Testament texts is a powerful advantage. We are all curious about the unfamiliar—and curiosity means enjoyable learning and attentive listening! And, as each of us knows well, when we ourselves genu-