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(South Africa 1954); *A Table of Lessons (authorized by the Episcopal Synod)*,  
THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER xxxvii (CIPBC 1963).

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 35:1-end (KJV).

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 36:1-end (KJV).

<sup>4</sup> St. John 14:1-end (KJV).

<sup>5</sup> St. John 14:27 (RSV).

<sup>6</sup> Of course, in English the origins of the words “health”, “wealth”, and “wholeness” all share a common nexus of meanings.

## SERMON FOR EVENING PRAYER The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

The Rev. Warren E. Shaw, Priest Associate

### Lessons:<sup>1</sup>

**The First Lesson:** Here beginneth the thirty-fifth Chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah.<sup>2</sup>

“The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim [***dgeh-HOY-uh-kim***] the son of Josiah [***dgoh-SIGH-uh***] king of Judah, saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites [***REE-kab-ights***], and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink. Then I took Jaazaniah [***jay-az-uh-NYE-uh***] the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniyah [***HAB-uh-zih-NYE-uh***], and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites [***REE-kab-ights***]; And I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan [***HAY-nan***], the son of Igdaliah [***ig-duh-LYE-uh***], a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah [***may-uh-SIGH-uh***] the son of Shallum [***SHALL-um***], the keeper of the door: And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites [***REE-kab-ights***] pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab [***REE-kab***], our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever: Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers. Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab [***REE-kab***] our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar [***neb-you-kad-REZ-ur***] king of Babylon came up into the land, that

we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans [**kal-DEE-unz**], and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

“Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith [**SETH**] the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith [**SETH**] the LORD. The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab [**REE-kab**], that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father’s commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me. I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab [**REE-kab**] have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me: Therefore thus saith [**SETH**] the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

“And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites [**REE-kab-ights**], Thus saith [**SETH**] the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you: Therefore thus saith [**SETH**] the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab [**REE-kab**] shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.”

*Or,*

Here beginneth the thirty-sixth Chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah.<sup>3</sup>

day. In our own lives and the lives of our family we see sickness and personal tragedy. But from time to time we are able to catch glimpses of what Jesus and the Apostles and the prophets have seen and told us about.

### Conclusion:

Every act of kindness, every sacrifice large or small for the good of others, every healing that takes place, every injustice that is rectified, every beautiful work of art or craftsmanship, every piece of harmonious music is an act of peacemaking and a manifestation of the children of God. Every time we show respect for the world of nature and accept responsibility for its preservation we show ourselves to be children of God. And when we honor God with our worship and with our obedience to his laws we proclaim the great SHALOM that was and that is and that is to come.

The Holy Spirit is given to us for that purpose, and Pentecost is just a small demonstration his power. The reconciling work of the Holy Spirit is closely linked with the atoning work of Christ.

So it is that Jesus is able to say as he prepares to go to the Cross: “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Let not your heart be troubled. Neither let it be afraid.”

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St. David’s Anglican Church  
Charlottesville, Virginia

May 10, 2008

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<sup>1</sup> *An Alternative Table of Lessons (The Table of 1922, As Revised in 1928), THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, WITH THE ADDITIONS AND DEVIATIONS PROPOSED IN 1928* 43 (Canterbury Press 2008); *The Table of Lessons (The Table of 1922, As Revised In 1928), A BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER* xxxviii

not much good. We are like the salt that Jesus spoke of that has lost its ability either to season or to preserve, and you know what Jesus says about that. It is good for nothing.

Jesus also commands us to present to every creature in the world the Good News of what He has done for the world. The Holy Spirit was given to the Church in order to enable us to do that. That's just what the Spirit did on Pentecost. He enabled the Apostles to preach the Gospel to a diverse group of people, overcoming their linguistic and cultural differences and drawing them all together in the acceptance of that Gospel.

To the extent that we continue that work, we not only advance the peace of God among the people of the world, but in the world of nature as well.

The prophet Isaiah gives us a vision of that great SHALOM. He talks about converting weapons of war to peaceful uses, beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. And he also says this:

“The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.”

The world of nature can hardly wait for that. St Paul says in Romans, “The whole creation waits with eager longing for the manifestation of the children of God.” Manifestation means that something is already present but until now has been hidden. When the screen is removed, the veil is lifted, our eyes are opened and what has been there all along is revealed.

The peace of God remains hidden today by the sins of men. We know it is present because it has been given to us by Christ. We don't see it because it is obscured and hindered by our sins. What we see instead is tyranny, conflict, corruption, and natural disasters. We see evil and disaster in the news every

“And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim [**dgeh-HOY-uh-kim**] the son of Josiah [**dgoh-SIGH-uh**] king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah [**dgoh-SIGH-uh**], even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch [**BAY-rook**] the son of Neriah [**neh-RYE-uh**]; and Baruch [**BAY-rook**] wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book. And Jeremiah commanded Baruch [**BAY-rook**], saying, I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people. And Baruch [**BAY-rook**] the son of Neriah [**neh-RYE-uh**] did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house. And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim [**dgeh-HOY-uh-kim**] the son of Josiah [**dgoh-SIGH-uh**] king of Judah, in the ninth month, that they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem. Then read Baruch [**BAY-rook**] in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah [**dgem-uh-RYE-uh**] the son of Shaphan [**SHAY-fan**] the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house, in the ears of all the people.

“When Michaiah [**my-KYE-uh**] the son of Gemariah [**dgem-uh-RYE-uh**], the son of Shaphan [**SHAY-fan**], had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, Then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the

princes sat there, even Elishama [**ih-LISH-uh-muh**] the scribe, and Delaiah [**dih-LYE-uh**] the son of Shemaiah [**shih-MAY-uh**], and Elnathan [**el-NAY-thun**] the son of Achbor [**AK-bore**], and Gemariah [**dgem-uh-RYE-uh**] the son of Shaphan [**SHAY-fan**], and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah [**han-uh-NYE-uh**], and all the princes. Then Michaiah [**my-KYE-uh**] declared unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch [**BAY-rook**] read the book in the ears of the people. Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi [**dgih-HYOO-dye**] the son of Nethaniah [**neth-uh-NYE-uh**], the son of Shelemiah [**shell-uh-MY-uh**], the son of Cushi [**KYOO-shy**], unto Baruch [**BAY-rook**], saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch [**BAY-rook**] the son of Neriah [**neh-RYE-uh**] took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch [**BAY-rook**] read it in their ears. Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid both one and other, and said unto Baruch [**BAY-rook**], We will surely tell the king of all these words. And they asked Baruch [**BAY-rook**], saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch [**BAY-rook**] answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book. Then said the princes unto Baruch [**BAY-rook**], Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be.

“And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama [**ih-LISH-uh-muh**] the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Jehudi [**dgih-HYOO-dye**] to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama [**ih-LISH-uh-muh**] the scribe’s chamber. And Jehudi [**dgih-HYOO-dye**] read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, that when Jehudi [**dgih-HYOO-dye**] had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Nev-

We are still in an adversarial relationship with nature. We are still in rebellion against the laws of God. We are still alienated from each other socially, politically, sexually, and even in the Church, where the same arrogance, the same pride, the same ambition, have produced a plethora of denominational structures that divide rather than unite the Church. It seems that every little group that calls itself a church is more concerned with its own survival and prosperity than with the role it has to play in the great SHALOM of God. So we compete with each other more than we cooperate.

When the Second Person of the Holy Trinity laid aside the privileges of divinity and entered this fragmented world of creation, He set about restoring the state of wholeness and peace that He and the Father and the Spirit had created together. He healed the sick. He tamed the wind and the waves. He challenged and overcame death. He clarified the relationships that God intended to prevail among people as well as with Himself. He gathered a community and gave His Apostles the authority to bind and to loose, which is to say the authority to order and regulate the affairs of the Church, and He promised them the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity to help them.

Jesus says in the Beatitudes, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” It is God alone who is blessed, and it is God alone who restores wholeness to His broken creation. But as a loving father allows his children to help him with his tasks, so God generously allows us to participate in the mending of broken relationships. St Paul says in Second Corinthians, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself ... and hath committed to us the ministry of reconciliation.” To the extent that we accept and perform that ministry, we reveal that we are indeed God’s children. How then do we do that?

Well, for starters, Jesus commands us to love one another. That’s where we have to start. If we can’t love each other, we’re

tionship of unity and mutuality, and most of all from chaos to order. The peace that Christ brings is the great SHALOM of God.

The basic or root meaning of the Hebrew word SHALOM is “wholeness”, “completeness”, or perhaps “perfection”. It can also mean “safety” or “health”,<sup>6</sup> which are part of what it means to be whole, complete, intact, and in perfect order.

Jesus sometimes spoke Hebrew, although he usually spoke a closely related language known as Aramaic. I believe the Aramaic equivalent of SHALOM is SALAAM, but the meaning is the same. We learn from the Bible that God created the world in a state of SHALOM. He rested on the Sabbath day, not because He was tired but because there was nothing more to be done. Everything was perfect. Everything was in its proper place and was properly related to everything else. The world was in perfect order, and God pronounced it “good”.

But, as we all know, things began to fall apart when Adam and Eve and the serpent disrupted the order of things and attempted to move out of their respective places in the hierarchical structure that God had ordained. The immediate result was fragmentation.

Adam and Eve became alienated from each other and tried to hide their sexual differences. They also tried to hide from God. Enmity arose between them and the serpent, who represents the animal kingdom which they were supposed to rule and care for. The earth itself began to produce weeds and thorns as well as flowers and fruit. One of their sons, the fruit of their loins, murdered his brother. Not only humans but all the creatures on earth became subject to death. The great SHALOM of God was shattered. And what caused that shattering? Pride, arrogance, ambition, and rebellion against the one rule that God had given to preserve the state of wholeness and well-being.

I would suggest to you that these same sins are responsible for the fragmentation that still prevails in the world today.

ertheless Elnathan [*el-NAY-thun*] and Delaiah [*dih-LYE-uh*] and Gemariah [*dgem-uh-RYE-uh*] had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them. But the king commanded Jerahmeel [*dgiH-RAH-mih-ell*] the son of Hammelech [*HAM-uh-leck*], and Seraiah [*siH-RYE-uh*] the son of Azriel [*AZ-rih-ell*], and Shelemiah [*shell-uh-MY-uh*] the son of Abdeel [*ABB-dih-ell*], to take Baruch [*BAY-rook*] the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

“Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch [*BAY-rook*] wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim [*dgeh-HOY-uh-kim*] the king of Judah hath burned. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim [*dgeh-HOY-uh-kim*] the king of Judah, Thus saith [*SETH*] the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith [*SETH*] the LORD of Jehoiakim [*dgeh-HOY-uh-kim*] king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

“Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch [*BAY-rook*] the scribe, the son of Neriah [*neh-RYE-uh*]; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim [*dgeh-HOY-uh-kim*] king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.”

Here endeth the First Lesson.

**The Second Lesson:** Here beginneth the fourteenth Chapter of the Gospel According to St. John.<sup>4</sup>

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith [SETH] unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith [SETH] unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith [SETH] unto him, Lord, shew [SHOW] us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith [SETH] unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew [SHOW] us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith [SETH] unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us,

and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.”

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

**Text:**

From the Second Lesson: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”<sup>5</sup>

**Homily:**

Peace, as the world understands it, is essentially an absence of open conflict. If people are not attacking each other, even if they are merely avoiding each other, there is said to be peace. But the peace that Christ gives is much more than that. The peace that Christ gives is a positive transformation from hostility to reconciliation, from an adversarial relationship to a rela-