

Judica (*Passion Sunday*)

St. John 8:46-59

April 3rd, 2022

St. Bartholomew Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC

Fort Myers, FL

All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC

Pawleys Island, SC

Pastor Jerald Dulas

He Shall Never See Death

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty and Most Merciful God, Who hast given Thy Son to die for our sins, and to obtain forgiveness and redemption for us through His own blood: Let the merit of this spotless sacrifice, we beseech Thee, purge our consciences from dead works, that we may serve Thee, the Living God, and receive the promise of eternal inheritance in Christ Jesus, our Lord to Whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we enter the last two weeks of Lent—as we enter Passiontide—we meet our Lord + Jesus in Jerusalem. In the readings for the next two weeks, our Lord will be in the city of His ancestor King David. He will be in the city where the temple of the Lord was built first by Solomon, and later rebuilt by Zerubbabel, and even later by King Herod. Our Lord + Jesus is in the city of the king's palace, and the temple. He is in the city where kings reign, and where the daily sacrifices, morning and evening, took place. Our Lord is in the city where prophets would preach the Word of God to kings and priest alike. In Jerusalem is where we meet our Lord + Jesus, Who is both Prophet, Priest, and King.

This is well for us, because beginning with Passiontide, we shift our focus from our breaking of the Ten Commandments; how we are hounded on all sides by our enemies—the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh—to our one and only means of salvation from our enemies. Our focus shifts to our Lord's redemption accomplished for us on the tree of the holy cross. His Passion takes place in Jerusalem. The city our Jerusalem is the city of our redemption. Our Lord comes to the city of His ancestor King David. He comes to the city where His ancestor King Solomon built the temple of the Lord. Our Lord + Jesus comes to the city where prophets proclaimed the judgments and promises of the Lord God.

Here is where we find Him today in the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John. We are told at the end of the reading that our Lord + Jesus “hid Himself, and went out of the temple.” To be clear there was only *one* temple. The only temple that existed was in Jerusalem. In the temple, the place where the daily sacrifices for the sins of the people of Israel took place, is where we find our Lord + Jesus today. The true Temple—our Lord + Jesus—has come to the temple made with man's hands. The One in Whom the sins of the whole world will be placed upon; the One Who will suffer and die, having committed no sin or crime, has come into the place where animals were sacrificed as a foreshadowing of the one, true, sacrifice of our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ.

And, my dear friends, what does the Lord + Jesus do in the temple made with hands preach to us today? He preaches that all those who cling to Him in faith will never see death. Our Lord Who is

both Prophet, Priest, and King, preaches and offers to all those who believe on Him eternal life in Heaven with Him. Even though our flesh may die, we will never see death, for when this body dies, we will enter into the Paradise of Heaven with our Lord + Jesus for all eternity. On the Last Day He will raise up from dead all of us, and give us new and glorious bodies that we will have for all eternity. This is what our Lord + Jesus promises today to us as the Prophet of the Lord God.

Prophets preach the judgments and promises of the Lord God. The judgment that our Lord + Jesus preaches is that those who do not believe on Him—who are outside the Christian Church—only believe the lies of their father the devil. The devil has deceived all unbelievers. He deceives them by making them think that they deserve more good things than they actually deserve. He deceives them by making them think that all their sins and troubles—their hardships—are undeserved. The reality that our Lord + Jesus would have us hear and believe, is that even when our life is at its lowest—when we struggle with the most egregious troubles that man can endure, we deserve so much worse.

If one wants to know how much he deserves on account of his manifold sins and trespasses, one need only turn to the cross of our Lord + Jesus. One needs only to hear the Gospel of our Lord's Passion—His suffering and death—for us. He endured shame, spitting, beating, scourging, mockery, crucifixion and death. This is the punishment that we deserved. He was innocent of sin and any crime. He did not deserve the cross and shame that He endured. This was the punishment that we deserved, and He took it upon Himself. He did this so that we do not have to endure the suffering we actually do deserve. In this we see His mercy for us, for He does not treat us the way we deserve to be treated. The sufferings that He endured on the cross are also a foreshadowing of the eternal torments that all those who do not believe on the Lord + Jesus will endure for eternity in Hell.

This is the judgment that our Lord + Jesus preaches to the Jews, the ones who would call him a Samaritan and accuse Him of having a demon. But prophets also preach the good news, the promises that our Lord God would have us hear about His grace and mercy for us. Who will convict the Lord + Jesus of sin? No one can! On account of this—because of His fulfilling of the Law of God—those who cling to Him in faith will never see death. Prophets preach the redemption for sinners found in the Lord God. They preach that sacrifices offered to the Lord God appease His wrath.

Our Lord + Jesus is not only a Prophet, but He is also the High Priest, Who offers Himself as the perfect, spotless Lamb of God on the altar of the holy cross. Our Lord + Jesus Who is in the temple made with hands, becomes both the perfect sacrifice and the Priest Who offers that sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Our Lord + Jesus offers Himself for us, and all of mankind, on the altar of the holy cross. He is the whole burnt offering of the Lord God. He is completely destroyed—He suffers and dies—to appease the wrath of the Lord God, and atone for the sins of the whole world.

Priests offer sacrifices. The priests of Israel offered sacrifices daily, morning and evening, and at other times, to appease the wrath of the Lord God. The shedding of blood was what was required to atone for the sins and murders—the hatred of one's neighbor—of mankind. The priests offered animals as a sacrifice to the Lord God, but these were only a shadow of the one, true sacrifice that took place in the Temple of the Lord's Body. The blood of bulls and goats could only appease God for the particular sin of the individual. It could not atone for all sins of all mankind, as the Blood of our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ's could. And often, the sacrifices that were made with animals were done out of duty, with no faith or belief directed toward the Lord God for forgiveness. These sacrifices our Lord did not desire. He desired rather the contrite heart; the heart sorry for its sins, and sought redemption from the Lord God fervently. All of us who with contrite hearts turn to the one, true sacrifice of the Lord + Jesus, will never see death, for His sacrifice was accomplished for us.

Our Lord + Jesus is found in Jerusalem as our Prophet, Who preaches the good news of our salvation through Lord God. He is found in Jerusalem as our High Priest, Who offers Himself as the

True Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and especially for those who believe on Him. Our Lord + Jesus is also found in Jerusalem as our King. He is our King because He took His place on the throne of the cross. He hung upon His throne of mercy—His *gnadenthron*—for us poor, miserable sinners. He endured the suffering that we deserved. The King dies for His subjects.

Kings of the Earth did not suffer for their subjects, at least most of them did not. Earthly kings sought to be served, not to serve. Our Lord + Jesus does the opposite. He comes down from His throne in Heaven to be the Servant of mankind. He serves us by offering His life as a ransom for ours. Kings would hand out treasures to subjects that pleased them. They would share the spoils of war with their subjects after they had defeated the enemies of the kingdom. Our Lord + Jesus, as our true King, offers to us the rewards that He won for us when He defeated our enemies of sin, death and the power of the devil by His suffering and death on our behalf. The rewards that He won for us as our King, and which He freely gives His subjects—all those who believe on Him—are forgiveness of all our sins, eternal life with Him in Heaven, and salvation from our enemies.

My dear friends, we will never see, nor taste, death, because our Lord + Jesus has come into Jerusalem. He is there as our Prophet, Priest and King. He declares to us that our sins are forgiven on account of His works and merits. He offers Himself for us out of His great love and mercy, so that we do not have to endure the suffering we deserve; He took that upon Himself. He wins the victory as our King, and gives to us the spoils of the war He waged and won on the cross so that we will never see death. He dies so that we do not have to. He even raises Himself from the dead, to show to us that He truly has defeated death once and for all.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us always give thanks to our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ for all His benefits. Let us give thanks that we find our Lord + Jesus in the city of Jerusalem. For in this city, He claims His throne; He reveals Himself as the True Temple; and He preaches into our ears today that we will never see death, for He has destroyed death once and for all by His own death on the tree of the holy cross. He has delivered us from our enemies, and vindicated us, and He leads us into our eternal heavenly home in Heaven. Thanks be to God! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Lord God, Heavenly Father, Who through Thy Son, true God and our Redeemer, didst say: "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death," we beseech Thee, bestow upon us Thy Holy Spirit, that we may give due honor to Thy Son, keep His Word, trust in it, comfort ourselves therewith in the hour of departure, and through death enter into everlasting life; for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!