

Good Friday
St. John 18:1—19:42
March 29th, 2024
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

They Shall Look on Him Whom They Pierced

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“For these things came to pass, that the scripture might be fulfilled, ‘A bone of him shall not be broken.’ And again another scripture saith, ‘They shall look on him whom they pierced.’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

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

My dear friends, our first parents in the Garden of Eden were deceived by the devil in the form of a serpent. He deceived them into eating from the tree in the midst of the Garden from which they were forbidden to eat. He tricked them into believing the lie that if they ate the fruit of this tree that they would be like the Lord God, knowing good and evil, and that in so doing they would not die as the Lord God had told them. Seeing that the fruit was pleasing to the eye and good for food they ate, and were thereby plunged into sin and death. Mankind was defeated by a tree through the serpent’s deception. Adam and Eve did now know good and evil. The evil was them. They were sinners and thereby outcasts from the Lord God’s presence. The price of knowing good and evil was also to know death and the grave.

Our Lord God in His love for His creation did, however, promise that He would send to mankind a Savior from their sin. Someone would be sent to rescue us from death and the grave. Someone would come to deliver us from the pain and suffering caused by our sinfulness. Our Lord God heavenly Father sent His Only-begotten Son, our Lord + Jesus as the Christ. He is the Promised One sent by the Father. When He was first promised to Adam and Eve our Lord God said that He would put enmity between the woman’s seed and the serpent’s seed. The woman’s seed is our Lord + Jesus. The serpent’s seed are all those who belong to the devil on account of their unbelief. Our Lord God also promised that the seed of the woman, our Lord + Jesus, would bruise the head of the serpent. In bruising the head of the serpent, He would also bruise His own heel.

Today, we see the fulfillment of these promises made to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after they had fallen into sin. The Lord + Jesus has come! He was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, even as the Prophet Isaiah foretold. He has taken upon Himself our flesh, and become as one of us but without sin. He fully obeyed and fulfilled the Law of God. He perfectly obeyed the Father’s command which we and our first parents did not heed. And today, He offers up His life as a ransom for ours. He bruises the serpent’s head by hanging upon the tree of the holy cross. On the cross He is full of wounds and scars. He is full of much bruising. But His bruising and suffering and pain defeats the serpent; He

defeats the devil and his seed forever and ever.

This was the bruising and suffering and pain that we deserve; that all of mankind deserves on account of our manifold sins and trespasses. The Prophet Isaiah foretold in the Epistle reading that the Messiah would endure these things. He would be numbered with the transgressors. He was crucified between two malefactors, but in His crucifixion, He is also numbered with the transgressors by taking our sin upon Himself. He Who knew no sin, became sin for us, in order that He might free us from the bondage of sin. He is mocked and shamed so that we might no longer endure mockery and shame. He dies and is buried so that we may not see nor taste death, but may enter into Paradise on the day of our physical death.

This is what the Prophet Isaiah had foretold. This is what our Lord God had promised to Adam and Eve, our first parents after their transgression. Our Lord + Jesus does all this for us, for those who turned their back on His Word and His promises. He suffers and dies for those who rebel daily by breaking the Law of the Lord God. Our Lord + Jesus shows His love for His creation by taking their place on the tree of the holy cross. He takes their punishment upon Himself. For we were and are unable to rescue ourselves from the promised condemnation. We cannot ever do enough good works to pay for the transgressions that we commit every day. We sin completely and thoroughly. We sin in both our thoughts and our words and our deeds. Sin has so thoroughly held us in its grasp that we cannot set ourselves free.

Even if we could perform enough good works, we would still bear in our flesh the sin that we inherited from our first parents. On account of our sinful flesh, we are born as the seed of the serpent; born in sin and shame. We are rescued from our innate corruption through the waters of Holy Baptism. In those waters we are connected to the cross of our Lord + Jesus. His suffering and death and burial is our suffering, death, and burial. His atonement of our sins; His payment for our sins, is credited to us in the waters of Holy Baptism. We put on the Christ. We put on His righteousness. We bear His innocence through faith. Because He has chosen to obey the Father's will and take our punishment upon Himself, so that He is committed of our sin, and we are acquitted.

In taking our punishment upon Himself His heel is bruised, but in being bruised on the tree of the holy cross, He bruises once and for all the serpent's head. The serpent can no longer rail against us, for our sins have been fully paid by the suffering and death of our Lord + Jesus.

The crucifixion of our Lord shows us what we deserve on account of our manifold transgressions. We deserve to be where our Lord hangs because of our iniquities. His hands and feet are nailed to the tree. We too deserve to be nailed to the accursed tree because of our sins. His side is pierced with a spear so that water and blood flowed out showing that He was indeed dead. Our side also deserves to be pierced. Our heart deserves to be punctured because we have daily disobeyed our Lord's commandments. Our Lord dies the death we deserve.

This is the death that the Lord God warned Adam and Eve about in the Garden of Eden before they ate of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the Garden. This was the death they deserved for eating from that tree. But our loving Lord God takes our place on the tree of the holy cross so that we do not have to endure the suffering and pain that we so rightfully deserve.

This is why, my dear friends, we should look with horror and awe at the One Who hangs upon the tree in our place. We should look with all reverent awe that our Lord God has offered Himself up on the tree of the cross so that He might pay the penalty of our sins. He dies so that we might have life. Therefore, let us look upon Him Whom we have pierced. Let us look upon Him Whom we have nailed to an accursed tree. All those who are hanged on a tree are cursed. Our Lord + Jesus, Who knew no sin, Who is innocent of condemnation, became a curse for us. So that we who should rightly be cursed

in the place where He now hangs, are not cursed but blessed with forgiveness of our sins, an eternal life with our Savior in Heaven, and rescue and salvation from that old deceiving serpent in the Garden of Eden.

The devil wanted to destroy mankind, and so eat deceived our first parents. Mankind has fallen to his deceptions since that first time. But our Lord + Jesus, the promised Messiah of our Lord God, has taken our place upon the tree of the cross. He is destroyed by the serpent in our place, so that we might not ever be destroyed; that we might not ever know eternal destruction. Our Lord + Jesus goes into the grave, so that we will not remain in the grave. We will with Him be raised again from the dead. For He has bruised the head of the serpent and won for us freedom from death and the grave. Let us look upon Him Who we have pierced on account of our manifold transgressions. For in His piercing—in His suffering and death—we have been redeemed and saved. Thanks be to our Lord + Jesus for His sacrifice for us poor sinners. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same 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!