

Laetare Sunday
St. John 6:1-15
March 15th, 2026
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

This Is of a Truth the Prophet

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“When therefore the people saw the sign which He did, they said, ‘This is of a truth the Prophet that cometh into the world.’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, heavenly Father, Who through Thy Son in the desert with little didst abundantly feed thousands, we beseech Thee, visit us also with Thy blessing, and preserve us from covetousness and cares of the body, that we may seek first Thy kingdom and righteousness, and experience Thy fatherly goodness in all things needful for soul and body; through + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

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

My dear friends, when the people of Israel were freed from the bondage of slavery to the Egyptians they followed the Prophet Moses into the wilderness. Through him the Lord God did many signs and wonders. He destroyed Egypt with ten plagues. He parted the Red Sea so that Israel could pass through on dry ground, and swallow up Pharaoh and his army in the midst of the Red Sea. He spoke to them from Mount Sinai, and gave them His Law, written with His own finger, which Moses delivered to the people of Israel. This Law was the testament that the people of Israel would be the Lord God’s people, and He would be their God. The Lord God even provided food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness. He brought water from a rock, and gave them the bread of heaven: manna, which they ate for forty years during their wilderness wanderings.

Moreover, the Lord commanded Moses, and the Israelites, to construct a Tabernacle; a place to contain the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the Lord’s presence among His people. His was His throne upon which He ruled over them. Moses stood between the people and the Lord God. He was the go-between. The Lord spoke to him, and Moses spoke on the Lord’s behalf to the people. And the people brought their concerns to Moses, and he in turn brought them to the Lord God. But Moses was not there with the people of Israel by himself. The Lord God was there with them. He was there in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. The pillar, which was the Lord God, rested in His Tabernacle. It was His dwelling place; it was His throne. The place where He gave out mercy through the animal sacrifices offered on the altar of burnt offering.

But the glory of the Lord God was too much for the people of Israel to endure on their own, so Moses interceded on their behalf. He stood between the Lord God and the people of Israel, so they might not be destroyed on account of their constant rebellion. It was the Lord’s constant presence with His people throughout the forty years of their wilderness wanderings that strengthened the faith of the

people of Israel. They saw how He fought for them, and destroyed their enemies. They saw how He provided for their sustenance by giving them water and bread from heaven. They also saw how they needed someone to act as an intercessor for them with the Lord God. This is why when Moses was about to be gathered to his ancestors, he prayed to the heavenly Father to raise up for them a prophet like unto him. One who would act as an intercessor for them, and hold back the wrath of the Lord God so that He would not utterly destroy them.

As we have been reading in our daily Scripture readings, Joshua succeeded Moses. He led the people of Israel after the death of Moses. Many believed Joshua was the prophet that Moses spoke about. His name even meant “Savior,” just like our Lord + Jesus. In fact, in the Greek Old Testament—the Septuagint—wherever the name of Joshua occurs, the Greeks translated it as “Jesus.” Joshua was a foreshadowing of the Lord + Jesus. His name was a foreshadowing of the true “Savior” of mankind. Moses also was a foreshadowing of the Savior that was to come. He was the intercessor between the Lord God and man. But his intercession was imperfect. He did not get to go into the Promised Land because of his frustration with the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah. He was only supposed to speak to the rock, so that water would come out, and in his frustration, struck the rock. Therefore, the full glory of the Lord was not revealed to the people of Israel. Therefore, Moses was not permitted to enter into the Promised Land. His intercession on behalf of the people of Israel would come to an end.

This is why the people of Israel in the wilderness with our Lord + Jesus begin to say, “This is of a truth the Prophet.” For, there were many similarities between the historical record from the Pentateuch, and this feeding of five thousand men. First, like their ancestors, they were in the wilderness. The Lord + Jesus, like Moses, had come down from the mountain. Like Moses, the Lord + Jesus did many signs and wonders. Especially the sign that is shown today in the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John. Like the Lord God provided manna in the wilderness, our Lord + Jesus provided bread and fishes, as much as they desired. No other prophet since Moses had provided such abundance to such a large crowd. Only the Lord God had provided such sustenance for His people.

The people began to understand that this man + Jesus of Nazareth, was the Messiah. He was sent from the Lord God to be their Ruler and Savior. Although, as we see at the end of the pericope for today, they did not fully understand what that meant. They were prepared to take Him by force and make Him their King. But our Lord + Jesus did not come to establish an earthly kingdom, He came to make an everlasting Kingdom.

He came to establish a new covenant. The covenant that was made at Mount Sinai needed to be replaced. Not because the covenant was inadequate from the Lord’s perspective, but because the people of Israel continually broke the covenant. They transgressed the Law of God completely and thoroughly. As St. Paul writes in his Epistle to the churches of Galatia, the covenant did not free them, it only made them a new kind of slave. They had been delivered from the bondage of slavery in Egypt to a new kind of slavery under the Law. The Law of the Lord God could not save them by their keeping of it, for they could not keep it.

This is why the Lord + Jesus comes to make a new covenant with the people of Israel. And by “people of Israel” is not meant just the Jews. The people of Israel include all those who cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus. This new covenant is with all those who trust in the Lord + Jesus to save them and deliver them from sin, death, and the power of the devil. For our Lord + Jesus is a perfect intercessor between the Lord God and man. He is a greater Prophet than Moses. For Moses stood between the Lord God and the people of Israel, but the Lord + Jesus is the Lord God in our flesh. The Lord God dwelt among the people of Israel in a Tabernacle, and in the Ark of the Covenant. These were only symbols of the Lord’s presence among them. But our Lord + Jesus comes as the Lord God in our flesh. He dwells with His people as one of us. This was the truly remarkable thing that the five thousand men

in the wilderness began to realize. The Lord + Jesus was a prophet like unto Moses. The Apostles began to understand that the Lord + Jesus was the Son of God Himself. That the Lord + Jesus was the Lord God Himself.

This is the type of God that we have. For He comes to us, as one of us, to establish a new covenant. He would fulfill the covenant that we break daily and often. He would establish this covenant through His suffering and death, by His once and for all time sacrifice upon the altar of the tree of the holy cross. He would bear our punishment in His own flesh. In the Tabernacle of His flesh, the sins of all of mankind would be atoned for. And like as He provided manna in the wilderness for the people of Israel, and as He provided the abundance of bread and fishes in this wilderness on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, He provides the Body and Blood which He sacrificed for us on the tree of the holy cross to us in bread and wine at this altar. We receive the Bread of Heaven at this altar. We receive our Lord's true and substantial Body and Blood given to us in bread and wine.

This meal is for our forgiveness. It is for our salvation. It is the Lord + Jesus coming to us poor, miserable sinners to be with us, His people. He comes in His Body and Blood to strengthen our faith in Him, and give us comfort and peace knowing that by Him—by His Body and Blood—we have the remission of all our sins.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us rejoice this day of Laetare—this day of rejoicing—for our Lord + Jesus has made a new covenant between God and man. He is our intercessor to the heavenly Father. He speaks on our behalf to the Father that our sins have been paid for in full by His suffering and death. We are now free from sin and death. We can now eat and drink, and sit down with our Lord + Jesus—with our Lord God in the flesh. He provides a meal for us in the presence of our enemies. He protects and guides us into the path of righteousness which leads into heaven. For our Lord + Jesus is of a truth the Prophet promised long ago by the Lord God to Moses. He has come to redeem us and save us from sin and death. Therefore, we can rejoice in Him and all that He has done for us to save us and forgive us. 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 the 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!