

WEDNESDAY OF LENT 5

“Shadows of the Suffering Christ: David”

Our Redeemer Dallas 2020

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward” (1 Sam. 16:13).

Abel. Noah. Joseph. Job. We’ve spent the last four weeks looking at these shadows, or types, of the suffering Christ. And though there are many more to be found in the pages of the Old Testament, ones we simply couldn’t get to for the sake of time, we’ve saved perhaps the best for last.

The Shadow

In the book of 1 Samuel, the Lord says to Samuel, the prophet, priest, and judge of Israel, that he has rejected Saul from being king over Israel. Saul, whom the LORD had chosen to be Israel’s first king back in chapter 10, had been unfaithful to God, offering a panicked and unlawful sacrifice in the hope of currying favor with God against a *massive* army of the Philistines. But Samuel says to him afterward, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the LORD your God...For then the LORD would have established your kingdom...forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.” So, Saul is out. The question is, who will be king in his place?

For that, the LORD sends Samuel to Jesse the Bethlehemite. Jesse has a number of sons, and the LORD’s anointed is among them. Some of them, apparently chosen for their *outward* appearance, are made to pass by Samuel, but the LORD has not chosen these. He has, in fact, chosen the *youngest*, the ruddy shepherd, who was not even deemed worthy for consideration. “Arise,” says the LORD to Samuel, “anoint him, for this is he.” Thus David became the new king of Israel, the Spirit of God rushing upon him from that day forward (1 Sam. 16:1-13).

The Suffering

But this series is called “Shadows of the *Suffering* Christ,” and so, you know it can’t be that easy. And it wasn’t. Though the LORD had rejected Saul and anointed David in his

place, Saul refused to give up the throne. He reigned as king for another *seven years*, the whole time setting himself against the LORD and against His anointed.

We just read about how Saul, in a rage, tried to *kill* David, hurling his spear at him to pin him to the wall (1 Sam. 18:6-11). This was not an isolated instance. Saul plotted against David, the LORD's anointed, *constantly*, becoming something of David's own personal Ahab. He was *jealous* of him. The Spirit of the Lord, which had once rushed upon Saul, had now been given to David, giving him great success. David slew the giant with a sling and a stone. "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his *ten* thousands," the women would sing. You can see how that might provoke someone like Saul to violence.

Not that it mattered. Saul could plot and rage all he wanted. That wouldn't change the fact that God had chosen *David*; that He had set His king on Zion, His holy hill (Ps. 2:6). Which is why, in the end, Saul died, and David was established as king over Israel, God even making him a promise that He would establish his throne forever (2 Sam. 7:16).

The Christ

David is a shadow of the suffering Christ. Just recently¹, the Church celebrated the Annunciation of Our Lord, which is the anniversary of the day when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she would conceive by the Holy Spirit and bear a son, who, in the words of the angel, would be great and would be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God would give to Him the throne of His father David, and He would reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there would be no end (Luke 1:26-33).

Nine months later, an angel appeared to a group of shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, saying, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news...For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:9-11). The title *Christ* means "Anointed One." So, altogether, what you have here is an announcement that the new King, the one promised to David all those centuries before, was here. And the shepherds, with a multitude of the heavenly host, rejoiced.

But not so the old kings, the ones still reigning on their thrones. Upon hearing from the magi that the Christ had been born, Herod the king, for one, was troubled. He had no intention of giving up his throne, not even to the Lord's anointed. So, taking counsel with his chief priests and scribes, he decided to trick the magi, sending them to

¹ March 25, nine months before Christmas.

find the child that he might learn of His location and kill Him. But the magi ended up tricking Herod, who, in a rage, retaliated by sending and killing all the youngest boys in Bethlehem—all except Jesus.

Things didn't change when Jesus grew up. Toward the end of Matthew's gospel, we read that "the chief priests and elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas, and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill Him," the Lord's anointed (Matt. 26:3-4). They were jealous of Jesus and of His popularity with the people. So, they turned one of His own disciples against Him, captured Him under the cover of darkness, tried and convicted Him in a kangaroo court, and put Him before Pontius Pilate for sentencing. "Are you a king," the Roman king Caesar's representative asked. "Not of this world," was Jesus' reply. So, he took Jesus and had Him punished. The soldiers dressed Him up like a king, twisting together a crown of thorns and putting it on His head and arraying Him in a purple robe, like mock royalty. They came up to Him and made fun of Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" But even this was not enough. When the chief priests and officers saw Jesus, they raged against Him further, crying out, "Crucify Him!" And they got their wish. They crucified their King, the Lord's anointed. Like Saul and Herod before them, they did not receive Him whom God Himself had chosen.

Not that it mattered. Oh, they did their best. They plotted and raged as best they could. They crucified Jesus, made Him suffer, they killed Him and sealed the tomb with a guard. But that didn't change the fact that God had chosen Him. "This is My beloved Son," spoke the voice from heaven at Jesus' Transfiguration, "listen to Him" (Matt. 17:5). Jesus' enemies laughed as He stood there in his bloody crown and tattered robe. But He who sits in the heavens laughed, as Jesus gave that last triumphant cry, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He laughed, as Jesus descended into hell, proclaiming His victory to the spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:19). He laughed, as the angel rolled away the stone, not so Jesus could get out, but so others could *look in* and see the grave clothes lying there (John 20:5). He laughed, as Jesus ascended into heaven and took His rightful seat upon His throne, receiving the name that is above all other names (Phil 2:9). He laughed, because, again, the Lord had set His King on Zion, His holy hill, and not the rulers of the earth, nor the devil, nor death itself would stand in the way of the Lord and of His anointed.

The Crown of Righteousness

"Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth" (Ps. 2:10). Of course, not many of *us* are powerful or of noble birth, but we *think* we are. We *want* to be. We have a God, a King over all creation. But we also have sin, deep in our members. And so,

there's a part of us that doesn't *want* a king. We don't want to be told what to do or to be ruled. We'd much prefer to do the telling and the ruling ourselves. So, when Jesus comes along and says, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand," well, that stirs up all kinds of fear and jealousy in us, and like earthly kings seeking desperately to hold on to their thrones, we fight back. We resist.

But He who sits in the heavens laughs. We may scheme and rage all we want, but the Lord has set His King on Zion, His holy hill. Jesus lives and reigns to all eternity. There's nothing we can do about that.

Nor should we *want* to. Somehow, we've got it in our heads that if *we* were the ones who were in charge things would be better. If *we* had the crown, if *we* called the shots, we wouldn't be in this mess that we're in. But we're in this mess that we're in precisely *because* that's what we thought in the beginning! Turns out we make *terrible* kings, who only want to *be* served. Turns out, we need God to choose a king *for* us, a Lord to *redeem* us who cannot redeem ourselves.

In Jesus, we have such a King. He is our Lord, who has redeemed us from sin, from death, and from all evil. Before, we were captive under the devil's power, condemned to death, stuck in sin and blindness (Eph. 2:1-3). But now, He has brought us from Satan to God, from death to life, from sin to righteousness (LC II 27, 31). He has done this by shedding His holy, precious blood; by suffering as He did, even as the Lord's anointed, in order to set us free.

"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness," writes the apostle Paul, "which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award me on that day" (2 Tim. 4:8). "Blessed are *all* who take refuge in him" (Ps. 2), laying down their golden crowns in submission to the one true King. For only Christ, the Lord's anointed, can bring eternal life. Only He lives that death may die. Only He sits enthroned in worlds above and alone can make us, clothing us with the robe of His own righteousness (Gal. 3:27), raising us up with Him and seating us with Him in the heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). We *are* Kings, because the Lamb upon His throne has made us His own, taking away our sin and giving us a glorious inheritance. We are *blessed*, for in Christ the kingdom of heaven is ours.

What better place to leave us as we look forward to our celebration of Holy Week. Starting this Sunday, we will trace Jesus' journey, a journey made for *us*, from the road into Jerusalem, where He was hailed as a king, to the cross, where He, the King of the Jews, was executed, to the empty tomb, where He rose and took up His throne forever. And we will see the Substance of all the shadows. We will see what it's all about. Long live the King of all, the Son of David, the Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ. *Amen*.