

Title: “Tears Wiped Away”

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Isaiah 25:6-9

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Service Readings: Is. 25:6-9 ; Philippians 4:4-13; Matt. 22:1-14

God spoke to Isaiah promises that we can cling to; promises that we can anchor our life to. These are promises that were realized in the death and resurrection of Jesus. And so the promise of an eternal life with God is one that, although not realized, we can trust and believe in.

Message:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Our Lord and savior was whipped until he almost died. His muscles laid bare, his flesh torn from his body. He was beaten by soldiers, mocked by the crowd, and forced to carry his own cross to his place of his execution. He was stripped naked and then pierced with nails in his hands and in his feet. He was rejected by man, humiliated and scorned. And in the midst of it all this the father turned his face from him. And in that moment, while physically suffering on the cross, he was completely and utterly alone – isolated from both man and God.

I want to pause and let the weight of all this rest upon you. The Lord our God willingly came down from heaven and subjected himself to this unimaginable suffering. Upon him was inflicted pain we will never experience. Upon him was inflicted spiritual suffering we'll never experience. Upon him was placed the weight of sin for all mankind so that we would never experience it. The enormity of this submissive act is something that we will never be able to fully appreciate. God entered into his creation in the person of Jesus for the purpose of saving his creation. And within this act he subjected himself to complete separation from a perfect union between the Father, the Holy Spirit, and himself. How can we even begin to understand what this actually means? How can we ever even begin to understand the effect that this had on him? It is beyond anything that we could, or even *would*, ever do for ourselves. And to think that he did this not for himself but for us, and even for those who would reject him and consider him an enemy.

This morning I'm focusing on the judgement inflicted upon Jesus for our sake because it stands in stark contrast to Isaiah's prophecy. He writes

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

On this mountain. What is the mountain that the prophet speaks about? It is nothing less than the Messiah, himself; the anointed one. Through his suffering and death he has become our mountain. It is through him that we feast on all that is good; we feast on the forgiveness that he offers us through his body and blood. Today. This morning. When we come to his table, this is what he is

offering each one of us. This is the richest of food, the best of the best. And our Lord offers it to us because he first suffered on our behalf.

He suffered so that we could feast, and not just on anything, but on himself – there is *nothing* better that has ever been offered us, nor will there ever be. He suffered. We feast.

But then Isaiah continues.

⁷ And he will swallow up on this mountain
the covering that is cast over all peoples,
the veil that is spread over all nations.

⁸ He will swallow up death forever;

The veil that was spread over all nations was created in the garden during the first days of creation. It covered the earth the very moment that Adam and Eve withdrew their trust in God and placed it within themselves. In that moment death rose to power and subjected all of creation unto itself. Nothing could escape; no *one* could escape. No one except Jesus. Yet, even *here* the son subjected himself to this veil of death, on our behalf. Even *here* he *allowed* it to cover him. He experienced what all creation was infected with, what all creation was destined towards. And it was physically painful. And it was spiritually unimaginable....

And it was voluntary.

And it was done for our benefit.

Death was swallowed up, forever. Death was conquered. Death no longer had any power over us. It no longer had control. From that moment on, death was no longer something to fear; instead it was given new meaning. God turned death upside down and used it as the doorway through which he now adopts us. Death no longer stings; it sings, for in our baptism our sinful selves are put to death and we are given new life – life that can praise him! Life that can live in joyful response to him.

How great is our God! But he is not done, even after all this. For Isaiah continues:

and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.

Tears wiped away. This is the promise from God and Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise. Through him we have the confidence to proclaim that all will be made right – in creation and in our own lives. Every wrong that we have been subjected to will be made right.... Because of Jesus.

Have you ever thought through that reality? Because of the injustice of what Jesus was subjected to, *our* injustice will be reconciled.

Our Lord and savior was whipped until he almost died. His muscles laid bare, his flesh torn from his body. He was beaten by soldiers, mocked by the crowd, and forced to carry his own cross to his place of his execution. He was stripped naked and then pierced with nails in his hands and in his feet. He was rejected by man, humiliated and scorned. And in the midst of it all this the father turned his face from him. And in that moment, while physically suffering on the cross, he was completely and utterly alone – isolated from both man and God.

You see? The sweetness of our Christ's work that Isaiah promises can only be tasted through the bitterness of Jesus' suffering. Our God willingly experienced hell so that we could experience eternity. He willingly subjected himself to separation from himself so that we could experience an eternity connected to him.

Praise be to God!

Please pray with me.

Lord,

⁹ In that day [we] will say,

“Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the LORD, we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”

Lord we praise you with our words and our actions; we praise you with the lives that we live as a response to all that you have done for us.

Amen.