

Crumbs – Good News for the Diaspora!

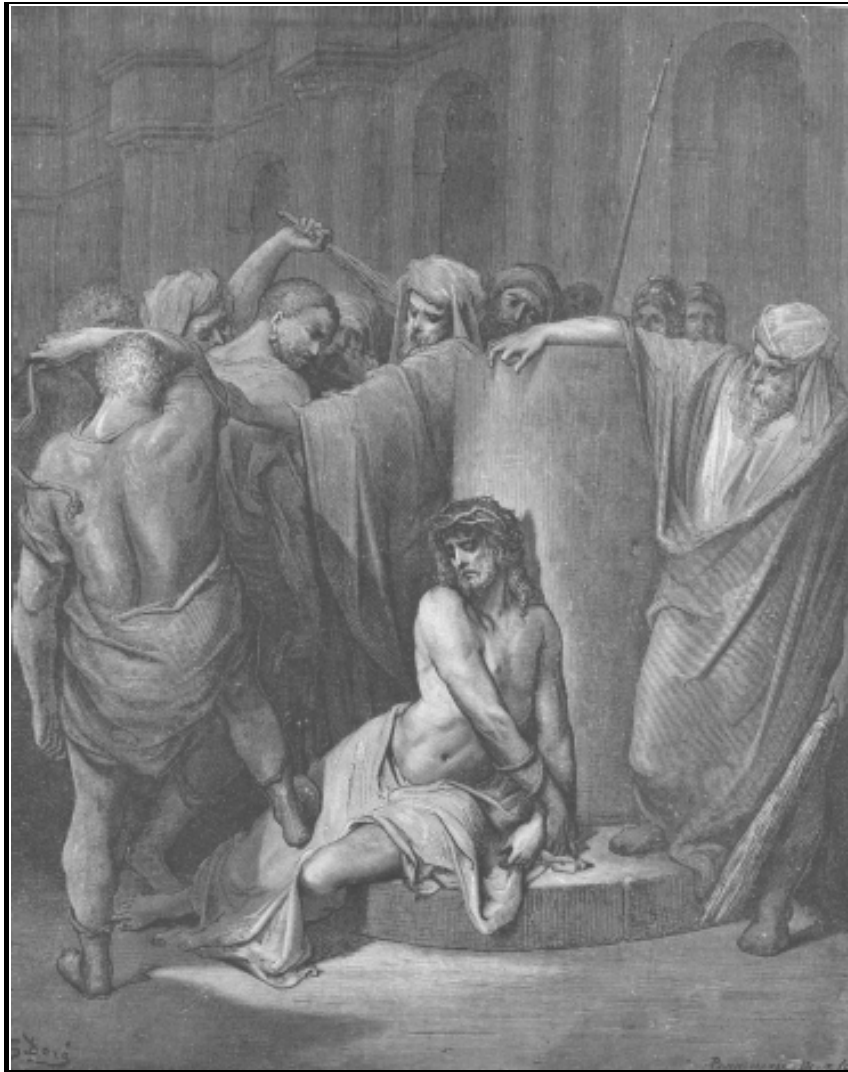


Illustration: The Flagellation

A Devotional for the
Week of the Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

SUNDAY.

Such an high priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.
– Hebrews 7:26.

The high priest of the Church of God in the Old Testament had three duties to perform. In the first place, he had to see that the people kept the Law of God. Secondly, he had to sacrifice for the sins of the people. Thirdly, he had to pray for the people.

All this was imperfect. For, in the first place, the high priest could not keep the Law of God himself. So, secondly, he had to sacrifice for himself also. And what did he sacrifice? Beasts. And thirdly, he himself was in need of intercession. The high priests of the Old Testament were but shadows and types of the true High Priest. "Such an high priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." And Him we have.

Christ is our true and only High Priest. In the first place, seeing that we cannot keep the Law of God, He keeps it for us. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Galatians 4:4-5.) Secondly, He sacrificed for our sins – what? – Himself. "Christ His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," (1 Peter 2:24.) "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29.) "This He did once." (Hebrews 7:27.) In doing so, all was accomplished. Thirdly, He continually intercedes for us before His heavenly Father, pleading the atonement which He has wrought. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:1-2.)

Dear Christian, put your trust wholly and solely in this High Priest.

MONDAY.

PRAYER. – My Lord and Savior, my only High Priest, how merciful You are! You have fulfilled the burdensome Law for me. You have sacrificed Yourself for me. You do, at all times, intercede for me. In You, in You alone, will I trust. You will do it, You will save me. Amen.

Hymn 244.

JESUS, my great High Priest,
Offered His blood and died;
My guilty conscience seeks
No sacrifice beside.
His powerful blood did once atone,
And now it pleads before the throne.

To this dear Surety's hand
Will I commit my cause;
He answers and fulfills
His Father's broken laws.
Behold my soul at freedom set;
My Surety paid the dreadful debt.

My Advocate appears
For my defence on high;
The Father bows His ears,
And lays His thunder by.
Not all that hell or sin can say
Shall turn His heart, His love away.

Should all the hosts of death,
And powers of hell unknown,
Put their most dreadful forms
Of rage and mischief on,
I shall be safe, for Christ displays
Superior power and guardian grace.

I am a King. – John 18:37

Thus the Lord said to Pilate. And truly, He is a King. He is a King whom no king can equal. All majesty on earth is but a faint, paltry, insignificant shadow of His majesty. His majesty is the divine majesty. For "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," in a human body. (Colossians 2:9.) So according both to His divine and His human nature He is King over all. His kingdom and His power extend over heaven, earth, and hell. Heaven is His throne, earth is His footstool, hell is the prison-house of His kingdom.

"By Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:16-17.) "He upholds all things by the word of His power." (Hebrews 1:3.) He rules and reigns over all. All things are subject to Him. Great and small, things present and things to come, death and life: He holds all things in His hand, and guides them according to His counsel with divine omnipotence and omniscience.

What a King! We do not now see that all things are subject to Him; He still suffers Himself to be despised and derided. But what is this present time? A brief moment. Soon and everlastingly it will appear that He is the King. – O Christian, this King is your Savior, your dear, faithful, merciful Savior, who loves you with unutterable and inestimable love. How safe, how blessed are you in His keeping!

– This was speaking of His *Kingdom of Power*.

PRAYER. – Almighty Lord and Savior, King and Lord over all, who will prove Yourself to be strong and terrible to Your enemies: I thank You that You are my Jesus, my dear Savior! Behold, I commend myself into Your strong hands for time and eternity. And I know that these, Your hands, will receive me and keep me. Amen.

Hymn 93, 1. 6.

ALL hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all!

TUESDAY.

Behold, thy King cometh unto thee meek. – Matthew 21:5.

Jesus Christ, the great King, whose kingdom has neither bound nor limit, who will be a terror to His enemies, comes to you – meek. To "you"? To whom? To you who receive Him as your Savior, and desire to be saved through Him. – Let us tell you something. Jesus Christ has a kingdom here on earth, a peculiar kingdom, which ever was a small and insignificant-looking kingdom. To this kingdom all poor sinners belong who believe in Him as their Savior and put their trust in Him. All these taken together constitute His kingdom.

This kingdom is called His *Kingdom of Grace*. There He holds sway with His grace, yes, indeed, with His great, pure, immeasurable grace. He embraces each one who belongs to this kingdom with His wondrous grace, yes, He, the great omnipotent King. In this kingdom He daily and richly forgives all sins. The members of this kingdom He protects, and guides, and directs, and leads, and governs, so that, despite all the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, they remain His own and obtain eternal bliss.

But how, by what perceptible means, does He govern this Kingdom of Grace? By His *Word* alone – nothing else. But in this

Word His – mark! – His Holy Spirit is present, and through it He is operative and effective. Let no one attempt to rule the members of this kingdom by any other means than by the Word of Christ. Let no one attempt to rule at all in this kingdom. Christ alone is the King of this kingdom. He is a meek King, meek toward poor miserable sinners. But these He will draw away from sin through His Word and Holy Spirit, and rule them inwardly, that they may serve Him. My dear Christian, rejoice and thank God for having brought you into this kingdom!

PRAYER. – Meek King, Lord Jesus Christ, I thank You that You have brought me too, a poor sinner, into Your Kingdom of Grace, into this, Your most precious kingdom, where You embrace Your own with great compassion, and lead them to salvation. Dearly beloved Lord Jesus, let me remain in this kingdom until my eyelids shall close in death. Amen.

Hymn 138, 4. 5.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ,
Adorned with prayer, and love, and joy;
So shall your Sovereign enter in,
And new and nobler life begin;
To Thee, O God, be praise,
For word, and deed, and grace!

Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me Thy inner presence feel,
Thy grace and love in me reveal;
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on,
Until our glorious goal be won!
Eternal praise and fame
We offer to Thy name.

WEDNESDAY.

The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom. – 1 Timothy 4:18.

Jesus Christ, the King of the Kingdom of Power and the King of the Kingdom of Grace, also has a heavenly kingdom, a kingdom prepared for us who here on earth are His own, a kingdom into which all those shall enter who here on earth have been in the Kingdom of Grace; when they leave the earth they shall enter this heavenly kingdom.

This is called the *Kingdom of Glory*; for there is nothing but honor and glory. There we shall be wholly free of everything that here we call evil. There our prayer, "Deliver us from evil," will in fullest measure be granted. There shall forever be fullness of honor and glory such as we cannot even conceive of now. There our souls shall ever be abundantly satisfied, rejoicing over all the gifts of heaven; and we shall never once grow weary of them, but shall ever desire them anew, and there shall be ever new abundance. And so it shall be in all eternity. That will be our true home, purchased for us by the Savior with His precious blood. There we shall enjoy real life graciously merited for us by Christ. There let your heart and mind be directed! Who would continue to bemoan the hardships of the journey since this is the goal?

And the Savior has promised, the King has assured us that He will bring us there. Doubt not! Say: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom." Ah, your Savior does not treat you parsimoniously. Here He showers upon you the fullness of His grace, and there He will give you the fullness of His glory. Abide with Him, remain His own!

PRAYER. – Ah yes, O great, rich, gracious, lavishly bountiful King, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, give me all, yes, all Your grace and glory. I cannot comprehend it. But You have promised it. Oh, therefore give it to me, O Lord, my dear Savior! Amen.

Hymn 238, 4. 5.

Jesus, hail! Whose glory brightens
All above, and makes it fair:
Lord of life, Thy smile enlightens,
Cheers and charms Thy people here.
When we think of love like Thine,
Lord, we own it love divine.

King of glory, reign forever,
Thine an everlasting crown;
Nothing from Thy love shall sever
Those whom Thou hast made Thine own,
Happy objects of Thy grace,
Destined to behold Thy face.

THURSDAY.

He humbled Himself. – Philippians 2:8.

Jesus Christ was "in the form of God." His human nature, being personally united with His divinity, possessed all divine majesty. And still, "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God." The use of this majesty communicated to His human nature the Lord Jesus did not hold so fast as one does a spoil. "But He made Himself of no reputation." He made no show of His divine majesty, He waived the constant and full use of it. He "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man."

You see this in the Bible stories of the evangelists. He was born a little, frail infant. He grew up, was obedient to His parents, learned, toiled, ate, drank, waked, slept, was fatigued, became sad, while at another time He was glad. He also walked from one place to another. To the will of His Father, who had foreordained this, He "became

obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philippians 2:5-8.) Thus He humbled Himself. This is called the *State of Humiliation* in which He remained from His conception to His burial. In this state He did not, according to His human nature, make use of the divine majesty which was communicated to it. Only when He performed divine works, miracles, or when He spoke words of divine majesty, did He suffer His divine majesty to shine forth.

Why did Jesus Christ humble Himself so? Having become our Substitute, He wanted to redeem us by His obedience to the divine Law and by His bitter suffering and death. How could He have done this if He had used His divine glory always and fully? See Him in His deep humiliation, my dear Christian, and thank Him for it with all your heart!

PRAYER. – Lord Jesus Christ, divinely glorious Savior, I thank You that also for my sake You did so exceedingly humble Yourself as to become like me - poor lost and damned sinner in all things, sin alone excepted. Kindle faith in You in my heart and true love toward You through this blessed Gospel truth, and finally let me see Your glory in the realms of eternal glory. Amen.

Hymn 157, 3. 7.

He lays aside His power divine, | A servant's form doth take
In want and lowness He doth pine | Who heaven and earth did make.

He serves, that I a lord may be; | A great exchange, indeed!
Could Jesus' love do more for me, | To help me in my need?

FRIDAY.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him.

– *Philippians 2:9.*

God has raised Christ from the state of obedient humiliation, and has exalted Him to the very highest height and sublimity. Now

Christ, according to His human nature, uses the divine majesty communicated unto it continually and fully, unrestrictedly. God has given to the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, a name which is above every name. At the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11.) Blessed is he who gladly does this, believing here, beholding there in eternal bliss! Woe unto him who, in unbelief, refuses to do this here! One day lie will be compelled to do it trembling and wailing dreadfully.

– This is called Jesus Christ's *State of Exaltation*. Our Lord entered this state when He was quickened in the grave and, having triumphantly descended into hell, showed Himself to His disciples as the Risen One, and when he ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. In this State of Exaltation all the world shall see Him when He will come again to judge the quick and the dead. And in this state He will remain forever.

My dear Christian, know your Savior, your beloved Savior, who so dearly loves you in His exaltation. And then rejoice exceedingly! Who or what can harm you – who or what can rob you of salvation, since your Savior is exalted above all things and encompasses you, and guards and protects you with His great divine power?

PRAYER. – Lord Jesus, my Savior, gladly do I bow my knee at Your name; with great rejoicing do I confess that You are the Lord, to the glory of Your Father, who has both humbled and exalted You for my salvation. I commit myself into Your hands, which were affixed to the cross for me, and which now have all divine power. O Lord Jesus, my glorious Savior. I wait for and hope in You alone; save me! Amen.

Hymn 235.

A hymn of glory let us sing;
New songs throughout the world shall ring:
By a new way none ever trod.
Christ mounteth to the throne of God.

May our affections thither tend,
And thither constantly ascend,
Where, seated on the Father's throne,
Thee reigning in the heavens we own!

Be Thou our present Joy, O Lord,
Who wilt be ever our Reward:
And as the countless ages flee,
May all our glory be in Thee!

All glory to the Father be,
All glory, Jesus Christ, to Thee,
Who didst heaven above ascend,
And to the Spirit, without end.

SATURDAY.

Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient. – 1 Peter 3:18-20.

"Christ was put to death in the flesh." As concerns His flesh, His human nature, His life on this earth, He was put to death. "But quickened by the Spirit." As concerns His spirit, His divine nature, His life as it was controlled by this spirit, He was quickened. Hence the man Jesus, put to death, was quickened on the third day, so that now He is in divine glory. In this divine glory the Man Jesus Christ, put to death, but quickened, went and preached unto the spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient.

This prison is hell. There are the spirits of unbelievers, the disobedient. To them Jesus Christ preached, living in divine glory. What did He preach to them? His victory. To the devils, too, He preached this. "He spoiled principalities and powers; He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Colossians 2:15.)

Christ's descension into hell was a triumphal procession, His preaching in hell a cry of victory. Hell must know that He has conquered, and that, on the contrary, it has lost. This was the first act of the Exalted. If there are spirits in hell to whom Jesus preached His victory, then there are also spirits in heaven who were informed of His victory. The former wailed, and the latter rejoiced.

Let us here on earth rejoice over the victory and the exaltation of our Savior, that we may belong "to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:23), joining them in their songs of praise when our earthly pilgrimage will have been ended.

PRAYER. – Lord Jesus, exalted Savior, who does declare Yourself to the living and the dead, let us who are living in this time of grace receive Your testimony in true faith, that when our last hour comes we may depart this life, not passing into howling unrest, but into jubilant peace. Hear me, O my blessed Lord, who was dead and will live in all eternity. Amen.

Hymn 225, 4.

He whose path no records tell,
Who descended into hell,
Who the strong man armed hath bound,
Now in highest heaven is crowned:
Hallelujah!

These devotions are adapted from *Crumbs* by C. M. Zorn (1914).
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