

## The Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Hymns: 27, 404, 385, 14

The INTROIT

(Ps.54:4,5,1)

*P: Behold God is my Helper;*

**C: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.**

*P: He shall reward evil unto my enemies;*

**C: cut them off in Thy truth, O Lord.**

*P: Save me, O God, by Thy name;*

**C: and judge me by Thy strength.**

The COLLECT

Let Thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please Thee; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said,

Blessed *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness,

and the power, and the glory,

and the victory, and the majesty:

for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*;

thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD,

and thou art exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honour *come* of thee,

and thou reignest over all;

and in thine hand *is* power and might;

and in thine hand *it is* to make great,

and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God,

we thank thee,

and praise thy glorious name.

The GRADUAL

(Ps.8:1; 112:1)

*P: O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth:*

**C: who hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

*P: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord:*

**C: that delighteth greatly in His commandments. Hallelujah!**

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

The SENTENCE for the Season

(Ps. 119:124)

*P:* *Hallelujah! O Lord, deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy and teach me Thy statutes. I am Thy servant, give me understanding:*

**C:** **that I may know Thy testimonies. Hallelujah!**

## The HOLY GOSPEL

St. Luke 16:1-9

And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

## 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 — “Blessed Be Thou, Lord God of Israel Our Father”

### INTRODUCTION

- I. WHEREFORE DAVID BLESSED THE LORD BEFORE ALL THE CONGREGATION
- II. BLESSED BE THOU, LORD GOD OF ISRAEL OUR FATHER
- III. THINE, O LORD, IS THE GREATNESS

### CONCLUSION

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1 Chronicles 29:10-13 — “Blessed Be Thou, Lord God of Israel Our Father”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

The reading from the Old Testament appointed for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity is 1  
Chronicles 29:10-13:

**Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David  
said,**

**Blessed *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.  
Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness,  
and the power, and the glory,  
and the victory, and the majesty:  
for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*;  
thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD,  
and thou art exalted as head above all.  
Both riches and honour *come* of thee,  
and thou reignest over all;  
and in thine hand *is* power and might;  
and in thine hand *it is* to make great,  
and to give strength unto all.**

**Now therefore, our God,  
we thank thee,  
and praise thy glorious name.**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### INTRODUCTION

**“God is still in control!”** I cannot remember how many times I have heard people say this. When I have heard it said, I know that it has been said with the intention of expressing faith in God’s faithfulness. But is this really the kind of speaking that the true faith produces in the sons of God? Is this sense of resignation to the sovereignty of God really an expression of faith?

In today’s text we encounter a very different expression of worship and praise to God. Here David leads the congregation in a form of worship that is not like what is commonly expressed among the peoples. Here David blesses the LORD according to the response of true faith, and leads the people to understand the true nature of the worship that flows from true faith.

#### I. WHEREFORE DAVID BLESSED THE LORD BEFORE ALL THE CONGREGATION

**Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation, . . .**

This is the conclusion of the forty years that David ruled over Israel as the king whom the

LORD had anointed over Israel. David had desired to build a house for the name of the LORD, but the LORD had told David that David would not be the one building a house for the LORD. Rather, the LORD declared that He would build an everlasting house for David. Nevertheless, the LORD also declared that Solomon, David's son, would build a temporal house of worship where God's name would be blessed for the sake of the people of God.

David has brought together the materials for the construction of the temple. He has appointed the craftsmen who would serve under Solomon's rule to build the temple. Everything has been made ready for the building of the temple, and now, the LORD's anointed joyously yields the throne to his successor, joyously looking forward to the fulfilment of his heart's desire.

David has long awaited this day. In his heart he desired to have a temple established in the land to stand as a symbol to the people of the enduring goodness and mercy of the LORD. David truly desired that the people would be blessed to know the promise of the LORD's salvation, the promise of the Seed of the woman, the promise of the Seed of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the promise of the Seed of Jesse and of David, the one who is the LORD's anointed from eternity, the one whose name is salvation, Jesus, God's only-begotten Son.

It is for this reason that the LORD anointed Moses to lead the people out of Egypt and to continue leading them through the wilderness for forty years. Now, David has likewise completed the forty years that the LORD appointed for him to lead God's people. Now it is time that the temple should be constructed to stand as the place of congregating in the name of the LORD until the LORD's salvation should be born to His people through the blessed Virgin.

**“Wherefore.”** It is in this knowledge that David now kneels before the face of all the congregation, kneeling to the LORD their God, calling on His name to bless the name of everlasting glory. David, the king of Israel, kneels before the people. He kneels not as a lord over the people, but as a servant of the Word, a servant anointed by God to serve the Word on behalf of the people. Thus the king humbly kneels in worship and praise and thanksgiving that flows from the knowledge of the goodness and mercy of the LORD.

II. BLESSED BE THOU, LORD GOD OF ISRAEL OUR FATHER

**Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said,**

**Blessed *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.**

**“Blessed be Thou, O LORD God of Israel.”** This is what the Lord Jesus teaches us in the Our Father when He teaches us to pray, **“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.”** This is how God's name is blessed among us, when we cling to His name, depending upon His name as the name of our salvation. His name is holy because He is holy, but among us, His name is kept holy in our congregating when we trust Him as the one and only source of salvation and blessing. Then we call upon His name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks, knowing that the goodness and mercy of the LORD endures forever, trusting that the temporal things that we crave and lust after are not the blessings that we really need. Yes, we know that God gives all good things, but the blessings of house and home and food and clothing and family and friends and good government are all temporal and eventually fail us. While we certainly should give hearty thanks to God for all of these things, they are not the basis for our thanksgiving and praise. Rather, the only blessing that lasts, the only blessing that never fails, is

the gift of the Gospel, the gift of the Savior who comes to us through the pure preaching of the Word and the pure administration of the Sacraments. These are the things for which we congregate. These are the blessings by which we are blessed everlastingly.

**Blessed *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.**

When we speak thus, this is not a choice that we make. It is the outflow of the heart that has received the anointing of the one true faith. Far from being a choice that believers make, this is the choice that the LORD has made for us. He is the one who produces this blessing that dwells in our hearts by faith so that it overflows and comes out as blessing the name of the LORD. All that we are really doing is expressing what God Himself has taught us in our hearts so that we believe it and express it in our daily lives.

**Blessed *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.**

Truly the LORD is the blessed one. He is the one who comes to us to bestow upon us every blessing of heart, body, soul, and mind. He is the Wonderful Counselor, the Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. He comes to us by the means of the Word, both as His Word is rightly preached and as the Word is poured over us in Baptism and as the Word is fed to us in the bread and the wine. He comes with blessing, for His presence is the very gift of life. When He comes to us through these means, He does not come in the blazing glory of His almighty power; He does not come in the judgment that condemns us on account of our rebellion and sin; He does not come to us except in compassion and mercy and forgiveness. For this is the only way that we can receive Him. His love and mercy humble us so that we fall to our knees, confessing our unworthiness, trusting in the faith that He works in us, so that we receive His forgiveness and mercy to rise up in hope and joy to carry us through the many trials of this evil age.

*Israel* means *Prevails with God*. This name was given to Jacob, the one named thus when at his birth he grabbed hold of his brother's heel. This is who Jacob was according to his own nature. He was a heal-grabber. Throughout his life he was always grasping after this and that. His grasping after things caused him much turmoil, to the point that he had to flee for his life because of the treacherous way that he sought the everlasting blessing of God, tricking his father, robbing his brother, and all this at his mother's bidding. Rather than trusting God to work His promises according to His good and gracious will, Jacob grabbed after the heel of the blessings that God planned to give freely without any effort on Jacob's part.

The name of Israel or *prevails-with-God* was given after the LORD had humbled Jacob through many trials. Jacob was on his way home again and was about to be met by his brother. The LORD came to Jacob and Jacob wrestled with the LORD all night. In this way the LORD taught Jacob that he could not obtain God's blessings by his own efforts, that Jacob could not obtain God's blessings by striving to take hold of them for himself. Rather, after wrestling with the LORD all night, the LORD dislocated Jacob's hip, rendering Jacob helpless to follow after Him and then began to depart. But Jacob cried out saying that he dared not let go without receiving the LORD's blessing. Then the LORD gave Jacob the new name of victory, Israel, *Prevails-with-God*. Jacob did not get this blessing by taking hold of God, but by losing to God. When the LORD took away Jacob's ability to follow by his own strength, Jacob had nothing left but the faith in which his father had catechized him so that by faith alone he cried out, believing that God would bless him purely by grace. Thus God blessed Jacob with the name that would catechize God's people forevermore in the doctrine of salvation, teaching us that salvation is by grace through faith, and this not of ourselves, it is the gift God, not of works, lest any of us should

boast. (Eph. 2)

### III. THINE, O LORD, IS THE GREATNESS

With this declaration David proceeds to bless the name of the LORD before the people, teaching and praying the blessing by which God's name is hallowed among us. David prays: **"Thine, O LORD, is the greatness."**

David had gathered together gold and silver and bronze and iron and all sorts of expensive materials for the construction of the temple. He had used his authority as the king of Israel to bring together multitudes of craftsmen to build the temple and its furnishings. He had set the example before the people so that they likewise brought of their treasures and offered many gifts for the building of the temple.

But now, having congregated the people together, David humbly prostrates himself before the LORD and declares, **"Thine, O LORD, is the greatness."**

This is very different from the preachers of our age, the preachers who teach that people should claim their blessings. Amazingly, such preachers hardly mention and often completely omit the only blessing that we absolutely must receive. Family and friends, house and home, justice and vindication, financial freedom and abundance, loving spouse, obedient and loving children, physical health and healing, these and many other forms of worldly mammon are continually preached to people as blessings that should be expected and perhaps even patiently awaited. But what do any of these really matter? The Lord Jesus reminded people that God makes His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon both the unbeliever and the believer alike. However, the blessings of a pure heart, purified through the gift of the Holy Spirit in Baptism and the gift of the faith that the Holy Spirit creates, as well as the blessings of partaking of God's Holy Communion, these are rarely even mentioned if at all.

**"Thine, O LORD, is the greatness."** This is how David begins this public blessing of the LORD as the God of Israel their father. The greatness is not of Israel. The greatness is not of the children. The greatness is not of David as king. The greatness is not of the praise itself. Rather, Israel and the people and the king and even their praise receive their blessings and value from the greatness of the one being praised, the LORD, the God of Israel.

This is a very different understanding of worship and praise. It has the heart and will of God as both its beginning and end. God Himself initiates and ordains the praise that He receives. He gives this praise to His children as a gift by which they are kept within the Holy Communion of His blessedness forever and ever. True worship of God is God's gift to the congregation. He ordains the means by which He carries us into His blessedness and by which we are made to be partakers of His praise.

And so there is no use of such language as **"We just . . ."** Any praise that begins with **"We just want to praise You,"** and any thanks that begins with **"We just want to thank You,"** has been turned upside down and inside out.

David teaches us the nature and pattern of true praise, saying,

**Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.  
Thine, O LORD, is the greatness,**

**and the power, and the glory,  
and the victory, and the majesty:  
for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*;  
thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD,  
and thou art exalted as head above all.  
Both riches and honour *come* of thee,  
and thou reignest over all;  
and in thine hand *is* power and might;  
and in thine hand *it is* to make great,  
and to give strength unto all.**

These are statements of fact, not of what we do. These are statements of what the LORD has revealed concerning Himself, not of what we choose to believe or of what we choose to say. These are the praises that flow from knowing the LORD as our God.

This is what David expresses in the concluding sentence of this portion, saying,

**Now therefore, our God,  
we thank thee,  
and praise thy glorious name.**

This is the result of what God has done. His greatness and power and glory and victory and majesty and kingdom are the very source of the praises that we exclaim. It is His love that moves us to praise Him. It is His love that moves us to love Him. It is His mercy that changes our hard hearts so that we are recreated to be merciful just as our Father in heaven is merciful. It is His graciousness and endless generosity that causes graciousness and generosity to be born in us. Even when we act in these blessed ways we are the recipients, not the givers and doers.

Thus in the verses that follow our text David explains:

**But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding. O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee: And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, *for* the which I have made provision. (1 Chronicles 29:14-19)**

Truly the LORD is the one who produces this faith and these praises that flow from the faith that He alone works in us. He keeps us in His grace. He gives all that we have and are and further gives the attitude of the heart that produces the thanks and praise by which we are built up together in His grace mercy and peace. Truly this is the LORD's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes.

## CONCLUSION

Solomon did oversee the building of the temple that David earnestly desired to build. The temple did stand for many years as a witness to the faith that David proclaimed and that all of the faithful prophets proclaimed. The temple stood for many years as the place where the LORD united His people as one through the sacrifices that directed them to trust in the grace of God that was and is in Christ Jesus.

But this temple was not the everlasting tabernacle. David desired to build a house for the LORD, and the Lord lovingly provided David with the means to build the temple which Solomon would build. But this was only a temporal house for God's holy name. It would not and could not last. In it the holiness of God's name would be profaned many times so that eventually God would have to destroy it. It would be rebuilt again, years later, only to be profaned again many times so that it would be permanently destroyed after the everlasting tabernacle had been crucified and raised again both from the dead and to the highest heaven. This is the house that the LORD has established for David and which we have inherited. We are that house as we have been made to be living stones in the building of God's everlasting tabernacle, the body of Jesus Christ, the LORD.

We are made to be members of God's house. He works this miracle for us. For His is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus forever. Amen.