

The INTROIT

(Ps.86:1,3,5)

P: Righteous art Thou, O Lord,

C: and upright are Thy judgements.

P: Deal with Thy servant according to Thy mercy.

C: Blessed are the undefiled in the way who walk in the Law of the Lord.

The COLLECT

Lord, we beseech Thee, grant Thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the devil and with pure hearts and minds to follow Thee, the only God; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth, and reigneth, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

1 Samuel 2:1-10

And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD *is* a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. *They that were* full have hired out themselves for bread; and *they that were* hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory:

for the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness;

for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

THE GRADUAL

(Ps.102:15,16;115:11)

P: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord:

C: and the people whom He hath chosen for his own inheritance.

P: By the word of the Lord were the heavens made:

C: and all the host of them by the Breath of His mouth. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

P: The right hand of the Lord is exalted:

C: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. Hallelujah!

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

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 14:1-11

And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things.

And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

1 Samuel 2:1-10 — “Because I Rejoice in Thy Salvation”

INTRODUCTION

I. BECAUSE I REJOICE IN THY SALVATION

II. THERE IS NONE HOLY AS THE LORD

III. THE ADVERSARIES OF THE LORD SHALL BE BROKEN TO PIECES

CONCLUSION

The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Hymns: 17, 444, 463, 465

1 Samuel 2:1-10 — “Because I Rejoice in Thy Salvation”

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

The appointed reading of the Old Testament for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity is Hannah’s prayer from 1 Samuel 2:1-10:

And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. *They that were* full have hired out themselves for bread; and *they that were* hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory:

for the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD’s, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness;

for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth;

and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

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

INTRODUCTION

“**And Hannah prayed . . .**” With these words the Holy Spirit presents to us the response of the woman, Hannah. Her response to the various circumstances in her life, both those circumstances that troubled her and those circumstances that gave relief to her soul, was to pray. Her name means *grace* or *favor*. And so our text opens with one who is named and filled with grace being moved to pray. As we examine Hannah’s prayer we will discover the pure grace by which true prayer fills the life of one who knows and rejoices in the LORD’s salvation.

I. BECAUSE I REJOICE IN THY SALVATION

A man had two wives, one named Hannah or Grace and the other named Peninnah or Jewel. Lovely names for the women. Peninnah had been blessed by the LORD to have children while Hannah's womb had been closed by the LORD. Their husband, Elkanah, was a godly man who brought his family to the house of the LORD to worship and to offer the annual sacrifices. But Peninnah kept provoking Hannah, troubling her and tormenting her over her barrenness. In her grief Hannah was moved to pray to the LORD. In the Scriptural account we are told of the severity of Hannah's grief, and yet the only response that is mentioned is that she fasted and prayed to the LORD. How sad for Peninnah that rather than giving thanks to God for her blessedness, especially as her husband brought the family to the LORD's house, instead, she gloated and sought to torment Hannah. Why did Peninnah not pray for Hannah to be blessed with children, especially as they went together to the house of the LORD to offer the sacrifices that were commanded by God to keep His people in the communion of the promised Seed of woman by which forgiveness and salvation would be provided for all the world?

Yet Hannah prayed to the LORD. Finally, her grief was so strong that Hannah prayed in such earnestness that Eli, the priest, mistakenly presumed her to be drunk. But she had been praying from the depths of her soul, vowing to the LORD to devote her son to the LORD's house and the service of the Word all his days, if only the LORD would bless her with a son. Such was her understanding of the blessings of God connected to marriage. When she explained to Eli that she had been praying, Eli changed his judgment of her, and turned to her and blessed her in the name of the LORD. Upon hearing this, Hannah's countenance was lifted up so that she no longer grieved. She trusted the blessing that her prayer was heard of the LORD. When her son was born, this is what she named him, *heard of God*, that is, Samuel.

Hannah nursed Samuel until it was time for him to be weaned, and then with a joyous heart she fulfilled her vow unto the LORD. She brought her son and presented him to Eli, the priest, to serve in the LORD's house all the days of his life. Then flowed from her heart the prayer that we have for our text on this day. Her prayer begins with these words:

And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

Can there be any doubt that this prayer is a prayer that flows from God's grace that dwelt in Hannah's heart? Consider the richness of the grace that these words declare.

She says: My heart rejoiceth in the LORD. Notice what she does not say. She does not say that her heart rejoiceth in the birth of her son or in being blessed to be a mother. She says that her heart rejoiceth in the LORD, that is, in His goodness and mercy and love.

Next she says: Mine horn is exalted in the LORD. Again, her horn or strength is not in having become a mother or in having a son or in anything that she has done or in the fleshly blessing that she has received, but in the LORD.

Thirdly she says: My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. She rejoices in the LORD's salvation. This word is Y'shua, that is, Jesus! Thus her mouth is enlarged over her enemies. Her mouth, her words, tower over everything that her enemies have to say. Peninnah chose to speak evil and to use her mouth to cause pain for Hannah. But Hannah rejoiced in Jesus, the LORD's salvation, and so her words were words of

grace and mercy and forgiveness and blessing. Such is the judgment of those who truly rejoice in Jesus, the name of grace, mercy, and peace that surpasses understanding.

The Hebrew word for prayer in this text is a word that means judgment and mediation as well as intercession and prayer. From this we learn that when a person's heart is filled with the LORD's gracious judgment of salvation that the person is moved to respond with prayer that reflects the LORD's judgment of salvation to the person and to the world. This is what we learn from the prayer that the Holy Spirit poured into Hannah's heart, the prayer that then flowed from her heart to her lips, and is recorded for our blessing this day.

II. THERE IS NONE HOLY AS THE LORD

Hannah's prayer continues with a confession of what the Law declares:

There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Here we learn what the purpose of the Law of the LORD really is. The Law was given to Moses, written with the finger of God upon the tablets of stone to be presented in perpetuity to those whom the LORD calls to be His people of faith. The Law is not given to condemn us. Neither is the Law given to teach us what we must do. The Law is given to teach us of the one and only one who is truly holy. The Law is given to teach us to know the holiness of the LORD our God. The Law is given to hold before us in unmistakable terms the fact that all holiness and all goodness is found in communion with the LORD. There is no holiness apart from the communion of the Holy Trinity. God alone is holy. God alone is good.

This is why the LORD's salvation, Jesus, is the source of Hannah's and our rejoicing. The Law shows us the holiness of the LORD our God. The Law shows us the holiness that the LORD desires to bestow upon us by grace through faith. The Law shows us that we cannot obtain this by anything that we think, say, or do, but that God must work His holiness in us through His means of grace, the means that He has ordained to be administered to us in His body, His Church. As we are brought into the oneness of His Holy Communion, His holiness, His salvation is declared to be ours. And what God declares is accomplished for us. Nothing can hinder what God sends forth His Word to accomplish. His Word is salvation. His Word is Jesus. And in Jesus, we rejoice in the LORD's salvation.

Hannah teaches us that there is none holy as the LORD. Jesus declared this to the man who came to Him and called Jesus "Good Teacher," asking Jesus to judge the man's works as worthy of everlasting life.

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for*

he had great possessions. (Matthew 19:16-22)

What a contrast between this man's prayer and Hannah's prayer. This man does not come to Jesus trusting in the LORD's salvation, but seeking to be good according to something that he would choose to do. Jesus calls the man to recognize that he should not look upon Jesus as good unless he first confess Jesus is LORD, that is, Jesus is God. This man called Jesus Good Teacher, as if Jesus were just another teacher of the Law. Thus, the man sought to be righteous according to his own attempts at fulfilling the works of the Law.

Hannah, however, realized that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. She rejoiced in the fulfillment of all righteousness that is accomplished in the LORD's salvation. She rejoiced in the promise that salvation would come through the birth of the Seed of woman, the Son of Mary, Immanuel. This One is truly good, truly holy, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God. He is goodness incarnate. He is the LORD's salvation in whom alone all goodness and all cause for rejoicing are found.

Truly Hannah's prayer is one of true faith as she proclaims, her mouth being enlarged over her enemies, saying:

There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

III. THE ADVERSARIES OF THE LORD SHALL BE BROKEN TO PIECES

With many joyful words of God's grace Hannah continues to pour forth the prayer that the Holy Spirit moved her to pray, blessing the name of the LORD and proclaiming His wondrous works of salvation, until she concludes her prayer saying:

for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

No man shall prevail by his own strength. Quite to the contrary, Saint Paul reiterates what the Lord Jesus conveyed to him,

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

When we examine ourselves honestly, what strength do we find within our own nature? Everything that we attempt by our own strength ends in failure. Ultimately our wages is death and decomposition. Wow! Isn't that a glorious end to all of our labor? All of our best efforts end in failure and even worse than failure, condemnation. This is what the Law shows us. Apart from God and His loving-kindness, nothing good exists. By our own efforts, by our own works, by our own attempts at goodness, we fail so miserably that we face total and complete

condemnation.

But as Hannah's prayer confesses, **"The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."** This thunderous judgment was manifested upon Mount Sinai. It was repeated upon Mount Calvary, as the sun was darkened at midday, and as the Lord Jesus breathed out His spirit and the earth trembled and shook and spilt open to release many saints who had died in the LORD. The adversaries of the LORD: namely, sin, death, and the power of the devil were broken to pieces never stand against the LORD and His children again. The LORD's anointed, the LORD's Christ, demolished the power of sin and death and crushed Satan's adversary power by dying under the curse of sin, having done no sin Himself. Then, with the power of His own holiness He rose again from the dead, death having no power over Him who Himself is Life and Goodness and Salvation. On the Last Day Jesus shall return, in the flesh, to pronounce the final judgement and bring with Hannah, all who have rejoiced in the LORD's salvation. Those who were falsely judged by the world as barren and beggarly shall be revealed as the princes of heavenly glory. All the heavy sighing and crying out in grief shall be turned to everlasting joy in the LORD's salvation by the power of His Christ.

CONCLUSION

Because I rejoice in Thy Salvation! Is this not the daily motif of the life of God's saints? Is this not what fills our hearts and minds and spirits as we walk in the life of grace that God pours out to us through the preaching and the liturgy and the Sacraments? Is this not what we have gathered this day to receive by God's gracious declaration? Is this not what the Holy Spirit calls us and gathers us to partake of together by His grace? Once again we have heard the Holy Spirit's gracious calling. Once again we have gathered to receive the divine service of the administration of His grace. Once again we have heard the Gospel proclaimed in clear words. Once again we are filled with rejoicing in His salvation. Once again we prepare to come to His Table where He sets before us to eat the body of His Holy Communion and to drink the blood of His New Testament of forgiveness and salvation and life everlasting. Truly we have immeasurable cause to rejoice without ceasing and to pray without ceasing. God grant that this always be the foundation of our lives and the fullness of our prayers. 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.