

## Oculi - The Third Sunday in Lent

Hymns: 467, 262, 370, 427

*(omit Gloria, responses before & after the Gospel reading, and other ascriptions of praise during Lent. )*

The INTROIT

(Ps. 25:15,16,1,2)

*P: Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord;*

**C: for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.**

*P: Turn Thee unto me and have mercy upon me;*

**C: for I am desolate and afflicted.**

*P: Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul;*

**C: O my God, I trust in Thee; let me not be ashamed.**

*(The "Gloria in Excelsis" is omitted during the Penitential Season of Lent)*

The COLLECT

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of Thy humble servants and stretch forth the right hand of Thy majesty to be our defense against all our enemies; 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

**2 Samuel 22:1-7**

And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence. I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

THE GRADUAL

(Ps. 91:1-2,4,11-12)

*P: Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail; let the heathen be judged in Thy sight.*

**C: When mine enemies are turned back; they shall fall and perish at Thy presence.**

*P: Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens.*

**C: Have mercy upon us, O Lord have mercy upon us.**

The EPISTLE

**Ephesians 5:1-9**

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean

person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth).

The SENTENCE for the Season

(Philippians 2:8)

*P: Christ has humbled himself, and become obedient unto death:*

**C: even the death of the cross.**

## The HOLY GOSPEL

St. Luke 11:14-28

And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? Because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

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“The One to be praised I will call/proclaim, Yahweh, and from my enemies I will be saved.”

2 Samuel 22:1-7 — “I Will Call on the LORD, Who Is Worthy to Be Praised”

### INTRODUCTION

I. AND DAVID SPAKE UNTO THE LORD THE WORDS OF THIS SONG

II. THE LORD IS MY ROCK, AND MY FORTRESS, AND MY DELIVERER

III. I WILL CALL ON THE LORD, WHO IS WORTHY TO BE PRAISED

### CONCLUSION

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### 2 Samuel 22:1-7 — “I Will Call on the LORD, Who Is Worthy to Be Praised”

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

The appointed Old Testament reading for this day of Oculi is 2 Samuel 22:1-7:

**And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence. I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.**

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

#### INTRODUCTION

In the collect of the day we cried out collectively as the Church on earth:

**We beseech Thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of Thy humble servants and stretch forth the right hand of Thy majesty to be our defense against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.**

We cry out in the name of the LORD for a reason. The reason is that He is worthy of praise. He is the One who has saved us. He is praiseworthy. He is trustworthy. He has promised to save us and in the suffering and death of Jesus He has saved us. This is why we call out in His name. This is why we turn to Him in our needs. In Him we find the salvation that He has worked for us. As we call out in His name, He hears us and answers us with the salvation that Jesus has accomplished for us. He gives us the faith that moves us to trust Him and our hearts, minds, and souls respond with the praise that we learn belongs to Him.

#### I. AND DAVID SPAKE UNTO THE LORD THE WORDS OF THIS SONG

Our text begins, saying: **“And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul.”** Two points or perspectives are recorded here regarding worship. The first is from the perspective of David, the king. The second is from those who learned from him and patterned their worship in accord with what they learned from him.

Interestingly and informatively the Scriptures tell us that David spoke unto the LORD the words of this song. David spoke the words of this song. David did not burst out with singing like in some Hollywood musical. No, as the king of Israel, David publicly spoke these words to the LORD. These words became words of praise for the Church, which were set to music and chanted in the liturgical life of the saints.

In Exodus 15 is recorded a similar instance after the LORD had saved the sons of Israel from the army of Pharaoh by means of the baptism in the Red Sea. Moses led the people in speaking the words of the song of deliverance, which Miriam then led the women in singing. This is the way of the Church's worship. We hear the proclamation of the salvation of the LORD and we then sing back what we have heard. The point is not so much whether the Word of the LORD is first spoken or sung, but that we first hear the preaching of the Gospel and then we respond as a congregation with joyful hearts.

Worship is the response of being saved. A bit later we will hear that these two cannot be disconnected. For now, however, as we reflect upon this opening portion of our text, we observe that salvation is purely the doing of the LORD and that true worship is what His acts of salvation produce in us. Our pastors and heads of households declare to us the saving acts of the LORD and we respond by repeating what we have heard. This is the way of true worship. This is the life of the Church.

## II. THE LORD IS MY ROCK, AND MY FORTRESS, AND MY DELIVERER

**And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.**

These words are the words of God's anointed one, the king of Israel. David is not speaking only for himself, but as the king whom the LORD anointed over His holy people. David is speaking as a prophet/king. He is speaking as the one through whom the promised Seed of salvation would come into the world. When David speaks of his deliverance from his enemies he is speaking of the salvation of the entire world and especially of the saints of God.

David proclaims these words at a time when as the LORD's anointed he had been given victory over those who opposed God's holy people. This victory was not for David alone, but for all of the people. Many battles had been fought. The armies of Israel faced many terrible foes. All of the enemies were defeated. In view of this, David as king proclaims before the people entrusted to his oversight:

**The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.**

By this action David sets forth the Truth before the people. David was not the deliverer of Israel. David was the one who was delivered. And if the king was not the deliverer, then certainly the people could not begin to claim to have delivered themselves by their own efforts. No, David proclaimed the LORD as the Rock and Fortress and Deliverer. David proclaimed that in God the Rock he will trust. The LORD God is David's shield and the horn of his salvation.

This language uses imagery of protection and power. David continues in this way calling the LORD God his high tower and refuge and savior. A tower was primarily a point of observation. It provided protection through observing the approach and actions of the enemy so that the people could be warned to flee to the refuge where they would be safely hid behind the walls. Far from imagery of people defending themselves, and far from imagery of people defending the Word of God, the watchmen in the tower call out for the people to flee to the protection of the LORD God.

This is what David proclaimed in the day of deliverance. He proclaimed to the people that the LORD is his Rock and his Fortress and his Deliverer. Thereby David proclaimed that the LORD is their Rock and their Fortress and their Deliverer. To this the people responded by learning these words and making them part of their liturgical heritage so that no one should ever be deceived into imagining themselves strong or powerful by their own reason and strength.

### III. I WILL CALL ON THE LORD, WHO IS WORTHY TO BE PRAISED

David continues, saying, **“I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.”** The actual word order says: **“The One to be praised I will call/proclaim, Yahweh, and from my enemies I will be saved.”**

Again David sets forth the reality of faith. The LORD is the One to be praised. He is the One who is worthy. From knowing this, David says that he will call out to the LORD, not only for himself, but for the people. The result is that from his enemies he and the people will be saved.

Next David names his enemies from whom he will be saved.

**When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.**

Does this not sound as though David were living in the Twenty-first Century? Does he not speak of our enemies that we face in our lives? Does this not sound like the threats to body and soul, health and happiness, security and well-being that we face today?

**When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.**

David and the people of Israel faced the same trials and temptations, the same heartaches and discouragements, the same fears, the same forces of evil as we face in our time. And the answer that David proclaims and the saints sang in the liturgy is the same answer that we need to hear today so that we likewise may sing it out and trust in the LORD’s deliverance. **“In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.”**

Oh that the pastors and heads of households still believed this proclamation! Oh that the people would listen and respond in the faith that God has poured out in Baptism! Oh that pastors truly believed in the resurrection of dead that we confess in the creeds so that they would direct people to trust the LORD and call out His name rather than the names of psychologists and doctors and pharmacists. Oh that they would teach the people truly to fear God and rely upon His merciful deliverance so that we would call out the name of the LORD and trust the power of the blood of the New Testament and bring our little ones to the LORD to be forgiven and strengthened and renewed in the life that is poured out freely for all to partake.

Truly, if only we would hear David and respond with the song of the liturgy, then we would see the salvation of the LORD. Then we would call out to the One to be praised and hear the salvation that He has worked for us. Then, no matter how high the waves of death and the floods of ungodly men should rise up we would be saved from our anxieties and our fears. Oh that we would hear and respond with the singing of the liturgy in every occasion, then in the distress of our sorrows of hell and the snares that kill our spirits we would be turned to call out the name of the LORD and our depression would be turned to hope and joy and the peace that surpasses all understanding would keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Yes! This is what the LORD promises us. We do not have to fight to keep our heads above the floods of evil men and we do not have to strive to rise above the waves of death that compass us. Like Peter sinking in the waves all that we need is to hear the words of this song and remember the One who is worthy of praise and call His name and be saved from all that rises up against us in our lives. The only reason that we sink is that like Peter we look away from the One worthy of praise and then we see only the waves. The waves show us how weak and helpless we are. But the name of the LORD is salvation. When we call out His name our hearts and minds are turned back to our Rock and our Fortress and our Deliverer. Even as we call out His name, we are converted again from unbelief to faith and we see that we are saved. When we live the liturgy, the life of the liturgy raises us up to see that the LORD truly is worthy of praise. Then rather than sinking, we continue walking above the waves even though they lash at us furiously.

#### CONCLUSION

In today's gospel reading the LORD was accused of casting out demons through Beelzebub, the devil himself. To this the LORD responds saying that the devil is a strong one who is heavily armed and guards his palace diligently. But the LORD declares that He is the stronger One who comes upon the devil and overcomes him and strips him of his armor and takes away what the devil has taken as his own possession, namely, sinners. Yes, David understood this and proclaimed it in our text. Yes, the Church heard the proclamation and responded by singing it back again and again and again. Such responsive singing keeps us in the name of the LORD by which we are saved. Such responsive singing draws us to the fountain of life where the name of the LORD was placed upon us and the Holy Spirit given to us. Such singing draws us to the table of life, where we partake again and again of the body of unity and of the blood of forgiveness and life and salvation. Such singing resounds in our hearts as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death so that we do not forget the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit and we do not forget the meal of forgiveness and salvation and life. Then we also remember through all the dark and hard times that the LORD does hear from His temple and He calls us to come again into His presence to receive again and again and again the salvation He has prepared for us. Therefore we know that we are safe and we say with David, **“The One to be praised I will call/proclaim, Yahweh, and from my enemies I will be saved.”** 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.