

## Reminiscere - Second Sunday in Lent

Hymns: 5, 145, 149, 518

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

The INTROIT

(Ps. 25:6,2,22;1,2)

*P: Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving-kindnesses;*

**C: for they have been ever of old.**

*P: Let not mine enemies triumph over me;*

**C: God of Israel, deliver us out of all our troubles.**

*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

O God, who seest that of ourselves we have no strength, keep us both outwardly and inwardly that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; 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

**Isaiah 45:20-25**

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the LORD? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

THE GRADUAL

(Ps.25:17,18; 106:1-4)

*P: Christ hath humbled Himself and become obedient unto death; even the death of the cross.*

**C: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him; and given Him a name which is above every name.**

*P: He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.*

**C: He hath given meat unto them that fear Him; He will ever be mindful of His covenant. My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed; he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in me and I in him.**

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

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. Matthew 15:21-28**

Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

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Isaiah 45:20-25 — “Look unto Me, and Be Ye Saved”

INTRODUCTION

I. LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED

II. IN THE LORD HAVE I RIGHTEOUSNESS AND STRENGTH

III. IN THE LORD SHALL ALL THE SEED OF ISRAEL BE JUSTIFIED

CONCLUSION

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Isaiah 45:20-25 — “Look unto Me, and Be Ye Saved”

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

Today is Reminiscere, and the reading of the Old Testament is Isaiah 45:20-25:

**Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the LORD? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.**

**Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.**

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

### INTRODUCTION

The Introit for this day leads us to begin the worship by crying out to the LORD, saying, **“Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old.”** Truly this is the appropriate focus of this Second Sunday in Lent. Truly this is the basis for true worship. Our worship is motivated by the LORD’s remembrance of His tender mercies and loving-kindnesses of old. The LORD has promised not to forget us in our need. The LORD has promised to come to us with salvation. In the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we hear and remember that the LORD does indeed remember. That is why He commanded that we come unto Him to partake of His ancient promises fulfilled as we eat and drink into His remembrance.

#### I. LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED

Today’s text from Isaiah calls to us saying:

**Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the LORD? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.**

The LORD addresses us and calls to us as refugees of the nations or Gentiles. He calls to us as those who have escaped the tyrannies of the ways of the world. He addresses us as poor and helpless refugees who desperately need to be rescued from our plight. To us who have no hope and no strength of our own He commands that we assemble ourselves together for a purpose. Next He declares that marvelous purpose of our congregation, saying,

**Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.**

**“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”** Do we even hear what He is saying to us? Are we even capable of hearing what He says? Are we so busy thinking about what we ought to do that we ignore what He says? Do we try so hard to be faithful and so hard to praise God that His words pass right through us without us really even hearing Him?

**“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”** This is the purpose of our congregation. This is the reason for us to gather together. This is what the LORD calls us together to hear again and again. This is what defines true worship. **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”**

Whatever praise that we present before the LORD God almighty flows from this message. Whatever sacrifices that we make unto the LORD are first received from Him in connection with this proclamation. This is the Great Commission. This is the mission of the Church. **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”**

Our time in this world is a lifetime of repentance. Our lives are a continual conversion experience wherein the LORD calls to us saying, **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”** This is the gracious calling of the LORD unto all the world. He calls to us as those whom He has set apart unto Himself to be saved through His means of grace administered in accord with His promises in His Church, His holy assembling of refugees of the nations.

**Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.**

The LORD is God and there is none else. Apart from Him there is no existence. This is why sin is such a terrible force. Sin separates us from the LORD. Apart from Him we exist without purpose and without hope. Our bodies truly die when sin separates us from the LORD. Our bodies become stinking bags of decay, and all of our works are corrupted by sin. All of the troubles of the world come upon us because we can no longer hear and respond to His words of life. Yet in His mercy the Word of the LORD has gone out in righteousness. Jesus was born of Mary. He lived among us in the world. He took our troubles. He took our sin. He suffered and died in our stead. He rose from the dead so that life would be restored through faith in His meritorious sacrifice. And so the LORD calls to us to gather together and look unto Him and be saved.

## II. IN THE LORD HAVE I RIGHTEOUSNESS AND STRENGTH

Then we receive from Him the salvation that we recite back to Him in our prayers and in the divine service. **“Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.”**

This is the true worship that flows from looking to the LORD and being saved. This worship is the natural response of a heart cleansed and a spirit renewed by God’s grace in Christ. **“In the LORD have I righteousness and strength, even to Him shall men come!”**

The focus is entirely upon the LORD and the saving mercies of the LORD. Notice what is missing in this declaration of praise. Absolutely nothing is said of the actions of the one praising the LORD! Beyond the response of what we see and hear the LORD doing on our behalf, beyond the grace, mercy, and peace of God in Christ Jesus, we say and do nothing. **“In the LORD have I righteousness and strength, even to Him shall men come!”**

In this there is no mention of acts of worthiness on our part. True worship is not about what good things that we bring to the LORD or do for Him. True worship is not about reaching out to the world to bring the multitudes into the Church. This is not the way of a person who has been reborn. No, this is the way of the world. This is the way from which we are called as refugees.

The LORD calls us to flee from such things and to be assembled together as refugees who are then free to cry out unto the LORD in His mercy and acknowledge that it is only in the LORD that we have righteousness. Righteousness is not measured by what we do. Rather what we do is measured by righteousness. God takes the complete righteousness of the Lord Jesus and holds us up to that standard and declares us to be completely righteous. He can do this because the fullness of righteousness is poured into the humanity of our Lord Jesus in His body. In His body the Lord Jesus fulfilled all righteousness for us. In His body the Lord Jesus took all the sin of the world and overcame it by His suffering and death on the cross. In His body the Lord Jesus filled up all the requirements of righteousness once and for all. In His body He called apostles to proclaim the message of His righteousness. In His body He commanded that disciples be made of all nations through the preaching of the Gospel in connection with the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit in Baptism. In His body He instituted the New Testament in His blood by which the Baptized are nurtured and continually renewed in the Communion of His forgiveness, life, and salvation all the days of their lives.

It is to this worship in Spirit and in truth that the LORD calls us to gather together and proclaim His death till He comes. Thus we cry out together unto the LORD and in the unity of His body, **“In the LORD have I righteousness and strength, even to Him shall men come!”**

## III. IN THE LORD SHALL ALL THE SEED OF ISRAEL BE JUSTIFIED

The LORD has sworn this by Himself. He has joined unto Himself our humanity. He took our flesh into Himself. He accomplished and fulfilled all righteousness in the flesh for all who will look upon Him and be saved. And to all of humanity, unto the entire human race He promises, **“In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”**

This statement is far greater in scope than we are first inclined to realize. This is emphasized in today’s Gospel reading. As the LORD declares through Isaiah, His Word has gone

out from His mouth in righteousness so that unto the LORD every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear. Our Gospel reading begins with the Word of God, Jesus, departing into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. These are the regions of the Gentiles. Yet to these regions the Word goes forth to seek the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As the Word of God walks among the people of these regions a woman of Canaan comes unto Him crying out, **“Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.”**

How did this woman of Canaan know the Lord Jesus? Time and time again the Word of the LORD went out from His mouth by His prophets into the world. Time and time again the holy remnant was dragged off with the apostate into the various regions of the world and in these places of exile the holy remnant cried out for all to hear,

**In the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.**

The Lord Jesus makes an example of this woman of Canaan, challenging her regarding her ancestry, so that she shows that even though her genetic ancestry is not of the house of Israel, she nevertheless is one of the refugees of the world who by faith has been reborn as one to be counted as **“In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”**

Truly this woman is one of whom Isaiah prophesied saying, **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”** The Lord Jesus very powerfully affirms this for all to hear, saying, **“O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.”**

Truly this woman of Canaan was declared long ago to be of the seed of Israel. Truly by the Word that has gone out of the mouth of the LORD she was called to faith and to gather unto Jesus. For who is The Seed of Israel but the Lord Jesus Himself? Who is the Word that goes forth from the mouth of the LORD but the Lord Jesus Himself? By faith we receive the LORD Jesus and by Baptism we are incorporated into Him in His body so that we, too, are counted as the seed of Israel. In Him we receive righteousness. In Him we share in the glory of the almighty. Thus we sing out with the glories of heaven as did the angels at the LORD’s birth announced unto the shepherds. During this season of Lent we temporarily have set aside the *Gloria in Excelsis* as a reminder that this song of praise is without glory or meaning apart from the crucifixion of Jesus unto death. On Easter morning we will resume the glorious chanting of this heavenly anthem, in the glorious hope of the resurrection unto righteousness and a clean conscience through Baptism. Truly we shall and do rejoice in the promise: **“In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”**

#### CONCLUSION

Dear fellow refugees of the nations, truly we have cause for rejoicing in hearing the promise and command: **“Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”**

This is why in His Church the Lord Jesus has ordained that our worship be formed by the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. It is for this reason that He has established that we hear and receive Him through the ordinary means of Water and Bread and Wine alongside the common preaching of fellow redeemed sinners. He calls us to assemble as the called out refugees of the nations, those whom the Holy Spirit has called out by means of the Gospel. As

such called out refugees we are commanded to be washed into His kingdom by means that we cannot apply to ourselves. The water is external and must be applied by one appointed to speak the Word in connection with it. And this Word that goes out from the Lord joins with the water and accomplishes what God promises. It washes us and regenerates us and renews us with the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Having been washed into the kingdom we then receive the material external elements of the Supper in connection with the words spoken by the called and ordained servant of the Word, so that what Jesus promises is given and received even as He has promised, namely His body of unity and His blood of forgiveness and life and salvation. How the LORD accomplishes these miracles we cannot fathom by our own reason and strength. Yet the LORD has declared these things so to be and therefore we know that they are as He has promised and we receive them as those made to be the seed of Israel and we are justified by them and in them we glory.

To this the texts of this blessed season of Lent direct our hearts, minds, and souls. God grant that we receive His words in true faith and continue in them unto life everlasting. 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.