



CHRIST CHURCH

ORDER OF SERVICE

November 29, 2020

Next Week

December 6, 2020

CHRIST CHURCH | 8:30 AM

FIELDHOUSE | DOUG WILSON

CC DOWNTOWN | 9:30 AM

NUART THEATER | BEN ZORNES

CHRIST CHURCH | 10:30 AM

FIELDHOUSE | DOUG WILSON

CONTACT US:

office@christkirk.com

208.882.2034

www.christkirk.com

ORDER OF SERVICE

ANNOUNCEMENTS & MEDITATION

- CALL TO WORSHIP -

+ ADORATION

Minister: The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of all who are in awe of Him

Congregation: He will hear their cry and save them. Amen.

+ SCRIPTURE

Psalm 99:2-3-9

Minister: Lift up your hearts!

Congregation: We lift them up to the Lord!

+ PRAYER

+ HYMN

O Come, O Come Emmanuel.....547

- CONFESSION -

EXHORTATION

PSALM

O Savior, Rend the Heavens.....557

CONFESSION OF SIN

Congregation is invited to kneel if able.

Proverbs 6:16-19

+ ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Proverbs 29:25

Minister: Your sins are forgiven through Christ.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

+ CONFESSION OF FAITH: DEFINITION OF CHALCEDON

Minister: Christian, what do you believe?

Congregation: Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord

teach men to acknowledge

one and the same Son,

our Lord Jesus Christ,

at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly

God and truly man,

consisting also of a reasonable soul and body;

of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at

the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood;

like us in all respects, apart from sin;

as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages,

but yet as regards his man-hood begotten,

for us men and for our salvation,

of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer;

one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized

in two natures,

without confusion, without change,

without division, without separation;

the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union,

but rather the characteristics of each nature

being preserved and coming together

to form one person and subsistence,

not as parted or separated into two persons,

but one and the same Son

and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ;

even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him,

and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us,

and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.

+ PSALM 149 - ABBREVIATED RESPONSE

Minister: Praise the Lord.

Congregation: Sing unto the LORD a new song,

Minister: Let Israel rejoice in him that made him

Congregation: Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

Minister: For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people:

Congregation: He will beautify the meek with salvation.

+ PSALM
Magnificat.....717

- CONSECRATION -

+ SCRIPTURE READING
2 Chronicles 34:1-10; James 4:1-10
Reader: The Word of the Lord.
Congregation: Thanks be to God!

HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM
Brandon Belschner (CC 1st)
Clive Elliot Zornes (CCD)
Georgia Lee Williams (CC 2nd)

Congregational Charge: Little child, for you Jesus Christ came to this earth, struggled and suffered; for your sake He crossed Gethsemane and went through the darkness of Calvary; for your sake He cried: 'It is finished'; for your sake He died and for your sake He overcame death; indeed for your sake, little child, and you—still— know nothing of it. And thus the word of the apostle is confirmed: 'We love God, for He loved us first.'
(Taken from an old French Reformed Baptism Rite)

HYMN
Comfort, Comfort Ye My People.....558

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER
Opening: Psalm 84: 8-9, 11
Thanksgiving: Psalm 107:21-22
Petitions: Psalm 116:1-2

+ HYMN
CC: *Savior of the Nations, Come*.....555
CCD: *Savior of the Nations, Come*.....555

SERMON
CC: *Advent and Affliction* (Doug Wilson)
CCD: *The Sure Incarnation* (Ben Zornes)

PRAYER
Ending with *The Lord's Prayer*.....725(411)

+ OFFERTORY
Prayer
Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying.....546

- COMMUNION -

THE BREAD
How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (stz 1-4)....554

THE WINE
How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (stz 5-7)....554

- COMMISSIONING -

+ CLOSING DOXOLOGY
The congregation may raise hands
Praise to God the Father sing.....555

CHARGE & BENEDICTION
Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work. Amen.
2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

NEXT WEEK

CC/CCD: **Doug Wilson, Ben Zornes**
SCRIPTURE READING: **Ezekiel 28:11-19; Revelation 18:9-20**
MUSIC: **572, 560, 717, 579, 569, 550, 587, 555**

“MAY I COME TO THE LORD’S TABLE?”

The Lord’s Supper is observed every Lord’s Day at Christ Church. We warmly invite to the Lord’s table all those who are baptized disciples of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and His body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the wine with us as a visitor, you are acknowledging that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. You also acknowledge to the elders of this congregation that you are in covenant with God, being active in a congregation which is covenantally bound to the triune God through Word and sacrament. If you have any doubt about your participation, please speak to the elders before or after the service.

INTRODUCTION

Over time, holidays take on a certain patina. Long usage and custom make this necessary, but it remains our responsibility to not allow such later accretions to overthrow or to reverse the actual import or meaning of the festival. In the case of Christmas, we have, quite obviously, the scriptural story of the birth of the Messiah, but we also have—do we not?—silver bells, softly falling snow, Hallmark movies, caramel popcorn, miracles on 34th street, fireplaces aglow, and various sorts of festive jello dishes. What are we to do with all of that? Well, enjoy them . . . but don't let them become your teachers.

THE TEXT

“Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not” (Matt. 2:16–18).

SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

There may have been three wise men, we don't know for sure. We guess at that number because of the three enumerated gifts mentioned—the gold, the frankincense, and the myrrh. At any rate, these wise men from the east showed up in Jerusalem and went and asked the king about the newborn king of the Jews. These men are called magicians (magi), and were most likely Zoroastrian astrologers. They were from “the east,” most likely Persia (Iran), and they had seen a star in the east that had compelled them to come. Herod found out when the star had first appeared (most likely two years before) and he helped the magi out through summoning the chief priests and scribes, who referred the magi to Micah 5:2. They went on to Bethlehem, where the star identified the house where Jesus was, and there the magi adored Him, presenting their gifts. The wise men were then warned by God in a dream not to go back to Herod (v. 12). An angel then warned Joseph of what was coming, and so he escaped with his family to Egypt (vv. 13–15), which brings us to our text.

When Herod saw that the magi had made a fool of him, he got extraordinarily angry, and ordered all the boys in the area of Bethlehem to be slaughtered. This resulted in the fulfillment of a sorrowful prophecy from Jeremiah. The prophet spoke through the personified figure of Rachel, who lamented

the loss of her children. That matriarch had been buried near Bethlehem—Gen. 35:19-20, near the border of Benjamin—1 Sam. 10:2.

BALAAAM'S WORD

I may appear to be changing the subject, but not really, and only for a moment. Balaam was a true prophet, meaning that his gift of prophecy was genuine, but he was a true prophet without being a true man (2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11). He would not curse Israel for the Moabite king Balak, but he did give him some counsel on how to use his women to seduce Israel (Rev. 2:14). But before doing that, he uttered a prophecy that was likely contained within the researches of the magi.

“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth” (Num. 24:17).

Balaam is not a Hebrew, and it seems to me that a record of his utterances could easily have been included in the kind of libraries that the magi would have been accustomed to use.

CHRISTMAS AND SIN

The presence of sin, and the reality of it, and the affliction and distress that sin always brings, is no refutation of the message of Christmas. Rather, Christmas is God's answer to our sin. Jesus took on a human body, the body that Mary suckled, and laid in a manger, in order that He would be able to die. He was born to die. He took up a body so that He would have a body to lay down. He assumed mortality so that He could slay our mortality. This was in view from the very beginning.

“And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” (Luke 2:34–35).

When we look at Herod's slaughter of the innocents, we see that the rebellion of man always wants to reverse the message of righteousness. Here in modern America, we are in the grip of the same Herodian delusion, and in our insanity, we also slaughter innocents. Herod, the Edomite king of Israel, turns himself into a Pharaoh, killing young boys for political reasons. Joseph was warned in a dream to flee from the new Egypt, which he did by fleeing to the old Egypt. Out of Egypt I called my Son.

A HARD HEADED NEW COVENANT

The chapter of Jeremiah that Matthew quotes as he records this awful crime is the same chapter where Jeremiah predicts the coming of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). This glorious prophecy is cited several times in the book of Hebrews. In Hebrews 8:8-12, it is quoted in full, and in Hebrews 10, two key excerpts of it are cited (Heb. 10:16,17). These two citations, these two pull quotes, identify for us the heart and soul of the new covenant. These two tenets are the internalization of the law (Heb. 10:16) and God's promise that He will remember our sins and iniquities no more (Heb. 10:17). The law of God is now written on our hearts and minds, and we are washed clean of all our iniquity.

And so, encouraged by these words, we return to Rachel, the inconsolable. God is the sovereign God over all things, including every form of all of our sin. He has prepared a covenant, a new covenant, one that takes the perverseness of the human heart into account. He has prepared a covenant that can etch the law of God on the adamant heart of man, and He has also prepared the blood of the everlasting covenant, blood that can cleanse absolutely anything. And so what does the Word of God say to this Rachel? In the very next verses . . .

“Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: For thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; And they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border . . . Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; For thou art the LORD my God” (Jer. 31:16-18).

INTRODUCTION

This Psalm has three layers to it. The first is the one on the surface. David recounts a deliverance from one of his many trials, and his response of praise. The second layer is that David's sufferings reflect the common plight of Israel as whole. Her history of exiles and returns, persecutions and deliverances, separation from and the reunion with Jehovah lie just beneath the surface of David's story. But as we go deeper we see that David's story, which is Israel's story, is really the Messiah's story.

THE TEXT

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. [...]

Psa 40:1-17

SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

In the midst of his distress, David waited for the Lord, crying out to Him; God heard his plea and brought him out of the pit (vv1-2). This deliverance springs forth into songs of thanksgiving, and fortifies his faith in God, rather than trust in man (vv3-4). This song of praise rehearses God's marvelous works, which are innumerable (v5); and this gratitude for past mercies is the bedrock for present faith, which understands the true nature of sacrifice and offerings: obedience. The call to obedient service is pictured by the bond-servant's ear being pierced (v6, Cf. Ex. 21:6).

Now, though he is king of Israel, David comes to the command of the Lord as a bond-servant would obey the master's will with joyful delight (v7; Cf. Deut. 17:18-19). As king, he is steward of God's law, and will preach righteousness in the congregation, without skipping a part (vv9-10).

Having presented himself in grateful service to the Lord, and obeyed the Lord's command, he asks of the Lord a two-fold request: withhold not tender-mercy and let God's lovingkindness and truth continually preserve him (v11). The reason for this request is "innumerable evils" (echoing God's innumerable marvelous works in verse 5) surround him, and his iniquities abound to the point of despair (v12). Thus, he makes a plea for deliverance from all evils inward and outward (v13).

The prayer goes on to request the undoing of his enemies; that shame and desolation would come upon them (v14-15). While those who seek God as their salvation shall be vindicated, and thus their love breaks forth in song: “The Lord be magnified (v16).” The concluding verse highlights David’s humility, and his boasting in the truth that God thinks about him; the end of the psalm echos its beginning: waiting patiently for the Lord (v1) while petitioning God to not tarry (v17).

OBEDIENCE IS TRUE SACRIFICE

This psalm draws a contrast between David’s response to God’s law with Saul’s famous very pious disobedience. In 1 Samuel 15:22-23, we’re told of how Saul’s kingdom came to be doomed; this is how it came to be that David was anointed as king of Israel (1 Sam. 16:13).

The nub is that obedience to God’s Word was more important than vainglorious exhibitions of spirituality. Saul made sacrifices to seem very spiritual; but he disobeyed the primary task he’d been assigned. The Psalm reiterates this, that sacrifices aren’t what please the Lord in the first instance. Obedience, from the heart, is His delight. So as king, David knows that deliverance is of the Lord for those who delight in His law and obey it by glad trust in God’s will.

MESSIAH IN OUR MIDST

In Hebrews 10, we find a large portion of this Psalm (vv6-8), cited. We don’t typically think of Hebrews as being a book for Christmas messages, but the underlying doctrine of Christmas is God sending the Messiah in the flesh. This is the point made in Hebrews. Christ coming in a human body was a set aside the sacrificial system, because His body was offered that we might be sanctified once for all (Heb. 10:10).

David anticipates that when Messiah came, He would do so in a human body. At first blush, however, Psalm 40 and its citation in Hebrews 10 seem at odds with each other. The hebrew refers to having His ear pierced (or dug open) as a bond-servant (Ps. 40:6); but Hebrews (10:5) cites the LXX, which renders it, “a body hast thou prepared for me.” What are we to make of this? As with most of these seeming contradictions, we don’t need to make them enemies, because they are friends. As a servant, Christ obeyed by taking to Himself a body. Further, He came when told, obeyed by becoming the fulfillment of the entire sacrificial system.

NOT A DISEMBODIED INCARNATION

The doctrine of the incarnation is not an insignificant one. Man, left to his own imagination, tries to grab hold of all the stuff, or tries to escape stuff. At Christmastime, we celebrate the Incarnate Lord

God made flesh. The Logos manifest unto us. Heaven come to earth.

Earth is to be redeemed. Creation is to be saved, not discarded. Our bodies are planted like seeds, only to spring forth at the resurrection into everlasting glory. The pagans sought to escape from the material world through their vain imaginations. Still others sought to hold onto the world.

One is too thick. The other too thin. What we teach is that Christ came, in the flesh, to redeem creation, and thus ultimately to resurrect the whole thing into greater glory.

The practical application of this is do not shy away from all the gifts...and fudge...and wrapping every imaginable food in bacon...and more fudge. Recognize that all these gifts and blessings are shadows of the blessings which they will become in the resurrection.

FEET ON A ROCK

Christ, our Messiah, came to set your feet on a rock. He came, as the bond-servant king so that you might no longer be facedown in the mud of your sin, but stand erect and bold, fearless before the face of man and face to face—without any shame—with God Himself.

This cannot happen without God coming in the flesh, proclaiming in the midst of the congregation the righteousness of God. He came into our midst, as was foretold. And this is the ground of our salvation. This is the only place to find firm footing for faith. The Son of God became a son of man so that He could die in place of sinful man, and that you might also be risen with Him to a glorified earth. An earth which will be “more real” than this one. So celebrate with the stuff—here in the shadowlands—knowing that in Christ it shall all be made more itself at the resurrection.