

REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY MORNING 30 AUGUST 2009: HOLY COMMUNION

Opening reading:

All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen." (Revelation 7:11-12)

Sing before: Psalm 72:10

Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Psalm of praise: Psalm 31:3,15

Confession of faith: Apostolic

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, a holy catholic* Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting

Amen.

After the reading of the Law we confess our guilt and pray for forgiveness and a new life before God with Psalm 67:1

Law

Psalm: 67:1

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation for the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises.**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

Amen

Scripture versification 1-1:3 [Ephesians 1:1-14]

Scripture reading: Jeremiah 33**Scripture text: Jeremiah 33:3****'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'** (Jeremiah 33:3)

The mercy of the Lord is much greater than what we many times realise or could imagine.

- At a time when the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem and matters were very miserable, the Lord sent Jeremiah to preach His mercy to these wretched people.
- In order to make the faith of the people strong enough so that they, without any doubts, may cling to all the promises, the Lord firstly introduced Himself.
 - He is the Lord doing it.
 - He is the Lord that creates.
 - He is also the Lord governing everything.

Why this intensified reminder to who the Lord is?

- Because the Lord wants to reveal to His believers, mercy of such a nature, that it would be larger than their abilities of comprehension.
- It is unfathomable.

The people were in a position where the punishment of the Lord was being meted out to them.

- Some of their houses were demolished by the enemy and dumped on the outside, next to the city wall, to aid them scaling the wall.
- Verse 5 tells us that those houses were filled with corpses.
- To intensify the misery on those people even more, the Lord says that in fact it was He who, in His wrath about the sins of the city dwellers, slayed those people.
- The Lord said that all this was the sign that He had hidden His face from the city.

In their wildest dreams the people never imagined that they could ever be freed from these circumstances.

- The Lord knew that they could be freed from this should He want to do so.
- He has the omnipotence and love to do so.
- Therefore this intensified introduction of who He is and what He will do.

Then the Lord directly addressed Himself to His people – to us!

'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.' (Jeremiah 33:3)

Call to Me and I will answer you and reveal Myself to you.

- How will the Lord answer and what will He reveal?
- He will reveal redemption.

In the Bible there are many examples of the usage of the words **call to** used by people praying in their distress and every time it went hand in hand with redemption by the Lord.

But know that Jehovah has set apart the godly for Himself. Jehovah hears when I call to Him.**(4) Tremble, and sin not; speak within your own heart on your bed and be still. .** (Psalm 4:3,4)**A Psalm of David. I will cry to You, O Jehovah; my Rock, do not be deaf to me, lest, if You be silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit.** (Psalm 28:1)

I cried to You, O Jehovah; and I prayed to Jehovah. (Psalm 30:8)

I, even I, will call to God, and Jehovah will save me. (Psalm 55:16)

I will cry to God most high, to God who does all things for me. (Psalm 57:2)

He shall send from Heaven, and save me from the scorn of him who would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth His mercy and His truth. (Psalm 57:3)

This matter of Praying and imploring and the Lord, in His time, answering us, is as relevant for us as it was towards the people Jeremiah ministered to.

The Lord will return His mercy to the people: Not with words, but by deeds. That is His promise to them.

- When the people worship the Lord again, they will see the wonderful fulfilment of it.
- There were many injured people amongst them: The Lord will make them fit and heal them.
- War and death surround them: The Lord will bestow lasting peace – a peace lasting eternally.

Thus the Lord grants physical cure. Together with physical cure the Lord will also grant spiritual repair.

- So great is the Lord's mercy that He will purify the people from their sins.
- This will happen when the sin committed by the people is transformed into justness.
- In fact the Lord uses two words describing what He, in His mercy, will do for us: He will **cleanse** and **pardon** us.

Let us again listen to Jeremiah 33:8:

'I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me. (Jeremiah 33:8)

One matter is really clarified by this verse:

- The physical and material repair promised by the Lord has a spiritual background.
- When internal transformation takes place then only external transformation takes place.
- Therefore it is written in our text verse that we must first call to the Lord and then He will grant blessing in abundance.
- From verse 6 onwards the Lord teaches that He will physically and spiritually change our destiny.

What does this leave us with today?

- We are facing the same calling as the people of Judah being called to conversion and worship.
- Still there is a small difference: Through the death and victory of His Son Jesus Christ the Lord has already confirmed his grace over us.

Today the Triune God is calling us to His table to be bodily and spiritually reminded of the fact that we bodily and spiritually have part of the redemption effected for us on the cross by Him.

- Just as to Judah, the Lord is confirming His promises to us, as far in the future as to the New Jerusalem.
- Through the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ we gain entrance to a city of eternal joy – a city where the voice of the Bridegroom will be heard.
- But it will not be the wedding of two people – it will be the eternal wedding of the Lamb and His Bride: The Lord Jesus and the Church.

The tranquillity of herds of cattle grazing and counted in the evening gives the inkling of all hatred and death gone by.

- All punishment has been executed and concluded.
- Then, together with our Creator we live in His eternal bliss.

Come to the table of the Lord and whilst we eat and drink let us remember the mercy of the eternal God making all this possible for us.

Amen.

Prayer

Scripture Versification 19-1:1 [Numbers 6:24-26]

Formulary

Psalm 23:1,2,3

To the table:

During Holy Communion: Psalm 116

Psalm 118

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: 66:1

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

Amen

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Scripture Modern King James Version