



Around the Word
Bible Study
 Epiphany, 2017

The Light of Christ
 St. Luke 18:31-43

No Cross, No Crown:

"For since the Disciples supremely desired that He might live, they could not listen to anything concerning His death; since they knew He was not alone an innocent man, but truly God, they could not conceive that He would die. And as they were accustomed to hear Him speak in parables, they believed that as often as He said anything concerning His passion, that this must be applied allegorically to something else," *Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, 406-407.

—St. Bede

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Introduction: The light of suffering!

The great crusade of today is to alleviate and rid the world of suffering. When something tragic happens, when a terrible illness takes hold, or when we are offended beyond belief suffering is portrayed as the enemy. However, suffering is a Godly attribute, indeed God Himself is "long-suffering". Thus, at the suffering of our Lord we find hope and not despair.

Opening: Psalm 31:1-8

¹In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;
 let me never be | put to shame;*
 in your righteousness de- | liver me!

²**Incline your ear to me;
 rescue me | speedily!***

**Be a rock of refuge for me,
 a strong fortress to | save me!**

³For you are my rock and my | fortress;*
 and for your name's sake you lead me and |
 guide me;

⁴**you take me out of the net they have hid-
 den | for me,*
 for you are my | refuge.**

⁵Into your hand I commit my | spirit;*
 you have redeemed me, O LORD, | faithful
 God.

⁶**I hate those who pay regard to worthless |
 idols,*
 but I trust | in the LORD.**

⁷I will rejoice and be glad in your | steadfast
 love,*
 because you have seen my affliction;
 you have known the distress | of my soul,

⁸**and you have not delivered me into the
 hand of the | enemy;*
 you have set my feet in a | broad place.**

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
 and to the Holy | Spirit;**

**as it was in the be- | ginning,*
 is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Read St. Luke 18:31-43

v. 31: And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. 32 For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shame-

fully treated and spit upon. 33 And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise."

Even though the disciples did not understand (v.34), Jesus still takes them aside to speak this prophesy only to them. Look at Zechariah 7:8-14. Verses 9-10 could be Jesus speaking (hint: it is!), but how are His words received? See Zechariah 7:11-13.

Jesus speaks privately out of mercy. He does not wish for His sheep to be scattered once again, because Jesus has come to gather (Matthew 23:37), but there are still those who will not listen (John 3:19-20).

"Everything that is written about the Son of Man". We have heard these words before in Luke (24:26-27) and we could fill 100 studies with all the Old Testament has to offer us in this regard. How do Job 25:6 and Psalm 8:4 describe the Son of Man, and how does this correspond with what our Lord says here in Luke 18:31? What does Ezekiel add to our understanding of the Son of Man? See Ezekiel 24:16.

One other king in the New Testament was mocked and didn't like it too much. Who was he? See Matthew 2:16.

v. 34: But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

Again, we want to see Christ's actions through the cross, not before or after or around it. Jesus wants to speak of the cross (John 3:14), but no one else does (John 12:34). Jesus foretells now in order that He gather again at the proper time (Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:31).

v. 35-39: As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

The first question these verses beg is, "should Jericho even exist?" See Joshua 6:2, 26. Who rebuilt it? See 1 Kings 16:34. Is this good or bad? How do you suppose this blind man fits into this story? See Deuteronomy 15:4.

If God's Law and commandments had been kept, blindness would not exist. But what does John 9:39, 41 say about true sight and true blindness?

What is the significance of the blind man addressing Jesus as, "Son of David"? See 2 Samuel 7:12-14; Proverbs 30:4; Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 7:13-14.

Why "mercy"? See Exodus 25:22; 2 Samuel 24:14; Psalm 25:6; Hosea 2:23, 6:6; Zechariah 1:16.

Is it the Church's practice to continually cry out for mercy? Where is this evident? See LSB 186, *Kyrie*.

v. 40: And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him,

Literally, Jesus "stood" and commanded. The reason to show that Jesus isn't merely stopping here is because of the obvious connection to v.33 where Jesus "rises again," or resurrects, on the third day. Literally, Jesus "stands up" from death on the third day. By making this connection, Whom is the blind man addressing? See Revelation 5:6.

Besides a game of "Marco Polo," there is no way a blind man could find one person in a great crowd. How does this reveal how our own salvation was given to us, by God? See Ephesians 2:1, 8-10.

v. 41-42: "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well."

As on Septuagesima (Matthew 20:1-16), the Lord treats this blind man as His equal, negotiating the terms and conditions of a deal. Again, the Lord takes the short end of the stick auto-

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matically and says to the blind man, "Thy will be done!" Why does the blind man only ask for his sight instead of infinite wishes? See Isaiah 42:7; John 9:3-5. How is the glory of God shown in this blind man? See Isaiah 42:19.

"Made you well": Since the man had a disability, it would be logical to assume that once it's healed that you would say, "made well." However, the Word of the Lord is different. That is expressed when Jesus says,

"your faith has saved you." The man is not just relieved of his disability, but hears the Word. What comes by hearing the Word of Christ? See Romans 10:17.

v. 43: And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Here again we see a reversal. Literally Jesus says, "And all the seeing people gave praise." So was the blind man blind, or were the people blind? See Luke 18:39.

Jesus talks about the "blind leading the blind," (Matthew

15). Is He talking about actual blind men? If not, what does He mean by calling them "blind?"

What is the purpose of "seeing again"? See John 9:35-38.

Though this man recovered his sight, many others in Jesus' time did not. Even in suffering, faith saves. In fact, for the sufferer, no greater comfort can be given than the fact that Jesus suffered also. The Lord's promise is made to those who suffer (Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 2:12), not for those who are well, for they do not need a physician (Luke 5:31). Do not be deceived, suffering is godly. It produces hope (Romans 5:3-5), steadfastness (James 1:2-4), and praise, glory, and honor (1 Peter 1:6-7).

Closing: Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me (LSB, 683)

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