

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

*Judica*: “Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation.” These are words that no fallen man can pray. Which sinner would hasten God’s judgment? The penalty for sin was established of old – death. And no man born of woman is innocent. Each of us stand before God condemned.

We have been like Israel in the desert. Our soul too rapidly becomes discouraged. We are quick to forget God’s blessings, even quicker to demand of Him what we think will make us happy. And for that, the venom of the serpent of Eden still permeates our flesh. God has told us the Truth.

But in our fallenness, like the Jews that confronted the Christ, we have sinfully not believed. As sinners we ought not pray God’s judgment, but rather flee from His wrath. We have no cause to plead. But He is God of heaven and earth. To where can a sinner flee?

The Lord’s Words to the Jews were clear. He did not speak in parables. He committed no sin, and yet they sought to condemn Him. He told them the Truth, but they could not believe Him. And that is the mark of their true king. So the Lord spoke openly to them: “you do not hear because you are not of God.

They called Him a Samaritan. They called David’s Son an unclean, idol-worshipping foreigner. And they charged Him with demon possession. He upon whom the Holy Spirit descended and remained, He whose Father is God the Father, He who cast satan from heaven, He who pronounced the sentence upon that deceiving serpent, Him they accuse of having a demon. All trappings of nicety or respect are gone, the daggers are out, they want His Blood.

The God of Love does not call down lightning, fire and burning sulphur upon them, although He could easily do so. He who is Truth repeats the Truth to them. They claimed Abraham as their father, but Abraham saw His day and was glad. Before Abraham was, He is. He has no beginning. He has no end. It is a clear proclamation of His deity.

And the Jews understand perfectly. He says He is God. If it is true they must fall down and worship. If it is a lie, He has committed blasphemy by breaking the First Commandment. According to the Law, that is worthy of death. So they pick up stones to put Him to death. They want His Blood.

It didn’t work. They couldn’t stone Him. As horrible a death as stoning is, it was too merciful for Him. The Blood they desired from Him they would shed. And as the Jews swore to Pilate after he publicly washed his hands of the Christ, that Blood, the better Blood than Abel’s, is upon them and their children.

Abraham saw His day by antitype, as the son to be placed on the altar of wood returned alive. Abraham saw His day by antitype, as God provided the ram that Abraham’s only son not give his life. Abraham saw His day because Abraham believed God, and it was credited unto him as righteousness. So the Jews that opposed our Lord were no sons of Abraham, for they did not

believe what Abraham believed: that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who took on Flesh to be the Promised Lamb, the Once for All Sacrifice that gave His life that you be spared.

Moses made a fiery serpent, and put it on a pole. He formed in the fire a model of the author of sin, and lifted it up, that whoever looked at it in faith lived. So the new and better Moses, the Promised Prophet raised up from among the midst of Israel, the Lord whose Glory made Moses' face shine, the Promised Savior made Himself the lowest of all creatures, covered Himself in your sin, and suffered Himself to be lifted up on the cross. He did it that you who look at Him in faith live.

He came, as the Apostle writes, as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with hands. All things were made through Him. He is not of this creation. Not with the blood of bulls and goats, not with the ashes of a heifer, but by His own Blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

And that redemption, dear Christian, is for you. For you who could not pray "Judge me, O God", God Himself was judged in your place. How much more, then, shall the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself, without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God?

For this reason He is the Mediator of the New Testament, by means of death. And that Testament is a Testament of life for you. For by that Testament, the sins you have committed are forgiven. You are redeemed, that you who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

That inheritance, the riches of the Kingdom of God, are freely bestowed upon you as you are born from above, born anew in Holy Baptism. Baptism is not only an event in your past. You are baptized. You have the faith worked by the Spirit and the Word. And that faith, like the faith of Abraham, like the faith of Moses, like the faith of the Apostles and Evangelists, is faith in Christ, the Lamb of God, the One lifted up, the One raised up to new life, the One ascended into heaven to open heaven to you.

As He promised, He sends out His Light and His Truth. Christ is the Light of the world. In Him you have light. By His Spirit and Word He illumines you, and in His Light you have life. You have Truth because you have His Word, the saving Gospel. And His Light and His Truth lead you, as you cling to His Way in the desert of this fallen world, as you are led by His Spirit to walk the path of righteousness, as He leads you to His Holy Hill and to His Tabernacle, even to this altar, where He makes Himself your Meal.

Abraham saw His day and was glad. And soon you will see His Day, the Day of His Coming, and you too will be glad. For according to His Promise, anyone that keeps His Word shall never see death.

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