

Last Sunday                      11/25/18  
Revelation 1:4b-8                B29

BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, AND EVERY EYE WILL SEE HIM, EVEN THOSE WHO PIERCED HIM, AND ALL TRIBES OF THE EARTH WILL WAIL ON ACCOUNT OF HIM. EVEN SO. AMEN.

Jesus is coming and all the tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him. And for good reason, too. Jesus is not coming as a little baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Jesus is not coming for a social call to have coffee and donuts with us. Jesus is coming as King; He is coming as Judge. He is coming to judge all people, the living and the dead. And that means every eye will see Him, because every person must appear before Him to receive from Him the due reward for the deeds that they have done in their bodies.

And, that is a reason to wail. The reason for the wailing is quite simple. The Bible looks at all human beings and all of human history and indicts it as sinful. It looks at the earth and her inhabitants and indicts it as evil. And anyone who is a member of a tribe of a nation on earth is pronounced sinful, as well.

The reason for that cannot be denied. The Bible is clear: Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and because of the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners (cf. Rom. 5:19). That's all of us. That's every one of us. And sin goes on and on and on from Adam and Eve to all of human history.

You know what the Scriptures teach: Adam and Eve sin and Cain kills Abel. Abraham lies about Sarah being his wife to save his own skin – TWICE. Israel bows down to the golden calf. David spots Bathsheba, lusts after her, commits adultery with her, then to cover it all up, he lies and

conspires to have her husband killed. Naboth has a vineyard, but Ahab covets that vineyard, so he sets it up so that Naboth is presented as a liar and a blasphemer and gets stoned to death, and Ahab takes the vineyard.

And we could go to the New Testament. Peter – Ah, you know Peter: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” then “I do not know the man,” and denies Jesus three times (Mt 16:16, 26:72). Saul persecutes the Church. Ananias and Sapphira lie about the sale of their property not to man but to God.

And what about you? You are a member of a tribe of the nations. You, too, are a sinner. Are you angry with someone? Being angry with is the same as murdering your neighbor in cold blood before God. The Bible says, “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him (1 Jn 3:15). Have you lied to save your skin? What’s your golden calf? Your job, your bank account, your popularity with your friends? Who’s your Bathsheba? Is it that woman on the website you like to visit, your friend’s spouse? And who is it you would like to see down away with, put in the ground? And what is your vineyard? Is it your neighbor’s house, your neighbor’s money, your neighbor’s success? What is it you covet? When have you denied Jesus, to serve yourself?

The mirror of the law shows you that your sins are great. Going all the way from idolatry to coveting, with every stop in between. You know what, it really doesn’t matter what your sin is, because the result of sin is the same and equal for all people. Paul puts it like this,

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor

thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10).”

Jesus is coming as Judge to give everyone what they deserve for their deeds and those are your deeds. Your deeds are sinful. Your deeds are unclean. Your deeds are deserving hell fire and brimstone for all eternity.

John tells us that even those who pierced Jesus will see Him. And you are among those who pierced Jesus. Now, wait a minute you say. That was 2,000 years ago. I wasn't even born yet! A bunch of Roman soldiers pierced Jesus. Yet Scripture says, “He was pierced for **our** transgressions” (Is 53:5, NIV). You are among those who pierced Jesus by your sin. And, He is coming as King and Judge to give you what you deserve for your deeds. And that is indeed a time to wail.

And yet, here come John. He looks at all the evil in the world; he looks at all your sin, all you who pierced Jesus and says, “Even so. Amen ... Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus” (Rev 22:20).

John can say that because of one little thing – the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus loved us and has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, John says (vv. 5-6).

The first time Jesus came, He came as a little baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. He showed His love for you by taking all your sins from you; He took them into His own body. And upon the cross, He was pierced for you – His hands, His feet, His side. He was pierced by a crown of thorns, nails, a spear. By those sacred wounds, His blood washes and cleanses you of all your sins. His bloody death upon that cross is your forgiveness and your salvation.

And, His resurrection the 3<sup>rd</sup> day is **proof** that your sins are forgiven. Doesn't matter what that sin is: idolatry, adultery, lust, lying, theft, stealing, cheating, anger – all of it is gone in Jesus' blood. You, Dear Child of God, are free from your sins.

And, Jesus gives you all that forgiveness and salvation to you at the font of baptism, where He washes you clean of all your sins and makes you a citizen of His kingdom of light and life. In this kingdom, He feeds you at His table with His life-giving Body and Blood. And, He speaks His words into your words, so that you hear Him and follow Him, as sheep follow their Shepherd, His rod and staff, guiding, directing, comforting and cheering us in this valley of the shadow of death.

And, by virtue of your baptism, He has made a priest to serve God. "You are a royal priesthood, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you of darkness into His marvelous light," Peter writes (1 Pe 2:9). The job of a priest in the Old Testament was to offer sacrifices to God. That is our vocation as New Testament priests. Except we do not offer lambs and grain offerings, we offer ourselves as living sacrifices. You offer prayers of thanksgiving for harvest and healing. You get up at 3:00 am to change the baby diapers. You do your homework assigned by your teachers. You shovel your neighbor's sidewalk. You are faithful worker. You love and cherish your spouse. These are the things you do in the vocations God has placed you in.

And you live in that fervent joy and expectation of the day Jesus comes. Then, you will join in the worship of all heaven.

Are you starting to see why John can say what He does? How he can look at all of our sins and Jesus coming again to give us what our deeds deserve, and still say, "Even so. Amen." John can say that because

“the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn 1:7).” That means the blood of Jesus covers all your deeds, so that when God looks at you, He sees only the perfection and purity of Jesus. By that blood, He has made us priests to serve your God and Father.

And that day is coming when the Lord Jesus Christ will come and take you to be with Him forever. That is not a time to wail. It is a time to raise your hearts and voices to sing, “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever!” and say, “Even so. Amen” (Rev. 7:12, 1:7).