

2 S. in Lent 3/13/22
Luke 13:31-35 C

SERMON TEXT IS THE APPOINTED GOSPEL FOR THIS SUNDAY,
FROM THE 13th CHAPTER OF LUKE'S GOSPEL

Behold, the Lord Jesus Christ. He casts out demons. He performs miracles. He cures sick people. He does it today, tomorrow, and, on the 3rd day, He finishes His course.

And here's the proof. He goes to Peter's house to find that Peter's mother-in-law is sick with a fever. Jesus rebukes the fever and the fever leaves her. Later that day after the sun had gone down, the people brought to Jesus those who had various diseases. They even brought people who were demon possessed. Jesus healed them and cast out the demons.

One day, a man with leprosy came to Jesus and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus said, "I'm willing," and the man was cleansed.

Another man came to Him with a withered hand. Jesus told him to stretch out his hand, so the man stretched it out and it was as perfectly normal as the man's other hand.

There was a time Jesus saw a paralytic lying on his mat, as he had for 38 years, and Jesus said, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." And guess what? He did. He arose, took up his bed, and walked.

He healed the centurion's servant. At Nain, there was a widow whose only son was dead and being carried out to be buried. And Jesus raised that young man from the dead. In the country of the Gerasenes, Jesus met a man whose name was Legion, because he had so many demons, and Jesus drove each and every one of those demons from the man.

Behold, the Lord Jesus Christ. He does what He says He is going to do. The question for us is this: Why? Why does He do it? He does it because He's like a hen who gathers her chicks under her wings. That being the case, Jesus goes about doing battle with anyone or anything that would prevent the brood from being gathered under His wings, including illness, demons, and even death. He does this so that a whole lot of little chicks can be gathered under His wings and live in security there, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

But, there are a whole lot of chicks that don't want to be gathered.

The people of His hometown didn't want to be gathered. Jesus went there, preached a sermon in their synagogue and said, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." But the people took offense at that and drove Him out to the edge of the hill upon which their city was built, so that they could throw Him off and kill Him.

The Pharisees didn't want to be gathered to Jesus. These are the guys who looked at what Jesus was doing and said, we know the reason why He is casting out demons is because He Himself is possessed by a demon. And they didn't like the fact that He called them out for replacing the Commandments of God with the commandments of men.

King Herod, he didn't want to be gathered to Jesus, either. In fact, he wanted to kill Jesus. The Pharisees told Jesus,

"Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." And He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem (vv. 32-33).' "

Behold, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the hen that will not be stopped. He is going to spread out His wings, so that people can dwell securely there.

But, as it went back then, so it goes today. People don't always want to be gathered. In fact, you don't always want to be gathered. Oh yes, yes, when you're dying on your deathbed, you want Jesus around so you don't go to hell, but there are those days when having Jesus around is a plain nuisance. Those are the day when you just say "Get away from here, Jesus," so you can be done with Him.

What? Why are you looking at me with those shocked looks on your faces? Don't look at me, look at your life, your heart, your words, your deeds.

Your neighbor ticks you off. And that neighbor may well be your spouse, your child, your parent, but you are angry and in your anger, you say mean, hurtful things.

And you have your pride. So, yes, you are angry because someone has sinned against you, you have been offended, your feelings have been hurt, and you are filled with rage. So, to get even, you gossip, you spread all kinds of evil, nasty rumors about your neighbor; you even post them on social media for all the world to see.

You think it's perfectly ok to ogle and lust after that woman in the magazine or on that website. God has given you a wife, but you don't treasure her as a gift of God. You are not content with the life God has given you; you, in envy, want your neighbor's life, then, then you tell yourself, I would be happy.

There are those times when rather than being gathered under the wings of Jesus; well, I want what I want when I want it, so I can go out and

spread my own wings. I want to think, say and do whatever it is I want to think, say, and do. After all, now is your time. Today is for me!

And that's when Jesus turns to you and says what He said to the people who told Him Herod wanted to kill Him, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones that who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing" (v. 34).

The season of Lent is a time to once again examine our hearts and lives to see all those times I don't want to be gathered to Jesus, that I insist on going my own way and doing my own thing and going my own way and doing my own thing only leads to death and the grave. Apart from the wings of Jesus, I am helpless and remain in heir of hell.

The season of Lent reminds us that we are not always willing, but the GOOD NEWS of the Gospel is that Jesus is willing. That's why He does what He does today and tomorrow. It's why He must go to Jerusalem and finish His course on the 3rd day.

When Jesus gets to Jerusalem, it happens just as He said it would. He rides into town amidst the palm branches and the cries of, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" He's come in the name of the Lord to do the Lord's work – to spread His wings to gather His chicks. So, He goes to Calvary where His wings are spread and nailed to the cross. His course is to save you, to gather you to Himself. So, with wings spread out upon the cross, His blood flows. It flows to wash and cleanse you of all the times you insisted on spreading your wings and doing what you want; of all your sin.

Jesus died on that cross, is buried, and, on the 3rd day, He finishes His course. He rises from the dead with healing in His wings.

He brings that healing, that love, that forgiveness to you by means of Word and Sacraments. There, He comes to you like a hen with outstretched wings to gather into His brood, to forgive you, to watch over and guard you, to comfort you, so that you may dwell with in all righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; today and for all eternity.

Behold, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not just willing to gather you, He has gathered you to Himself.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.