

The Judgment of God

Easter Solace

Psalm 17

Easter Sunday, April 20th, 2025

I. Introduction: Death Cannot Hold Him

Peter said of Jesus in his first sermon on Pentecost, that God raised Him up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it (Acts 2:24). Jesus could not rot in the grave, for _____ cannot be broken. He is the very Word of God—and death cannot hold the Word of God. Jesus could not rot in the grave, for Jesus is the very _____, coeternal with the Father, equal in glory, equal in honor, equal in power. And so Jesus could not rot in the grave—for death cannot hold the Son of God. Jesus could not rot in the grave, for He was _____. He was blameless. There was no sin found in Him. Jesus is Faithful and True, and death cannot hold the Truth. On Easter morning, the _____ of God broke into this old and dying world. The Ancient of Days, which is the Highest Court of all, overturned the judgment of mere men, and He calls us to rejoice.

II. The Text — Psalm 17

A Prayer of David.

1 Hear a just cause, O LORD,

Attend to my cry;

Give ear to my prayer which is not from deceitful lips.

2 Let my vindication come from Your presence;

Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright. . . .

David has been grievously wronged by enemies that seek him like a lion seeks its prey. And David calls out to God, for God is just. God delights in things that are upright. God the Lord is the just judge over all the earth and He will see that justice prevails. David has been judged falsely by men, so he asks that true judgment—true vindication—would come from the Lord, for it is good and right for the Lord who *is* righteous to vindicate the one who walks in the truth. David ends his prayer, resting in his God; he is content knowing that that when he *awakes*, when he is _____ in the likeness of his Lord, he shall be satisfied (1 John 3:2; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2-3).

III. The Judgment of God

On Easter morning, the Judgment of God broke into this old and dying world, and He overturned the judgment of false and wicked men. While David was persecuted and wronged and dealt with unjustly by Saul, by Saul's army, and by many in Israel, yet none of this amounts to the mistreatment Jesus experienced—not only at the hands of His people, but at the hands of His *creatures*. Jesus was the Suffering Servant. He was the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. Although the Maker of all, yet He was despised by all. Men hid their faces from Him, and counted Him as a transgressor. Like David, Jesus entrusted Himself to His Father, while suffering unjustly. And God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ answered His prayer. He rose Him up from the dead. He vindicated His Son, and said, "Today I have begotten you" (Psa. 2:7; cf. Acts 13:33).

IV. Easter Joy

On Easter morning, God the Father overturned the betrayal of the Son of Man, the denial of the Son of Man, the sham trial of the Son of Man, the cowardly handing over of the Son of Man, the cruel and unjust crucifixion of the Son of Man. The Father overturned the worst that false men could do, and He established Jesus, the Righteous One, as the very highest Judge, and He commissioned Him to establish perfect Justice in a world where justice often languishes and unrighteousness prevails.

What solace does Easter furnish us with? Easter proclaims that our God has the final say. The actions of men, the words of men, the doings of men are not the end of the matter. But they are all up for divine judicial review. There is One who judges justly. And He will vindicate the man who trusts in Him.

First. Easter exhorts us to live before God with a clear _____, entrusting whatever befalls us to His hands. We are not in control of a whole lot in this world. But we are in control of our own actions, of our own words, of our own doings. We're not in control of how others will respond to us. But we are responsible for living honorably before God and men. Easter instructs us to live before God with a clear conscience and entrust all that befalls us to His hands.

When we meet with pressure to act one way or another, this is the world trying to control us. For there's nothing the world, the flesh, and the devil fear more than an honest man before God, who cannot be bought off, scared, coerced, or steered. That man is an enemy like our Lord. And so he will face injustices. But Easter is steel for our spine. It proclaims to us in the midst of whatever pressures we might face that we are to stand firm in the Lord. If we are right before Him, then all is right. He will hear our just cause. He will vindicate us, whatever we might face. See 1 Peter 4:19.

Secondly. Easter is a call for us to _____. We rejoice because our portion is not in this life. God is pleased to give us many blessings. But these things are not our _____. This is merely the journey to the New Jerusalem where we shall be satisfied in God. Easter warns us against being a worldling, whose portion is in this life. For if this is the case, there is no way we'll stand under pressure. For in that case, we are already bought off. Instead, Easter call us to rejoice, for we have God and so we have sure hope knowing that we will behold His face in righteousness, and we will be satisfied when we awake.

The Church of the Resurrected Jesus is a community of people whose joy is deep and abiding. For our joy has already gone through death; it has already endured all injustice. It has already suffered all that the world, the flesh, and the devil could do to it—and it was not possible for death to hold our Lord and our Joy.

Thirdly. Easter exhorts us to _____ those who wrong us and to forgive those who trespass against us. Jesus was vindicated by God, and instead of returning evil for evil He invited those who wronged Him to _____ with Him. Christ did not just want to be vindicated. He wanted to see His enemies reconciled to Himself. He wanted us to share in His triumph. He wanted us to be restored to true fellowship with Him. It wasn't enough for all the world to see that Jesus was right, and His enemies wrong. He wanted to see His enemies made into friends. In fact, that's why He came in the first place.

V. Come & Welcome to Jesus Christ