

Epiphany 2



Prayer of the Day

Lord God, you showed your glory and led many to faith by the works of your Son. As he brought gladness and healing to his people, grant us these same gifts and lead us also to perfect faith in him, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 62:1-5

{1} For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. {2} The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. {3} You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. {4} You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. {5} For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

4-5: 1. For Zion's sake I will not rest: If the speaker is Yahweh this affirms Yahweh's determination to rescue his people and the city of his throne. If the speaker is the prophet, it reflects the prophet's determination to plead for a reversal of Yahweh's judgment on the city.

2-5: The restoration of Jerusalem is described in terms of vindication and reversal of fortune. The imagery of marriage is used to describe the relationship between the people and Yahweh, both faithful and unfaithful in other prophetic contexts also, as for example in Hosea 1-2.

4. Forsaken...Desolate: "...'forsaken' usually refers to being forsaken by a husband (54:6 and 60:15; see also 1 Kgs 22:42). ...'desolate' means to be without children as in 54:1." [1]

My Delight Is in Her: This is "Hepzibah" in Hebrew.

Married: "Beulah" The changing of names reflects the change of Jerusalem's situation.

Psalms 36:5-10

{5} Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. {6} Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O LORD. {7} How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings. {8} They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights. {9} For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. {10} O continue your steadfast love to those who know you, and your salvation to the upright of heart!

5-6. steadfast love...extends to the heavens...faithfulness...to the clouds...righteousness...like the mighty mountains...judgments...like the great deep: The Israelites like all people of that time lived outside and were constantly aware of the power and beauty of the natural environment. Yahweh's covenant qualities of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness and judgments are compared to great natural features, and contrasted with the character and actions of the wicked.

7. the shadow of your wings: This is not really a metaphor but a reference to the outstretched wings of the cherubim that overshadowed the mercy-seat on the Ark of the Covenant, which was the footstool of Yahweh. There all people may take refuge with confidence in Yahweh's mercy.

9. *with you is the fountain of life*: This metaphor is also used in Jeremiah 2:13, there to express the rejection of the people who have rejected Yahweh in favor of cracked cisterns they dug for themselves. The image also appears in a much more highly developed form in Ezekiel 47:1ff.

in your light we see light: "...[r'h 'wr, "see light"] means 'life' (cf. Ps. 49:19; Job 3:16). Thus the psalmsinger confesses in the hymn: we receive the light of life from the light of the presence of God." [2]

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

{1} Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. {2} You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. {3} Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit. {4} Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; {5} and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; {6} and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. {7} To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. {8} To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, {9} to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, {10} to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. {11} All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

"The new topic, once again introduced in the style of an answer to questions,... embraces chaps. 12-14. They provide a richer insight into community life than any other passage in the New Testament, and especially into the busy life of divine worship in Corinth.[3]

3. *speaking by the Spirit of God*: That is, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, the same Spirit that came upon Jesus at his baptism.

"Let Jesus be cursed!": "It would be a self-contradiction for the Christian pneumatic to curse Jesus, i.e., to deliver Him up to destruction by God." [4]

no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit: Only the spiritual person can recognize Jesus, and confess his Lordship.

4-7: *the same Spirit...the same Lord...the same God*: "[Carismata] is an equivalent for [pneumatika, spiritual gifts] and is ascribed as such to the Spirit. [diakonia, services] intentionally goes together with [kurios], 'Lord' (cf. 3:5). And finally, the linking of [energemata, activities] and 'God,' is shown by the extended conclusion of the third sentence to be appropriate. We have here a formula of omnipotence, which is now related to the community (and thereby Christianized)." [5] Just as there are different gifts given to different members of the community, so those different gifts are associated with different manifestations of God.

8-10. *wisdom...knowledge...faith...healing...miracles...prophecy...discernment...tongues...interpretation*: Each of these is given by the Spirit. No one has all the gifts. And no one can determine which gift he or she will have. One can only use the gift he or she has received from the Spirit "who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. Because it is the community that is gifted by the Spirit it has all of the gifts though individuals may have only one gift.

11. *activated by one and the same Spirit...as the Spirit chooses*: The spiritual person is not the possessor of the gift. The gift can only be used by the choice of the Spirit.

What follows in 12:12-30 is Paul's description of the church under the figure of the body, which will be the second lesson next Sunday.

John 2:1-11

{1} On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. {2} Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. {3} When the wine gave out, the mother

of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." {4} And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." {5} His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." {6} Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. {7} Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. {8} He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. {9} When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom {10} and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." {11} Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

1. the third day: "Note the enumeration of days: the first day covers 1:1-28; 'the next day,' 1:29-34; 'the next day,' 1:35-39; and a presumed next day: 1:40-42; with a final 'the next day' in 1:43-51. With these five days over, 'the third day' here (2:1-11) would be the eighth day. And this eighth day marks the first day after the close of the first (creation) week since the beginning (1:1). That first week is John's creation week. After this eighth day, there is no more counting of days (so in v. 12 we read 'a few days'). 'On the third day' also reflects the day of Jesus' being raised, the eighth day of the week (see vss. 19-20: 'after three days'). [6]

Cana of Galilee: Nathanael (21:2) was from Cana. An invitation creates an obligation, which Jesus discharged in providing the wine.

3-5. the wine gave out: "The fact that the family hosting the wedding has run out of wine threatens a serious loss of honor." [7]

the mother of Jesus said to him: "Working discreetly behind the scenes as Jesus' Mother does would avoid social humiliation of the family. If she is a kinswoman of the groom (as some traditions hold), she would view the matter with some urgency, since the shame would also fall on both Jesus and herself. Even if not a family member, she is acting as a loyal friend. In relaying the concern about wine to Jesus, his mother plays the role of broker on behalf of the bridegroom and his family." [8]

What concern is that to you and to me: Jesus shows reluctance to respond to the needs of those closest to him (4:46-54; 7:2-14; 11:1-6). Malina suggests that perhaps "John uses this pattern to inform members of his group about how to deal with their relatives and other natural in-group persons." [9] This seems a bit far-fetched to me. Nevertheless both reluctance, and compliance are demonstrated in the story.

woman: "The address Jesus uses here, "Woman," sounds harsh to modern ears. Its use in 19:26, however, makes clear that it is not.... The bond between mother and son is the closest interpersonal bond known in the Middle East. It is generally much closer than that of husband and wife. Hence, the mother of Jesus is able to presume upon Jesus to act as patron on behalf of this family." [10]

5-11: "By providing wine for the wedding celebration, Jesus rescues the honor of the bridegroom. Traditional Western theological comment that Jesus here usurps the role of host (thus turning this into a sacramental story) misses a key point in the story. By providing wine for this threatened family, Jesus honors the bridegroom and saves *his own* prestige." [11] (Italics in the original.)

This is the first fulfillment of Jesus' statement to Nathanael that he would "see greater things" (1:50). A sign is an act that reveals who Jesus, and how he can be expected to behave toward members of his group.

Reflection

As Yahweh has acted to vindicate his people Israel, so, in Christ, he has promised to be with us, and to bless us with the gifts of his Spirit. Jesus acted to preserve the honor of a friend, so he will act to preserve us because we, too, are his friends (John 15:11-15).

Because we are Jesus' friends and have been endowed with gifts of the Spirit for the common good, we are expected to use our gifts for that purpose. We are not to use them for gaining recognition, not for material gain. Nor are we to deny them and refuse to use them at all.

Hymns [\[12\]](#)

With One Voice (e.g. 762v), *Hymnal Supplement* 1991 (e.g. 725s) and *LBW* (e.g. 32).

E=Entrance; D=Hymn of the Day; I=First Lesson, P=Psalm; II=Second Lesson; G=Gospel

552 --E--In Thee Is	85 --G--When Christ's
78 --D--All Praise to	751v --G--As Man and Woman
86 --I--The Only Son	648v --G--Jesus, Come
38 1 --II--Hark, the Voice	773s, 820s, 790s/749v,
703v --II--Draw Us in (763s)	710v, 755v, 687v
90 --G--Songs of	

Prayers of the People [\[13\]](#)

Presider or deacon

Clothed in the beauty of Christ, let us approach the Lord with prayers for all peoples.

Deacon or other leader

For the church of Jesus Christ in every place.

For *N* our bishop, for presbyters, deacons, and all who minister in Christ.

For this holy gathering and for all the people of God.

For this country, for all nations and their leaders, and for those who guard the peace.

For all those in danger and need: the sick and the suffering, prisoners, captives, and their families, the hungry, homeless, and oppressed.

For the dying and the dead.

For ourselves, our families, and those we love.

Remembering the blessed Virgin Mary, *N*, and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

To you, O Lord.

Presider

O God, who sent Jesus among us, hear the prayers of your people, and make us into new wine for the glory of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Notes

[1] John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987, p. 313.

[2] Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59: A Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988, p.400.

[3] Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975, p. 204.

[4] Behm, "[anathema]," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. (ed. by Gerhard Kittel), Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Vol. 1, 1964, p. 354.

[5] Conzelmann, *Ibid.*, p. 207.

[6] Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998, p. 66.

[7] *Loc. cit.*

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[12] <http://www.worship.on.ca/text/rclc0001.txt>

[13] <http://members.cox.net/oplater/prayer.htm>