

## **Pericope Study for Sunday, March 20, 2016 – Palm / Passion Sunday C**

Presented Tue 3/15/16 by Richard Burgess

### **Collect(s) / Prayer(s) of the Day (ELW)**

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

or

Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

or

O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

### **Presenter's Comments**

Since the full gospel for the day is quite long (114 verses in NRSV) and the other lessons have significant content in and of themselves, we will not be able to study all of the lessons in detail. Instead, I propose that we study the alternate Gospel text of Luke 23.1-49 and view it through the lens of the Epistle text, Philippians 2.5-11. In a further attempt to keep things manageable and still allow maximum opportunity for the Holy Spirit to speak to us through the text and our study, I also offer thought questions for the day and for our study of the Gospel text.

### **Thought Questions for Palm / Passion Sunday and in Preparing for Holy Week:**

- How are the Cross and Resurrection at the center of your life as a Christian?
- How are the Cross and Resurrection at the center of your ministry as a leader of the Church?

### **Recommended Resources:**

[This Pericope Study on the World Wide Web:](http://www.richardmburgess.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/ps_c_Burgess_-_Pericope_Study_2016.73102754.pdf)

[http://www.richardmburgess.com/yahoo\\_site\\_admin/assets/docs/ps\\_c\\_Burgess\\_-\\_Pericope\\_Study\\_2016.73102754.pdf](http://www.richardmburgess.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/ps_c_Burgess_-_Pericope_Study_2016.73102754.pdf)

[Sammy Alfaró's Working Preacher Commentary on Philippians 2.5-11:](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2800)

[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2800](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2800)

[Robert Hoch's Working Preacher Commentary on Luke's Passion Narrative:](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2793)

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**OT: Isaiah 50:4-9a** (NRSV)

[4] The Lord God has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he wakens--  
wakens my ear  
to listen as those who are taught.  
[5] The Lord God has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.  
[6] I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheeks to those who pulled out  
the beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.

[7] The Lord God helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to  
shame;  
[8] he who vindicates me is near.  
Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.  
Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.  
[9] It is the Lord God who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?  
~~All of them will wear out like a garment;  
— the moth will eat them up.~~

**Psalm: Psalm 31:9-16** (NRSV)

[9] Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in  
distress;  
my eye wastes away from grief,  
my soul and body also.  
[10] For my life is spent with sorrow,  
and my years with sighing;  
my strength fails because of my misery,  
and my bones waste away.  
[11] I am the scorn of all my adversaries,  
a horror to my neighbors,  
an object of dread to my acquaintances;  
those who see me in the street flee from  
me.  
[12] I have passed out of mind like one who is  
dead;

I have become like a broken vessel.  
[13] For I hear the whispering of many--  
terror all around!--  
as they scheme together against me,  
as they plot to take my life.

[14] But I trust in you, O Lord;  
I say, "You are my God."  
[15] My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the hand of my enemies  
and persecutors.  
[16] Let your face shine upon your servant;  
save me in your steadfast love.

**Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11** (NRSV)

[5] Let the same mind be in you that was in  
Christ Jesus,  
[6] who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
[7] but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
[8] he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of  
death--  
even death on a cross.  
[9] Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
[10] so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the  
earth,  
[11] and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

**Thought questions for studying the Gospel through the lens of Php 2.5-11:**

- How is Christ emptying himself?
- How is Christ being exalted / glorified?

**Gospel:** Luke 22:14—23:56;

**Luke 23:1-49** (alternate)

[23:1] Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. [2] They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king." [3] Then Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." [4] Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation against this man." [5] But they were insistent and said, "He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place."

[6] When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. [7] And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. [8] When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. [9] He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. [10] The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. [11] Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. [12] That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

[13] Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, [14] and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. [15] Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. [16] I will

therefore have him flogged and release him." [17]

[18] Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" [19] (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) [20] Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; [21] but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" [22] A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." [23] But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. [24] So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. [25] He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

[26] As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. [27] A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. [28] But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. [29] For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' [30] Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' [31] For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

[32] Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. [33] When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [34] Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. [35] And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the

Messiah of God, his chosen one!" [36] The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, [37] and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" [38] There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

[39] One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" [40] But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? [41] And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." [42] Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." [43] He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

"Please stand for the remainder of the reading."

[44] It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, [45] while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. [46] Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. [47] When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." [48] And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. [49] But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.