

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
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BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

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Bulletin for the 1st Lenten Service

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PSALM: O LORD, how many my enemies have become! Many are rising up against me. Many are saying about my soul, "He has no salvation in God."
Nevertheless, You, O LORD, are a shield for me and my glory and You lift my head high. With my voice I was calling to the LORD, and He answered me from His holy mountain. I have lain down and gone to sleep. I have awoken. For the LORD continues to support me. I shall not be afraid of the tens of thousands of people who have taken positions against me on all sides. Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheek. You have smashed the teeth of wicked people.
Salvation belongs to the LORD. May Your blessing be on Your people!

Psalm 3

COLLECT: Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

SERMON: Genesis 3:19b A Significant Problem

"For you are dust and you will return to dust."

Our 1st Readings for this Lenten Season will track the story of Joseph, which supplies so many parallels to the Passion of our Lord

1st Reading: Genesis 37:12-36

¹² Joseph's brothers went to Shechem to graze their father's flock there. ¹³ Israel asked Joseph, "Are your brothers not grazing the flock at Shechem? Come! I shall send you to them."

Joseph answered him, "Very well."

¹⁴ Jacob told him, "Please go and see if all is well with your brothers and well with the flock and bring me a report!"

Therefore, he sent him from the Valley of Hebron. When Joseph arrived at Shechem, ¹⁵ a man found him wandering around in the open country. The man asked him, "What are you looking for?"

¹⁶ He said, "I am looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they are grazing the flock!"

¹⁷ The man said, "They have moved away from here. For I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan!'"

So, Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸ They saw him from a distance, but, before he reached them, they plotted against him to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another: "Look! Here comes that master-dreamer! ²⁰ So come now! Let us kill him, throw him into one of the pits and say, 'A wild animal has devoured him!' Then we shall see what will become of his dreams."

²¹ However, when Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from their hands. He said, "Let us not take his life!"

²² Reuben also told them: "Do not shed blood! Throw him into this cistern in the wilderness but do not lay a hand on him!"

Reuben said this to rescue him from their hands, to take him back to his father.

²³ When Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped off Joseph's tunic, the tunic reaching to the ankles, which

he was wearing.²⁴ Then they took him and threw him into the cistern. It was an empty cistern, without water in it.²⁵ When they sat down to eat a meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were carrying resinous gum, balm and myrrh. They were on their way to take them down to Egypt.²⁶ Judah asked his brothers: “What shall we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his death?²⁷ Come! Let us sell him to the Ishmaelites! Let us not lay our hands on him! For he is our brother, our own flesh.”

His brothers agreed.²⁸ When the Midianite traders were going past, the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the cistern. They sold Joseph for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not in the cistern, he tore his clothes.³⁰ He went back to his brothers and said, “The boy is not there! Where do I myself go from here?”

³¹ Then they took Joseph’s tunic, slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the blood.³² Then they sent the tunic, which reached to the ankles, back to their father. They said, “We have found this. Find out whether that is your son’s tunic or not!”

³³ Jacob recognised it and said: “It is my son’s tunic! A wild animal has devoured him. Joseph has certainly been torn in pieces.”

³⁴ Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth around his waist and mourned for his son for a long time.³⁵ All his other sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said, “No! I shall still be mourning when I go down to my son in the grave.”

This is how his father wept for him.

³⁶ In Egypt the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and a captain of the bodyguards.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Drawn from the Four Gospels, Part I

The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called “the Passover,” was approaching. Jesus told His disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the chief priest, whose name was Caiaphas. They plotted to arrest Jesus in an underhanded way and kill Him. However, they said, “Not during the festival! Or there may be a riot among the people.”

Then Satan entered Judas, who was called “Iscariot,” and who was numbered among the Twelve. Judas went to the chief priests and the captains and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus to them. They were glad, and agreed to give him money. He consented, and kept looking for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.¹

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

He sent two of His disciples and told them: “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him! Where he goes inside, tell the owner: ‘The Teacher asks, “Where is My guest-room, in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?”’ Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there!”

The disciples left, went into the city, and found things just as Jesus had told them; and they prepared the Passover. When the hour had come, He and the apostles reclined at the table. He told them, “I have eagerly

¹ Matt. 26:1-5; Mk 14:1-2; Luke 22:1-6

desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I shall certainly not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”²

Then a dispute arose among them about which of them was considered to be the greatest. Jesus told them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ However, you should not be like that! Rather, the one who is the greatest among you should become like the youngest, and the one who rules should be like the one who serves! For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? However, I am among you as the One who serves. However, you are those who have continued with Me in My temptations. I also confer on you a kingdom, as my Father has conferred one on Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and that you may sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”³

Before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knew His hour had come to leave this world and go to the Father. He had loved His own who were in the world, and He loved them completely. The evening meal was being served, and the Devil had already put the idea of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going back to God. Jesus rose from the meal, laid aside His outer garments, took a towel, and tied it around His waist. Then He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet and to dry them with the towel that He had wrapped around Him. So He came to Simon Peter. Peter asked Him, “Lord, are You going to wash my feet?”

Jesus answered him, “You do not understand now what I am doing, but later you will know.”

Peter told Him. “You will assuredly never wash my feet.”

Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” Simon Peter told Him, “Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head!”

Jesus told him, “The person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet. He is completely clean. You are clean, but not all of you.”

For He knew who would betray Him. That was why He said, “Not all of you are clean.”

After He had washed their feet and put on His outer garments, He reclined at the table again. He asked them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord’, and you are right, because I am. Therefore if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly I tell you, a slave is not greater than his master is, and one who is sent is not greater than the one who has sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”⁴

Then He took a cup and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you, from now on I shall certainly not drink what comes from the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”⁵

M: Here ends the reading.

The congregation stands.

² Matt. 26:17-20; Mk 14:12-17; Luke 22:7-16

³ Luke 22:24-30

⁴ John 13:1-17

⁵ Luke 22:17-18