**Resurrection *AND* Fiery Trials?**

Exaudi – 7th Sunday of Easter

05/29.2022

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

In our Ezekiel text, God declares that He's going to act for the sake of His holy name. By the way His holy name is the name they have profaned among the nations. He declares that the people of Israel have profaned His name. It is God's chosen ones who have profaned His name in our text three times.

I want you to note something! Who is it that has profaned God's Holy name? Not unbelievers! Not the nations and people who do not believe in Him! In fact, it is His chosen ones who have profaned His name among just such people. God’s own people have profaned God’s name among those who are not His people.

Those who have profaned His holy name are those whom He has called out from amongst all the other people. Those who have profaned His name are those whom He has called by name. Those who have profaned His name are those whom He has made His people!

Today those whom He calls out from among the people and calls by name are the baptized! All those who claim the name of Christ, declaring themselves Christians!

You know what else is true, those people – those called by His name – are still the ones who profane His name.

Unbelievers cannot profane His name because they do not use it as their name, and claim to be a part of His holy family. Only those who claim to be ***IN*** His name, can profane it.

It is true that those who are outside His name – unbelievers and all those who believe in other gods – may mock His name, make fun of it, despise it, abuse it, use it in vain, and even hate it. Those of us who claim the name of Christ hear people who are not Christians befoul His name, even blaspheming God's name. But as they do not believe or claim that God's name is sacred and holy, they cannot profane it.

Only those who claim God’s name as His people, who believe in God, who bear His name – calling themselves Christ-ian, and think of God as holy – can profane His name. People such as you, dear Christian friends.

How? Great question!

Do you live your life in a manner unlike those who do not believe in God live? Or, do you live in a manner like those who despise the name of God? Do you take your marching orders for what is acceptable in your life, your manners, your language, and your approach to doing what is right or wrong according to what the world says? Do you declare acceptable behavior, what God declares to be unholy and sinful – or simply keep your mouth shut when others claim such behavior is not sinful?

Do you claim the name of Christ?

If you claim the name of Christ, claim to be a Christian, but your life is more a testimony to the things of the world, you are profaning the name of God. You, by your actions, your desires, your language, and your life among others, should be different than those of world. *You are to be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers*, just as God declares through Peter’s pen in our epistle. Or, as God asserts by the pen of Paul to the Romans:

*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.* (Rom. 12:1-2)

We are to live differently. Our bodies, our lives – in how they are lived – is to be evidence of what we believe and ***whose*** we are. We make holy the name of God in our life, our thoughts, and our words. Only thing is, too often we don’t.

Dear friends, this is Exaudi Sunday, it is the last Sunday of Easter. We still proclaim our alleluias, “He is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!” Do you understand that? You are in the midst of the season of celebrating the resurrection of God’s Christ. It is the season of Easter! We are celebrating that Christ, who lived without sin; suffered, was crucified, and buried, has risen from the dead.

He rose, having died for keeping holy the name of God. He rose, having died for keeping perfect the will of the Father, even as the world enticed Him to do otherwise. His sacrifice made holy all suffering for the name of God, for enduring the fiery trials which we assault us because we bear the holy name of God.

Too often we go along with the world, to get along with the world. In so doing, we profane the name of God. We are, to endure suffering, the fiery trials that will assault us for being in the world, but not of the world. It is the cross we bear in this life for we bear the name of Christ.

In our gospel Jesus declared, *“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed the hour is coming whenever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor Me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.”*

Do you truly believe that you can get along with the world, and not profane the name of God? You bear His name, you are Christian! God's will and law do teach you how to live as His children. You are to love your brothers and sisters in Christ, and all those in the world. You are to be self-controlled and sober-minded, and to speak His Word in truth and purity.

How many of you know somebody who child died in Texas? We are horrified by such behavior, and we pray for all those who have been afflicted by this vile evil.

And yet, how often does the world shame us into silence? Have you heard the commentary? They tell us, “What we need now in this country is more than just your prayers, do something to get rid of the guns.” Indeed, there is indeed a need for more than just our prayers, but that does not mean we succumb to this vile thinking, believing that prayer is of secondary importance. Do not profane the name of God by thinking it is!

Dearly beloved of God, Christ has died to free us from our sin. We confess that we have profaned the name of God among the people around us. We have profaned His name by the things we have done – before the world which knows we bear the name of Christ – but even more often, by the things we have left as those who bears His holy name.

We confess our sins and God grants us forgiveness. He feeds and nourishes us with the very same body of Christ which was pierced to purchase that forgiveness, and He gives us to drink of the very blood poured out from Christ's veins to cover our sin.

Here are words from Christ which cleanse your lips, remove your sin, and make you holy. Here is a meal that grants you strength, and bestows a peace which the world cannot understand.

In Christ, as you show the hospitality and love of God, you make holy His name you bear. Christ in you and through you, making holy the name of God in all your life and work.

Yes, we continue to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, for it is Easter! We celebrate it every week, for as He lived and died, so He rose again. We also, daily put to death the old Adam within us in contrition and repentance, and each day we rise to new life in Him. On the last day, joining Him in resurrected and glorified bodies – always and forevermore bringing glory to His holy name.

But until that last day comes, we ask the Lord to hear us still – “forgive us our sins, cleanse us from all unrighteousness which would profane Your holy name among the people, and raise us to new life. That we might always live according to your will, making holy your name in all that we do and say. Grant this to us, in Your Son Jesus Christ.” Amen.