

The Baptism of Our Lord
Service of Daily Prayer -- Morning
January 10, 2021

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice;

C: **In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.**

Psalm 5:3

P: My mouth is filled with Your praise,

C: **and with Your glory all the day.**

Psalm 71:8

P: O Lord, open my lips,

C: **and my mouth will declare Your praise.**

Psalm 51:15

All: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Scripture Readings

1 Samuel 16:1-13

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you." Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here." And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

Romans 6:1-11

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Mark 1:4-11

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Hymn: *LSB 398, Hail to the Lord's Anointed*



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, Great Da - vid's great - er Son!
 2 He comes with res - cue speed - y To those who suf - fer wrong,
 3 He shall come down like show - ers Up - on the fruit - ful earth;
 4 Kings shall fall down be - fore Him And gold and in - cense bring;
 5 O'er ev - 'ry foe vic - to - rious, He on His throne shall rest,



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, His reign on earth be - gun!
 To help the poor and need - y And bid the weak be strong;
 Love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, Spring in His path to birth.
 All na - tions shall a - dore Him, His praise all peo - ple sing.
 From age to age more glo - rious, All bless - ing and all - blest.



He comes to break op - pres - sion, To set the cap - tive free,
 To give them songs for sigh - ing, Their dark - ness turn to light,
 Be - fore Him on the moun - tains Shall peace, the her - ald, go;
 To Him shall prayer un - ceas - ing And dai - ly vows as - cend;
 The tide of time shall nev - er His cov - e - nant re - move;



To take a - way trans - gres - sion And rule in eq - ui - ty.
 Whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, Were pre - cious in His sight.
 And righ - teous - ness in foun - tains From hill to val - ley flow.
 His king - dom still in - creas - ing, A king - dom with - out end.
 His name shall stand for - ev - er— That name to us is Love.

Sermon

Today's reading deals with an action which many people today don't really experience, but which was much more common in past times, both the Old Testament and other periods of history. The word here that Samuel does to David is "anoint," pouring oil on his head to anoint him as the king. At the most basic, physical level, to anoint something is just to apply some kind of liquid or paste to an object; the word originally referred to "smearing something on." I suppose when you put on makeup, you're technically anointing yourself.

But it's the symbolic importance that makes this noteworthy. In the Old Testament, people or things are anointed for a specific reason: to dedicate them to the service of God. When the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant were consecrated, God commanded that they be anointed with oil as well; in fact, it was a special recipe of many fine oils and perfumes, and it was forbidden to use that combination for any other purpose besides the holy worship of God. Anointing a person in the Bible is always somehow invoking God and His blessing: sometimes to anoint the sick and pray for healing, sometimes to designate that person as someone set aside for a particular purpose in God's plan, like David being anointed as king.

David didn't really seem like the kingly type at that moment. He's the last son of an undistinguished family in a small town. He's not even invited; he's out in the fields, doing his job. It says he was handsome and (an odd detail in the way the Bible often describes people) it says he had nice eyes. But otherwise he didn't seem to have much going for him. Samuel thinks it must be his older brother Eliab: this guy is the eldest son, and was apparently a big, strong man. But God tells him, "Do not pay attention to his appearance... For the Lord does not see as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

Going back farther, the previous king Saul also looked good on the outside, like the kind of man they would want as their king. We're told he was a handsome young man too, that there was no one in Israel more handsome than him; he was remarkably tall, head and shoulders taller than the average man. He came from a wealthy family. By all accounts, he looked the part. Yet he proved himself unfaithful to God, and his heirs would not be kings.

God teaches us not to judge by appearances, and He says that He does not judge that way either. His choices are rarely the ones that human beings would make, and the anointing of David shows that to be true yet again. But even when no one else knew the plan, when even the prophet Samuel himself who was doing the anointing didn't understand what was going on, still God knew what He was doing. When David is anointed, the Holy Spirit comes down on him. This happens to other people in the Old Testament, to prophets or even to King Saul; but with David, it says "from that day forward," that once the Spirit was given to him it didn't later leave, or come and go.

All these things bring us to the New Testament event today, and this reading from the Gospel. As you've probably heard before, "Christ" is just the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah," and both of those words mean the same thing: "the anointed one". This is what we see happening as he's baptized in the Jordan river by John, and likewise we see the Holy Spirit come down to him just like it did with David, the Spirit of the Lord on him and with him "from that day forward."

Anointed for what, exactly? As this anointing is a ritual that sets somebody apart for a particular office or for a special role, what is that for Jesus? We see David being anointed here as king over Israel, and that one makes sense for Jesus since he's often referred to as a descendant of David, a new king from the line of David and heir to those promises God made to the king long ago. But in the Old Testament, three kinds of people are anointed – priests, kings, and prophets. Aaron is anointed as the first high priest by Moses, David is anointed as king of Israel by Samuel, and Elisha is anointed as a prophet and his successor by Elijah.

So which one of these was Jesus anointed as, a prophet, a priest, or a king? That's a trick question, of course – the real answer is “all three of them.” The one that the people around him could see the most clearly was a prophet, though they didn't know who exactly. All the time, they're speculating on whether or not he is a prophet, or who and what kind of prophet he is exactly, but certainly many of those 1st century people would have called him a prophet. A prophet is someone who speaks for God, who is sent by God to speak His Word and His message to the world. Well, Jesus certainly did that. He went further, not just speaking God's Word, but remembering John 1:1, that he is God's Word. Jesus doesn't just speak God's promises; he is the way that those promises have been kept and fulfilled. He's not just a prophet; he's the ultimate prophet and the one all other prophets were pointing to.

He's also a king, and kings were anointed as a part of that office. This is the direct connection with this Old Testament reading about David. Even today, the kings or queens of England are anointed with oil during their coronation ceremony. Jesus most certainly fits here too: but not the kind of king the people wanted or expected, a king whose kingdom is not of this world at all. Nevertheless, he's still a king. We've been hearing about how Jesus is called “Son of David,” a member of the family of Israel's great king and his heir, even born in Bethlehem just like David was.

At a couple of points in the Gospels, Jesus has to be careful of the crowds who want to carry him off and crown him king by force. But his kingdom is not of this world: he's king of all the universe, being in very nature God who created all things. He's not just king of Israel; he's King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And most importantly, his kingdom is not like the nations of this world, running on political intrigue, war, and so forth.

I know this week's events in DC have been a shock to just about everybody, scenes in our Capitol building that look like something from a third world revolution. Psalm 2 is a good reminder: nations conspire, people plot, earthly powers rise up, yet the One who is enthroned in heaven laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Knowing that Jesus is our king is far more important than whoever is the President, because our king's power is established on grace, and we see it here on earth in the form of the Christian Church. Back in Rome's last days, the bishop and theologian Augustine saw Rome get sacked and looted by barbarians, and his reflection on that disastrous event led to one of his greatest works, “The City of God.” Even when the city of Rome could fall and all the things of this world would pass away, the City of God would stand forever; even when every earthly power will decline and disappoint, Jesus is still on his eternal throne.

And finally, the third kind of person who gets anointed in the Old Testament is a priest; Leviticus talks about how Moses' brother Aaron and his sons were anointed as the first priests of Israel after the Exodus, and how the future priests were also anointed in taking up that office and that duty of service.

Jesus is our priest. The book of Hebrews talks about this, that Jesus is our high priest who is the mediator between us and the Father, who intercedes for us, and who gave himself up as the sacrifice. A priest is someone who stands between God and the people, to mediate and offer sacrifice. Jesus went beyond what any Old Testament priest could do and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the whole world.

Anointed as a prophet, preaching God's Word and making the Word of God known to the world. Anointed as priest, interceding and mediating for us with God the Father, offering the sacrifice for the sins of the world, once for all time, for all people, for all sins. Anointed as king, both descendant of David and Lord of David, greater than him or any earthly ruler, the king of the universe who holds all power and honor and authority forever. That's what makes him the Messiah, the Christ, and we see this the most clearly at this very moment of his baptism at the Jordan River, the one who is marked and revealed to us as fully, totally dedicated to the service of God and accomplishing the will of God.

You have been anointed too, because you have also been baptized. You have been anointed, marked as a child of God and dedicated to the service of God. For you too, the same can be said that Jesus heard, "You are my beloved son, you are my beloved daughter; with you I am well pleased." And for you too, the Holy Spirit has come down to remain with you and in you - to guide, to strengthen, to comfort, to help as Jesus has promised. You have been baptized, anointed to be joined together with the Anointed One, Christ our Lord. Him we follow, him we trust, him we worship and obey. Hail to the Lord's Anointed, great David's greater Son!

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Prayers

Prayers for the Church, our community and nation, the sick, etc.

C: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

P: Father in heaven, at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized in His name faithful in their calling as Your children and inheritors with Him of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

All: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

P: Let us bless the Lord!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

P: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C: **Amen.**