

The Third Sunday of Epiphany

White

Collect

God of all mercy,
your Son proclaimed good news to the poor,
release to the captives,
and freedom to the oppressed:
anoint us with your Holy Spirit
and set all your people free
to praise you in Christ our Lord.

Genesis 14.17-20

Abram Blessed by Melchizedek

Abraham is usually presented to us as a patriarchal shepherd, but surprisingly in Genesis chapter 14 he appears as a triumphant man of war. In this curious passage he returns from the battle field to receive a royal welcome. Most significantly for the Jewish reader of these texts, he receives a blessing from the King of Salem the town one day to become Jerusalem - Israel's capital city.

17 After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. ¹⁹He blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth;
²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

Psalms 128

The Happy Home of the Faithful

A Song of Ascents.

- ¹ Happy is everyone who fears the LORD,
who walks in his ways.
- ² You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands;
you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you.
- ³ Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots
around your table.
- ⁴ Thus shall the man be blessed
who fears the LORD.
- ⁵ The LORD bless you from Zion.
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem

all the days of your life.
⁶ May you see your children's children.
Peace be upon Israel!

Revelation 19.6-10

Hebrew thought likened the relationship between God and humanity to a marriage. In his vision of heaven St. John the Divine pictures this ideal fulfilled in the marriage between Jesus (The Lamb) and his faithful people (The Church).

⁶Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder-peals, crying out,
'Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
⁷ Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready;
⁸ to her it has been granted to be clothed
with fine linen, bright and pure'—
for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

⁹ And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are true words of God.' ¹⁰Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow-servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

John 2.1-11 The Wedding at Cana

St. John has shaped his Gospel around seven miracle stories with he calls 'signs' or indicators. The seventh and final sign is the raising of Lazarus from the dead - we now hear the story of the first Sign.

2On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' ⁴And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' ⁵His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' ⁶Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. ⁹When 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 ¹⁰and

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.' ¹¹Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Post Communion

Almighty Father,
whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world:
may your people,
illuminated by your word and sacraments,
shine with the radiance of his glory,
that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed
to the ends of the earth;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.