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## Outlines of the Standard Gospels

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## Outlines on the Standard Gospel Lessons

### Oculi

Luke 11:14-28

The Lord was approaching the close of His earthly ministry. The conspiracy against His life was nearing the breaking point. He had just wrought a mighty miracle, v. 14. Deep concern and alarm in the ranks of the Pharisees, v. 16; others went farther, v. 15; cp. John 8:48. Calmly the Lord takes up this charge and exposes its hollowness. That is the scope of the text.

#### The Victorious Defense of Jesus Against the Charge that He Is a Secret Ally of Satan

1. *The charge does not make sense*
2. *The Jewish exorcists refute it*
3. *By the finger of God Jesus casts out devils*

#### 1

A. Jesus does not use the sword of the Spirit against His enemies. For reasons of His own, He appeals to common sense. Vv. 17, 18. No organized society of any kind can endure if it fights against itself. Such intestine war is suicidal. The allies in the present war recognize that. They suppress their disagreements and unite their forces against the enemy. Satan is not so short-sighted as to make war against his own agents, as his followers argue.

B. The clearer the truth shines into the eyes of the Church's enemies today, the more venomous is their blasphemy. Acts 2. Yet all their charges against God's Word are groundless, make no sense.

#### 2

A. V. 19. Jewish exorcists, Luke 9:49; Acts 19:13; Matt. 7:22. Pupils of the Pharisees, called "sons," as "sons of the prophets." The Pharisees did not object to their activity. Question is not whether the exorcists exorcised successfully and in the right spirit. The Pharisees recognized them. Therefore Jesus says in effect: Your own pupils testify against and condemn you.

B. What clashes of authorities in the world of science today! The claims of Scripture as to the creation, the age of the world, etc., are ignored and ridiculed, yet all arguments against the Bible and Bible religion are unsound, and often scientists refute the claims of "science falsely so called."

#### 3

A. V. 20. See Ex. 8:19. Matthew: "Spirit of God." Jesus, the God-sent Savior, was destroying the works of the devil, 1 John 3:8. The first skirmish was the temptation in the wilderness. The de-



cisive struggle was in Gethsemane and at Calvary. The resurrection proclaimed the victory. Satan is fallen as lightning from heaven. Vv. 21, 22. Yet Satan is still a roaring lion, a master of a thousand wiles, possessing the hearts of millions. Luther on v. 21: "Here Jesus says that where He is not, there the devil is quiet and lets the people have peace." Satan or Christ occupies the heart, cf. Acts 5:3. When Jesus enters the soul by His word, He casts out the devil and takes his prey, the entire person. Vv. 24-26, an earnest warning against security. Many have been set free from Satan's power, but failed to watch and pray. Their soul was "swept and garnished" for Satan's return, and now they become sevenfold the possession of the devil. Cp. Matt. 12:45. Also the would-be neutrals, v. 23, are property of the Evil One, like the fig tree "cumbering the ground," Luke 13:7.

B. Jesus' defense is an appeal to His enemies. Chrysostom: "Behold, how He invites and seeks to lead them to the conviction that they are making war on their own salvation. They should rejoice, says He, that He has come and the day of their peace."

C. Are you a partaker of Jesus' victory? Are you battling and marching under His banner? In these days when Satan "Oft his harvest reapeth While the Christian sleepeth"; when he is gathering in so many of the young, equip yourself from the armory of St. Paul, Eph. 6:10-17.

L. J. ROEHM

### Laetare

John 6:1-15

The Passover was nigh, v. 4. This was the season of great joy for all true Israelites as the pilgrims journeyed to Jerusalem, Psalms of Ascent, 12-134. A season of joy for the carnally minded, who believed that the Messiah would establish His kingdom at the Passover; cf. v. 15 and the Palm Sunday Gospel. — Today is Laetare, *i. e.*, Rejoice; cf. Epistle Lection and Introit for today. Our joy must increase during Lent and reach its climax on Easter Sunday. But the people in the text and many today deprive themselves of the joy of the Lenten season and Easter.

#### Why Do Some Deprive Themselves of the True Festival Joy of the Lenten and Easter Season?

##### 1

V. 3 (cf. Mark 6:31) describes a scene which should have been an occasion for great joy. But the disciples are deprived of enjoying the intimate fellowship with Christ by worry and anxiety over temporal matters. In the hour of extreme need they lack trust in God's providential care. They apparently accept the great



truths confessed in the Second Article, but find it impossible to accept the promises of the First Article, and thus lose the joy which the Second Article engenders in the believer's heart. Vv. 5—9. Philip and Andrew had forgotten the many evidences of the Savior's willingness and ability to help; see especially Luke 9: 1, 10. Lack of trust in God to supply man's bodily needs deprived them of the joy which the approaching Passover festival had in store for them.

We are now privileged to hear the sweetest story ever told and the message of the open heaven. Do we rejoice in this? The Lord tests us also by casting heavy burdens upon us. Examples: Loved ones at the front; reduced income for those who in old age depend on their life's savings; the problems of adjustment in the postwar world. They are real problems. What do you do with them? Man's extremity must become God's opportunity. If we do not cast our temporal problems on Jesus, we shall lose the joy which the Lenten and Easter season has in store for us.

## 2

Materialism, an undue emphasis on the things which pertain to the body, will deprive us of the joy of the Lenten and Easter season. True, the Lord recognizes the needs of the body, Matt. 14: 14. Jesus nowhere advocates an ascetic withdrawal from the world. He is the Great Physician both for the soul and for the body. Mark 6: 34; Luke 9: 11. Jesus also provides all the necessities for our body. He does this abundantly, systematically. Cp. Mark 6: 40, "in ranks." Teaches frugality, vv. 10-13. But above all, teaches that we receive our daily food as gifts from God. The multitude, however, is interested primarily in the temporal advantages which they enjoy. Their chief interest is to see the miracles (v. 2) and to anoint Christ as their "bread king" (v. 15). Their materialistic spirit deprives them of the joy of the Passover.

This is happening to many today. The various pronouncements which contain the blueprint for a better economy and greater social justice in the postwar world, are frequently confounded with the heart of Christianity. True, we should always strive for improving our own and other men's economic and social standard. The Lord wants us to work and to save. But this dare not be the end of our life, only the means to an end. Under present economic conditions the danger of materialism is very real. War work; high wages; the desire to accumulate as much as possible against "the rainy day." When our thoughts are absorbed in this, the joy of the Lenten and Easter season can have no room in our hearts. Therefore Matt. 6: 19, 20.

F. E. MAYER



**Judica**

**John 8:46-59**

The text tells a sad story—the Jews blaspheme Jesus and even try to stone Him. Today, too, Jesus is rejected on many sides. This is done by all who tread the Word of Christ under foot either in doctrine or in life. To avoid such a course, let us see what the text says about the bliss of those that belong to Christ. The text enables us to answer the question:

**Why Are Those People Blessed Who Cling to Christ?**

**1. They have a divine Savior.**

- a) Jesus is without sin, v. 46. Sinlessness is not necessarily a proof of being divine, but it is a prerequisite.
- b) Jesus is from eternity, v. 58: true God.
- c) The enemies cannot harm Him unless He is willing to suffer, v. 59.

**2. They will not see death.**

- a) Jesus makes a great promise, v. 51.
- b) Everybody has to die physically, Rom. 5:12.
- c) Still, the Christian will not see death, death in the full sense of the word, signifying eternal separation from God, 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:55-57; John 11:25 f.
- d) Hence the greatest of all foes will not be able to hurt the Christian.

W. ARNDT

**Palmarum**

**Matt. 21:1-9**

This Sunday bears various names—"The Lord's Day of the Palm Branches," "Hosanna Sunday," and "The Paschal Day of the Flowers," all indicating the historic event of this day's Gospel. On this day the Creed was also again formally imparted to the candidates for Baptism and Confirmation. Hence Confirmation at this time is not without ancient, historical precedent. (Strodach, p. 132.)

How fitting, therefore, that today we, with the prophet Zechariah, should say to "the Daughter of Zion" and her confirmands:

**"Behold, Thy King Cometh Unto Thee!"**

**I. "Thy King cometh unto thee."**

**A. Behold the manner of His coming.**

1. In manifestation of His godhead. a. He claimed deity, v. 3, "The Lord." b. He showed omniscience, vv. 2 and 3. c. He manifested omnipotence, v. 6 and especially Mark 11:4-6.

2. In fulfillment of prophecy. a. He came as foretold Zech. 9:9, "sitting upon an ass and a colt" (the "and" means, "And, to be ex-



plicit, upon"—Ylvisaker), and as "King," the ass being the common beast of Israel's rulers in ancient times (Judg. 5:10; 10:4), since in the East the ass is not a despised animal. b. He was greeted as foretold (Zech. 9:9). Vv. 8 and 9, the "Hosannas," etc., evidently taken from the great Hallel of the Feast of Tabernacles (Ps. 118: 25, 26) and chanted antiphonally.

#### B. Behold the purpose of His coming.

1. To save the world. a. Zech. 9:9; Is. 62:11b. b. He rode, not a horse, employed in battle, but an ass, used by Eastern kings on peaceful errands, His mission being to bring "Peace on earth" (Luke 2:14; Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:18-21). c. How fittingly the Epistle and the Introit describe the active (Phil. 2:7, 9) and the passive obedience (Ps. 22:1) of our Savior, whereby His purpose was accomplished!

2. To rule the world. a. He shook all nations with tribulation and war, in order that His kingdom might come, Hagg. 2: 6, 7. Think of the world conquests preceding Christ's first coming, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the present war—all ultimately serving His cause. b. Governing His people by grace, v. 5, Matt. 11: 29, 30; Rom. 6:14, 15; 12:1; and Titus 2:11, 12.

#### II. Behold Him as thy King.

A. By confessing Him. 1. Not as those in Jerusalem who on Sunday said, "Hosannah," etc., and on Friday cried, "Crucify Him!" 2. But as those who confessed, Acts 2:36; 4:12, 40. 3. Application: Think of the broken confirmation pledges of them that deserve condemnation (Rev. 21:8; Mal. 3:5); but how kind our King, pardoning His most unworthy subjects, even though we have failed properly to acknowledge Him!

B. By serving Him. 1. The disciples and the colt's masters served in humble obedience, vv. 3, 6, 7. 2. Shall not we serve Him as well, telling others of Him (v. 5)? "He . . . redeemed me . . . that I may serve Him." What ingratitude to fail Him! And who of us is not guilty here? 3. How comforting to know that, despite our sins, He still continues to impute His obedience and His sufferings to us by faith! Verily, Blessed is He!

As today we behold our King entering Jerusalem for the one purpose of saving us, may His kindness move us, as loyal citizens of His kingdom, joyfully and faithfully to confess and serve Him "even unto death." Amen.

TH. F. NICKEL

