



### Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

#### *The Collect.*

**O** ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, of thy bountiful goodness keep us, we beseech thee, from all things that may hurt us; that we, being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things which thou commandest; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Gen 3:15)*

*23 Of this man's seed (David) hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus (Acts 13:23)*

*13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith (Romans 4:13)*

*6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Romans 9:6-8)*

*45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor 15:45-49)*

The ways of God are past finding out by man, the crown of His Creation. All of man's logic and laws are so far short of the great purpose and will of God that they appear as a gossamer silk scarf when stricken by the saber of the Saracen Guard. Man's law and logic yield immediately before that of God. It has always been a principle of many lands, including the Holy Land, that the eldest son is the beneficiary of all that His father possesses, or at least the greater portion of his holdings. But this law is null and void in the eyes of God.

When Eve was seduced in the Garden at Eden, and Adam, knowingly, partook of her sin, God immediately set in play His mighty plan for Redemption through a Redeemer. Adam was the federal head of all of humanity. We all alike have our descent from these ancient parents who brought sin and death upon all of their progeny – but not their human progeny alone, but upon every beast of the field, and all other living of nature. Being rightful heirs of our father, Adam, we deserve to die in our sinful natures of which we bear the very marks in our characters and being. Adam was the first son of God according to biblical lines of descent, though he was a created being. (Luke 3:38) In legal parlance and custom, it would seem that the first human father should have preeminence over all others, and he does insofar as the inherited nature of sin is concerned; however, God would send another Son of a completely different character – a Son of His own Substance and Nature – the Lord Jesus Christ. So Adam was the first son who sinned willfully, but Christ is the second Son who was perfect and pure and willing to die a substitutionary death to cover our sins. He is the Seed of Promise made reference to in Genesis 3:15, Romans 9:6-8, and 1 Cor 15:45-49. If we have received His redeeming grace by faith and promise, we have become Children of Abraham and of Promise.

It baffles mankind to observe how God seems to overlook, always the first-born and favor the second. Cain was the first-born of Eve, yet he was a murderer. Ishmael was the first-born of Abraham, but yet Isaac was considered the seed of promise (for he truly was. Ishmael came through an act of adultery). Later, Esau was the first-born of Isaac, yet he traded his birthright, foolishly, for that which would only temporarily appease his appetite – a bowl of red porridge. So the birthright blessing passed on to Jacob and his descendants. Order of physical birth has no preeminence with God – only the new birth in His Promised Seed, Jesus Christ, will the blessing of God be granted.

Jesus came in the line of descent from the second king of Israel, King David. The first King, Saul, was not faithful to God. Even Joseph was the first-born son of the favored wife, Rachel, of Jacob. So the mathematics of God is quite different from ours. We may sit and calculate the odds and the possibilities ad infinitum, but the Sovereign Will of God is unbreakable by our meager figures.

Even the Lord Jesus Christ had an immediate Forerunner to proclaim His Coming – John the Baptist! And the Books of God are divided, as well, into two separate, yet consistent, works – the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament summarizes the law and man's failure thereunder. In fact, the very last word of the Old Testament is "CURSE" for the terms of the law are a curse to man. But the blessings of God are found in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ of the second Testament! Man can never be righteous under the terms of that law. The law was a schoolteacher and a mirror to our souls so that we might behold our complete hopelessness before God in righteous endeavor. Once we had learned that reality under the struggles of those of the Old Testament period, we were made to know that we were helpless without a

Savior. That Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, came in the fullness of time to Redeem us – even under the terms of that Law which condemned us. He satisfied the terms of the Law that we might be reckoned as righteous before God with that imputed righteousness that only Christ could grant.

Are you, Reader, yet under the condemnation of the Law; or have you become a Child of that Promised Seed – Jesus Christ?