

Sermon for the Last Sunday of the Church Year

'Your words have been hard against me, sayeth the Lord.'

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It is the end of the ecclesial year. The last day of the Church's calendar. How shall we end it? Let us end it, by ending God. The Church's year is over. Let God be over with it.

Who will believe in this God? He claims to be good, but He allows every evil to prevail in this world, for *the wicked prosper, and the treacherous thrive*.

Why hold fast to this Lord? He claims to be compassionate, but little children are born unto death, and strong men die long before their time, for He who is merciful has *numbered their days*, and numbered them shortly.

When shall we trust in this Christ? He claims He shall come again so save us from the fallenness of this world. He *'he saved others. But he cannot even save himself.'*

Such a God deserves to be murdered. So many promises. So many promises not kept. So many lies.

Many know the famous quote of Friedrich Nietzsche: 'God is dead.' Most do not recall the rest of what he said immediately following: 'God is dead, he remains dead, and we killed him.'

We indeed did kill him, even as the Gospel tells us today, for when we were hungry, He did not feed us, when we were naked, He did not cloth us, when we were lost, He did not welcome us, when we were imprisoned, He did not visit us.

So we mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine. A false Eucharist; though He might give us the wine of His blood, we offer Him the rot of our malice.

In every way this God of the Hebrews deserves our derision. For it is written, even of the prophet, *'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evil-doers not only prosper, but they put God to the test and they escape.'*

The Lord has no power, He cannot prevent the unjust from escaping justice, even as He cannot prevent the unjust from crucifying him. This is no Almighty. This is no God on High.

Therefore, *'the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.'*

Fool, have you no patience? Fool, have you no vision?

'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed. They will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us," and to the hills "Cover us." For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'

All evil you see is born of the heart of man, *out of which comes every corruption.* If they shall crucify the tree of life, *the wood of green, the Christ,* shall they not destroy you, simple mortal, *who is dry, who is dead, even dead in trespasses and sins.*

You suffer, not because God causes it, because man willed it. From the beginning man willed a world of suffering, for he ate of a tree, a tree that taught him knowledge, knowledge of Good, but a knowledge of evil, and so evil you have known all the days of your life.

Suffer but a little longer Jerusalem; hold fast but a bit, O mother of Israel; the mount of Zion shall fall on you, Heavenly City, the height of propitiation; the hills shall cover you, for the earth shall welcome your sorrow into its womb, that it might give birth to you once more in the life of the world to come.

Have patience, see the vision, for the Lord has spoken. You have thought He was afar; but *call on Him while the Lord is near. For he is near to the brokenhearted.*

Enlightened mankind believes they have killed the Lord, even as they killed Him millennia ago; but what mortal shall bring death to Life?

Behold, even now the Lord speaks to those who yet *esteem his name*, *'Your words have been hard against me.'* But *'You shall be mine, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare you as a man spares his son who serves him. Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not.'*

Sinful mankind, thrust your lance into the side of the Son. Torture and taunt the Just Man. But the season of Advent has come, the day of waiting is over, the day of His coming has begun. The godless proclaim, *'It is vain to serve God.'*

But you, O patience ones, hold fast, behold the sign above the head of the crucified, and read, and despair no longer, for it is written, even of Pontius Pilate:

'This is the King.'

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Preached by Pastor Fields

Sermon Texts: Malachi

3:13-18, Colossians 1:13-20, Luke 23:27-43