



Table Talk

By Rev. Timothy J. Swenson • ILT Dean of Chapel

The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 15, 2023

ISAIAH 25:1-9

The LORD God will wipe away the tears from all faces" vs. 8b



Children behave badly. We've all seen it in our children and in the children of others. Even with parental admonitions ringing in their ears, children still touch the hot stove, stick their tongue on the frost-covered pipe, and pick fights with their siblings. Dramatic consequences ensue: hurt, pain, shame, crying (lots of it), and a child on the run... running to mommy or daddy's arms.

The prophet Isaiah has been recounting a list of the great and mighty deeds of Israel's God, a God delivering dramatic consequences upon the bad behavior of the opponents to Israel: ruined cities and silenced enemies. God's great and mighty deeds work blessings to those children of his: rescued poor, infinite feasting, the shame of death removed. There, in the midst of those mighty deeds, is one of intimate tenderness: a little thing—personal, touching, and familial—a daddy wiping away the tears of his sons and daughters, "...and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces..." (vs. 8b). The hurt, pain, and shame of children behaving badly dabbed away by the ministrations of a loving parent.

Our God fulfills the prophet's promise when he comes in the flesh: "[Jesus] took {the children} up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them" (Mark 10:16). The end of all things—the passing away of the old, the coming

of the new—the wedding feast of the Lamb, the end of the children's shame—death will be no more... all anticipated in the loving touch of our Savior. He is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. We all will confess, "This is the Lord, we have waited for him..." (vs 9). While we wait, our God gives us neighbors to pass the time. As we are useful to those neighbors in their needs for daily bread, our waiting is well-ordered and we, as children of our God, do not behave so badly.

Table Talk: Share the emotions of parenthood; tell how they're God's emotions as well.

Pray: Heavenly Father, forgive our sin, wipe away our tears, remove our shame, and restore our love. Amen



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ISAIAH 25:1-9 ESV

O Lord, you are my God;
I will exalt you; I will praise your name,
for you have done wonderful things,
plans formed of old, faithful and sure.
2 For you have made the city a heap,
the fortified city a ruin;
the foreigners' palace is a city no more;
it will never be rebuilt.
3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;
cities of ruthless nations will fear you.
4 For you have been a stronghold to the poor,
a stronghold to the needy in his distress,
a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat;
for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall,
5 like heat in a dry place.
You subdue the noise of the foreigners;
as heat by the shade of a cloud,
so the song of the ruthless is put down.

6 On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.
7 And he will swallow up on this mountain
the covering that is cast over all peoples,
the veil that is spread over all nations.
8 He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
9 It will be said on that day,
Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.
This is the Lord; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.



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