

“It is Time for the Lord to Act”: The Age to Come

Theme

The Divine Liturgy takes place in God’s Time. In celebrating it, we are taken up into the Age to Come, and feast with Christ in his Kingdom.

Outline

Psalm 118.126

The Funeral Service

The Age to Come and the Eighth Day

Scripture References

Genesis 6.13

Esther 4.14

*Psalm 118 (119)*¹

Sirach 20.7

Isaiah 54.7

Isaiah 56.8

Mark 1.14-15

Mark 10.29-31

John 10.16

John 12.24

Scripture References Continued

2 Corinthians 6.1-2

Ephesians 1.3-10

Galatians 1.3-5

Hebrews 4.8-11

Glossary

Chronos: time as a succession of moments

Kairos: time as the opportune moment, in the
New Testament also God’s time.

Quote

Christ’s own work has turned death inside-out, showing himself to be stronger than death, and proving himself to be the one who is ultimately and totally in control from the beginning: All things are in his hands and providence—even our apostasy. Turned inside-out, death now becomes the means whereby the creature returns to God, and, in fact, is fashioned by God as a living being... [Christ in his death] has opened up a way of seeing a deeper mystery in death and has transformed death throughout all time: for what was once the end now becomes the beginning of a deeper mystery.

— Fr John Behr *Becoming Human*

Resource

Becoming Human: Meditations on Christian Anthropology in Word and Image; Fr John Behr
The Divine Liturgy: A Commentary in Light of the Fathers; Priestmonk Gregory

¹ References from the Greek Bible; differing Hebrew Bible references are noted in parentheses.

The Opening Dialogue of the Divine Liturgy

The priest and deacon, being fully vested, stand together before the holy table. The priest in the center and the deacon at his place at the southwest corner. The priest with hands uplifted says the following prayer while the deacon lifts his orarion [stole].

Priest: O heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come, and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O good One.

The priest and deacon make three metanias [low bows] while the priest says:

Priest: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. (twice)
O Lord, thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy praise. (once)

The priest then kisses the gospel book and the holy table, while the deacon kisses only the southwest corner of the holy table. The deacon then bows his head to the priest and holding his orarion with three fingers of his right hand hand says:

Deacon: It is time for the Lord to act. Bless, master.

The priest makes the sign of the cross over the deacon's head, saying:

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen. Pray for me, master.

Priest: The Lord direct thy steps unto every good work.

Deacon: Remember me, holy master.

Blessing the deacon, the priest says:

Priest: The Lord God remember thee in his kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

Having kissed the priest's hand, the deacon exits the sanctuary, passing the high place, through the north door. Standing at his place in the center of the solea [raised platform in front of the icon stand], the deacon makes three metanias before the holy doors, saying each time:

Deacon: O Lord, thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy praise.

Extended Edition E-mail

Scriptures References

Genesis 6.13 NETS²

And God said to Noah, "The time of all humankind has come before me, for the earth has become full of wrongdoing by reason of them, and see, I am going to ruin them and the earth."

Esther 4.14 NETS

Because even if you keep silent at this time, from elsewhere help and protection will come to the Judeans, but you and your father's household will perish. And who knows if for this time you were made queen?

Psalms 118.12 (119.12) NETS

Blessed are you O Lord, teach me your statutes.

Psalms 118.126 (119.126) NETS

It is time for the Lord to act; they scattered your law.

Ecclesiastes 3.1-8 NETS

For everything there is a time [*chronos*],

and a right time [*kairos*] for every matter under heaven:

a right time to give birth, and a right time to die;

a right time to plant, and a right time to pluck up what is planted;

a right time to kill, and a right time to heal;

a right time to tear down, and a right time to build;

a right time to weep, and a right time to laugh;

a right time to mourn, and a right time to dance;

a right time to throw stones, and a right time to gather stones;

a right time to embrace, and a right time to be far from embracing;

a right time to seek, and a right time to lose;

a right time to keep, and a right time to throw away;

a right time to tear, and a right time to sew;

a right time to keep silence, and a right time to speak;

a right time to love, and a right time to hate;

a right time for war, and a right time for peace.

Since the NETS is a very literal translation, *kairos* is translated as 'right time' for every instance it appears in this passage. For an interesting discussion on the two Hebrew

² New English Translation of the Septuagint (proper names standardized.)

words used for time in verse 1, see the note in NET³ Bible. (Despite the similarity of the names, the NET and NETS are not related).

Sirach 20.7 NETS

A wise person will be silent until a proper time,
but the swaggerer and fool overstep a proper time.
A word search on how Sirach uses *kairos* is quite illuminating.

*Isaiah 54.7 ESV*⁴

For a brief moment I deserted you,
but with great compassion I will gather you.

Isaiah 56.8 ESV

The Lord GOD,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares,
“I will gather yet others to him
besides those already gathered.”

Mark 1.14–15 ESV

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 10.29–31 ESV

Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

John 10.16 ESV

“And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

John 12.24 ESV

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

³ New English Translation

⁴ English Standard Version

Romans 5.6–8 ESV

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8.18–21 ESV

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (ESV)

Romans 13.11–14 ESV

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

2 Corinthians 6.1–2 ESV

Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Galatians 1.3–5 ESV

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 1.3–10 ESV

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through

Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Hebrews 4.8–11 ESV

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Hebrews 9.8–10 ESV

By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

1 Peter 1.3–5 ESV

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 5.6–7 ESV

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Revelation 1.3 ESV

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

Quotes

Further, He says to them [the Hebrews], "Your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot endure." [Isaiah 1.13] Ye perceive how He speaks: Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me, but that is which I have made, when, giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day, that is, a beginning of another world [or age]. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead.

— *Epistle of Barnabas* Chapter 15

The command of circumcision, again, bidding them always circumcise the children on the eighth day, was a type of the true circumcision, by which we are circumcised from deceit and iniquity through Him who rose from the dead on the first day after the Sabbath, our Lord Jesus Christ. For the first day after the Sabbath, remaining the first [or 'being the first'] of all the days, is called, however, the eighth, according to the number of all the days of the cycle, and yet remains the first.

— St Justin the Philosopher and Martyr *Dialogue with Trypho* Chapter 41

An Interesting Item that Didn't Fit into the Talk

When the priest and deacon arrive at the church before the Divine Liturgy, the first service they offer is the Kairos, where they enter into the sanctuary. This indicates that just as in the Incarnation the Timeless One entered into time and renewed it, so to in the Liturgy we are taken up into God's time.

More Resources

Ante Nicene Fathers; Volume One