

**Sermon Notes – April 13, 2025**  
**The Holy Gospel of St. Luke 22: 14-23: 56**  
**Peace Lutheran Church**  
**“Jesus Is Not Disgraced”**

On this Sunday each year, the Revised Common Lectionary provides for the reading of the Passion narrative from the year's dominant synoptic gospel, while Good Friday brings John's Passion account. Despite cynical comments to the contrary, this is not because the framers knew that people had stopped coming to Friday evening service. Rather, it is a continuation of an old tradition in which Matthew's Passion account was read on this Sunday and John's on Good Friday. There are enough significant differences in tone and subtle differences in details to make this double reading quite rewarding. John's account is a coronation in which Jesus is clearly in control throughout; Mark's and Matthew's present apparent defeat and abandonment, with foreshadowing of the final eucatastrophe that only careful reading will reveal. Luke's account is somewhere in the middle. A significant theme of today's gospel reading is Jesus' ministry of healing at this climax of His ministry: He heals the temple slave whom Peter wounds; He heals the breach between Herod and Pilate; He forgives the soldiers who crucify Him; He offers consolation to the penitent thief. Jesus exercises kingly authority and continues His trust in Abba Father to the very end: rather than a cry of dereliction from Psalm 22, His final words are a confident quote from Psalm 31.

The processional gospel offers several interesting points as well. One that all synoptics share is the double meaning of Luke 19: 34. Along with the traditional translation, it could also mean, “Its master is in need,” which asserts Jesus' deeper claim to rightful possession in line with the royal images in the rest of the story. Unique to Luke is 19: 40, which again asserts Jesus' sovereignty over the created order. It begins a series of references to stones in the next few chapters (from the one the builders rejected, to the complete destruction of the city, to the rock closing Jesus' tomb) and echoes Luke 3: 8.

The first two readings for Passion Sunday do not vary from year to year. The first is always this servant Song from Isaiah, a courtroom drama between the servant and those who attack the servant's faithful message. It is unclear who the servant was originally intended to be - the prophet himself, the king, or His audience knows well (we'll hear another example on Maundy Thursday) to emphasize His central point. And this passage ends with a phrase he quotes many times, the oldest Christian creed we have: “Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil. 2:

11). This is indeed a revolutionary affirmation, giving an imperial title not to Caesar but to Christ.