

## MARCH 20 2026 FATHER HENK VAN MEIJEL

Today we really have the tension between the forces of good, the heavenly forces, and the forces of evil, the forces of the world. And we see this also right in the Gospel reading, how Jesus goes up to Jerusalem, and they're trying to figure out who he is. But they should know who he is, because of his teaching, and of all the miracles he has done. But yet, there's this opposition. And led by the worldly forces, and in this case, the leaders of the temple. And they have to unite. This guy has to go away, has to get out of here, we don't want him, because he might take our power away, and worse yet, the Romans might intervene.

And so, there's the tension. There's the tension, of who Jesus is. And Jesus at one point, as we read, cannot take it, and he cries out. And he does in convoluted language, he says: But I am the Son of God. But, of course, it falls on deaf ears.

I always like the first reading. The book of Wisdom. And as it says, it's about wisdom, it's about also common sense, and how those who do not believe try to figure out what it is with those who believe. How come they have peace of mind? And want to test them. And it's really an interesting reading to sit with, and to look in our own lives.

It's hard to explain, why God gives us that peace. As a believer, God gives me peace, and it's very hard to talk about. But in my own life, I can come up with an example. I, in my darkest days, about 25 years ago, I tried to have a big business, and I tried to have all kinds of things. Stature in the world, which means absolutely nothing, because two months after we're dead no one knows us anyway.

But pursuing those forces, what society tells us, what should bring happiness. And I worked very hard at it. But then everything came to a

halt, when my life fell apart. A few years after, I remember sitting at the table having dinner, and I said to myself: Wow! That's interesting. I don't care about my business, I don't care about my bank account, I don't care about the investments, I don't care about my truck car, I don't care, really, about sports, or holidays, I don't really care about much! I should be depressed! Since I don't care about anything.

And I thought, "Well, that's strange, but I'm not depressed. I'm actually quite happy." And this was the time that my eyes opened up, how God gives us peace of heart. Peace of heart... There's a certain peace. And in our lives we always have to try to pursue that peace. When there's disturbances, always try to go back to that peace. And that's that heavenly peace only God can give. The world cannot give that.

As we are pursuing our things in the world, as we get excited about what's happening in the shopping mall, and we don't get the right thing, and we have to return things, and this doesn't work out, and that doesn't work out, it can be really consuming us. And how many times I'm with people who say, even though they are quite well off, say, "I don't have enough money, I don't know how to do it." That is the world. That is the world.

But if we can tap into the Holy Spirit, God will give us that peace. And even in my life today, my life actually is much more difficult today, in my ministry, because I am also doing a lot of administration, and have to deal with contractors. And most contractors trying to get as much money out of you as possible, and so on. How can I maintain that peace? And always going back to that peace.

And even today, I don't care, you can give \$1,000,000, I won't get excited about it. It doesn't do nothing for me. You can take me to a restaurant, and I think it's a waste of money to drop, I don't know, \$50

for a meal. And this is God. God gives us that peace of heart. The only thing I want is that peace in my heart, and always pursue it. And that peace you cannot buy. Even with \$10,000,000.

And we see, as we live in this messy, messy world of today, it is messy and a lot of people are scared, and it does not mean that we should not be concerned. Because in today's world there is the rhetoric among world leaders, it's not very life-giving. And it sounds like we might go to wars again, and so on. But, even in that, there is that peace. And we have to pursue that peace. That peace of Christ, and God only can give that.

And as the Psalm says today, our refrain which was sung, "The Lord is near to the broken-hearted." "The Lord is near to the broken-hearted." When our lives, when our heart is broken, and there's nothing else left, we have to go to God. God only can give us healing. And it's very simple, it's not easy to do. And we have to rely on God. And especially when our lives have fallen apart, there's only one thing we can—we have to go to God.

And it's always the discernment. Where am I going? And this Lenten season, of course, is that season to look at our lives. Am I going more towards the world, or am I more going towards God? Am I pursuing that peace in my heart, or am I still worrying about every little thing in my life? Every little thing that happens during my day. When someone has an unkind word. Or something goes wrong. And why does this happen to me? That mentality.

But, to find that peace in God, and then we discover the kingdom here on earth. The kingdom of God is very much alive on earth.

Amen.