

February 23, 2021

Lectionary Passages:

Psalm 77  
Job 5:8-27  
1 Peter 3:8-18a

Selected Verses:

I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord;  
I will remember your wonders of old.  
I will meditate on all your work,  
and muse on your mighty deeds.  
Your way, O God, is holy. – Psalm 77: 11-13

As for me, I would seek God,  
and to God I would commit my cause. – Job 5: 8

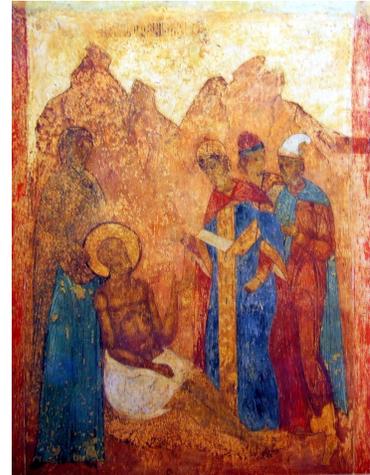
Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing...For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. –1 Peter 3: 8-9, 18

Devotional:

Whenever we need a housewarming gift, we shop at “Clay in Motion” in Milton-Freewater. It is great to watch the potters work and look at their beautiful creations. On the back shelf, they have “seconds” for about half price. Many times, the flaw is slight enough that we barely notice. If we give a second as a gift, we always let the person know the flaw. They are still beautiful and very functional.

In his speech, Eliphaz had many words of wisdom. Many statements that on their own make sense and sound beautiful. Eliphaz praised God for his power and justice. Yet, while it is good theological doctrine, it is filled with flaws. While God is all powerful, the events that happen in our lives is often unjust and unfair. In the end, Eliphaz tries to make God and struggles black and white. Yet, as a result of sin, there are times when life is difficult and there is no one, not even God, to blame. At times, life is unfair. Even when it is three friends against one Job, their answers have too many faults to be useable.

At a time of struggle and feeling in despair, David turns to remembering God’s mighty deeds and wonders. In the midst of the struggling, we can focus on God’s faithfulness. Some of the remembering is thinking about the places we have seen God in our lives. We can also use Scripture to remind us of God’s mighty deeds in history. God led the people out of Egypt through forty years in the wilderness and into the Promised Land. God was with Elijah when he felt all alone. God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. Even so, God is mindful of us and cares for us as parents care for and protect their children.



During difficult times, it is important to have a sense of unity and love for one another. Hard times can lead toward drawing people apart or drawing them together. Peter encourages us to draw together, having humility and a tender heart for each other. This will mean forgiving others when they hurt you. It may mean repaying evil with good. To show love and care even in the midst of disagreement. While we may think our way is right and the best way to go, often it is better to be humble and show love to one another. At times, this may lead to suffering. At those times, we remember the suffering that Christ did for us to receive the gift of salvation.

Yet, like the argument of Eliphaz, we cannot allow this to go too far. There are times when the flaws in a piece of pottery are too big that the piece needs to be discarded. There are times when someone's arguments are too far off that we need to stand up and disagree. There are times when there is abuse that needs to be corrected or avoided. The wisdom is having a humble heart and reaching out in humility and love to share the flaws and share the message of salvation in the gospel. May we have the wisdom to see God's hand at work in the midst of the storm.

Prayer:

God of all times and places, in Jesus Christ, lifted up on the cross, you opened for us the path to eternal life. Grant that we, being born again of water and the Spirit, may joyfully serve you in newness of life and faithfully walk in your holy ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who live and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever. Amen.