

March 3, 2021

Lectionary Passages:

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45

Jeremiah 30:12-22

John 12:36-43

Selected Verses:

They asked, and he brought quails,
and gave them food from heaven in abundance.
He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.
For he remembered his holy promise,
and Abraham, his servant. – Psalm 105: 40-42

Why do you cry out over your hurt?
Your pain is incurable.
Because your guilt is great,
because your sins are so numerous,
I have done these things to you. – Jeremiah 30: 15

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them. Although he had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him. – John 12: 36-37

Devotional:

This last weekend, a family of three went camping in Northeastern England overlooking the North Sea. The young couple, with a small child, set up their tent within a couple feet of a cliff edge with a sheer 280-foot drop. The Coast Guard came and warned them of the danger of landslides in that area. The family were looking forward to a weekend of camping with a great view. For some reason, they didn't notice the danger. Waking up in the middle of the night with the call of nature could lead to a sudden drop. Maybe some cliffs are stable enough, and people are safe enough to camp, but this one was dangerous enough to draw world-wide attention. This couple didn't notice the danger that seems obvious to most people.

John's gospel tells us that when Jesus came into Jerusalem, he performed many signs and miracles. Jesus had healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, raised Lazarus from the dead, and many more. Even so, the leaders in Jerusalem could not see Jesus for who he was. They had set up their tent around the temple. They looked to the temple for their place of worship and for the salvation. During the week of Passover more than 400,000 lambs were sacrificed for the Passover meal. People were so busy preparing for the Passover that they did not see God in their midst. They were finding comfort in the ritual of Passover and overlooked the danger of missing God.

Israel's history was filled with people forgetting that God was in their midst. The Psalmist tells us of God providing water in the desert, quail in the evening and manna in the



morning. During the 40 years wandering in the wilderness, God had provided for them. God had kept His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God had brought the people out with a mighty arm. God has kept his covenant, and will continue to keep His promises throughout all generations. Even so, the people try to rely on their own strength, instead of the strength of the Lord. God brought them out of slavery, provided food and water, yet the people complained and needed to constantly be reminded that God was guiding them to the Promised Land.

By the time of Jeremiah, the people had completely forgotten about God. Jeremiah proclaimed God's judgment on the people. Their sins were great. The suffering that was coming was a result of their sins. They had not seen the danger of living on the edge. They thought they could act however they wanted, and God would still care for them. Maybe like the couple camping, they thought they could live near the edge of danger and God would still protect them. They could not see that the danger of not following God and sinning would lead to suffering and death.

Today, may you pause and look around. Experience where God is in your midst. He may seem hidden to you because you have not paused to give Him space. Jesus came as the light in the darkness to show us the dangers around us and how to live. As the light, Jesus invites us to be children of light, living in the safety of God's salvation.

Prayer:

Almighty God, you are the light of the world. All too often, we are wanting to live on the edge, not noticing the danger around us. Give us eyes to see your guiding presence in our lives today. May we experience your presence. We give you praise and thanks for the daily blessings you provide us. We often overlook the gifts of food and water you provide for us as we journey with you. Remind us to give you thanks for each blessing you shower upon us today. As a result of your light, may we walk in the light and share your salvation with others today. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.