

March 15, 2021

Lectionary Passages:

Psalm 107:1-16

Exodus 15:22-27

Hebrews 3:1-6



Selected Verses:

Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress. – Psalm 107: 4-6

When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter. That is why it was called Marah. And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” He cried out to the Lord; and the Lord showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. – Exodus 15: 23-25

Now Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken later. Christ, however, was faithful over God’s house as a son, and we are his house if we hold firm the confidence and the pride that belong to hope. – Hebrews 3: 5-6

Devotional:

God led Moses and the Israelites out of the bondage of slavery into the wilderness. In chapter 15, they have just crossed the Red Sea. They had just watched God part the waters and give them release from their bondage. Both Moses and Miriam sang songs of deliverance. The 400 years of bondage and slavery in Egypt were over. The new life of freedom had begun.

Part of stepping out in faith, in trusting God is realizing that the freedom of salvation we enter does not have the same securities as before. In Egypt, while under slavery, they knew where to get food and water. They had learned that if they stood up to authority, they would have to make bricks without straw. They may have to walk a long way to get water, and the meals were meager, but they were fed. Now, they were following God across the Red Sea and into the wilderness.

The first issue, and a common issue in the book of Exodus, was the need of good water and food. Image being called to follow God and leave behind the comforts of home. Even if that home was in slavery, everything is known. Now, you need to trust Moses to provide. At least at this point, they weren’t complaining to God. When they come to a water source, the water is undrinkable. It is bitter. They cried out to Moses.

In turn, Moses turns to God. Throughout the wilderness years, whenever Moses turned to God, he received the answer of what to do. The people would complain, Moses turned to God,

God provided. God simply told Moses to throw a stick into the waters and it would become drinkable. How could a stick make the water drinkable? It wasn't the stick; it was God calling Moses and the people to trust Him. Over the next forty years, the people would need to trust God again and again. In fact, none of that generation, including Moses, were able to enter the Promised Land because they did not trust God.

With this first encounter with needing food or water, God said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right in his sight, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you." The people were called to trust and follow the Lord who heals you. They had seen the plagues that came upon Egypt, God is willing to bring healing instead of plagues.

Centuries later, a leper came to Jesus, knelt before him and asked, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." Jesus replied, "I want to, be clean." The word can also be translated, "be healed." Jesus was able to heal the leper. He was also able to make him clean. He took the bitterness out of the man's life and made him whole. While Moses could only turn to God to bring cleanliness and purity, Jesus could freely give it. By grace, Jesus offered the cleansing words of life.

The book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus could offer what Moses couldn't because Moses was a faithful servant while Jesus was a faithful son. Jesus has a relationship with God as a Father and son. As the Son of God, Jesus can offer the cleansing waters of salvation. Then, we are told, we belong to the house. We have the hope that Moses could not have because Jesus has been revealed to us. We no longer need a mediator as Israel needed Moses. Jesus is the high priest that intercedes on our behalf, and we are invited into the household of God. In Christ we have the hope that God is truly the healer. The one who has washed us clean and given us new life.

Prayer:

Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for your healing powers. May we have faith to trust you as you lead us and provide for us. As a parent provides for the household, you provide for us. May we live in the hope of the gospel, namely, that in Jesus Christ we are healed and forgiven. Guide us this week on where you are leading us and allow us the strength to follow you. Fill us with your Spirit to live as your children. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.