

DEVOTION FOR THE FOURTEENTH WEEK OF PENTECOST

PSALM 144:1-8

Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.

He is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and He in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me.

O Lord, what is man that you regard him, or the son of man that you think of him? Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.

Bow down your heavens, O Lord, and come down! Touch the mountains so that they smoke!

Flash forth the lightning and scatter them; send out your arrows and rout them!

Stretch out your hand from on high; rescue me and deliver me from the many waters,

From the hands of foreigners, whose mouths speak lies and whose right hand is a hand of falsehood.

I will sing a new song to you, O God; upon a ten stringed harp I will play to you, who gives victories to kings, who rescues His servant David from the cruel sword.

Rescue me and deliver me from the hand of foreigners, whose mouths speak lies and whose right hand is a hand of falsehood.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Deuteronomy 25:1-19

Laws of family life and punishments for transgressions

Questions for reflection

Why was the brother in law of a childless widow to take her as his wife?

Beyond honesty, why were merchants to use accurate weights?

Why was God's anger at the Amalekites so great? (Exodus 17:8-14)

Romans 9:1-33

God's choice and Israel's unbelief

Questions for reflection

What special privileges were given to Israel by God?

What was Israel's responsibility as God's people?

Where did Israel as a nation go wrong? (vs31-32)

“GOD'S CHOICE”

How do you make up your mind? Do you base your choices on logic and reason, or on intuition and feeling? They say we shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but booksellers design covers to attract customers to the book. If you were trying to put together a winning team, what kind of players would you choose? The ones most likely to win, of course! If you were God and wanted to make your name known to the nations, what kind of people would you choose? Probably the brightest and the best! With that in mind a theologian once commented, “How odd of God to choose the Jews.”

Why did God choose the Jews, or more accurately Israel, the descendants of Sarah and Abraham (of which the Judah was one tribe) to make His name known? Certainly not because they were the most powerful nation, for they were slaves. Neither did He choose them, because they were the most culturally or intellectually influential people. God chose Israel first and foremost, simply because He loved them. God's choices are based on His love. God chose Israel for the sake of His love. God's choice made Israel beautiful, so they would sparkle the shine of His glory like jewels in the world.

The most precious ^{jewel} of Israel came from the tribe of Judah (from which we get the names Jews and jewels). Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah to fulfill the purpose God gave Israel, of making His Name and salvation known in all the world. God doesn't make His choices on the same basis as we do. God chooses on the basis of His love. When you consider the sin of the world, how odd of God to choose any of us. Yet for the sake of His beloved Son Jesus, the most precious jewel of Israel, He chooses to set His love of us and call us His children, dearly loved.

HYMN: “GOD LOVED THE WORLD SO THAT HE GAVE” (Public Domain)

1. God loved the world so that He gave
His only Son the lost to save,
that all who would in Him believe
should everlasting life receive.
2. Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,
who was made flesh and suffered death;
All then who trust in Him alone
are built on this chief cornerstone.
3. God would not have the sinner die;
His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the word declares,
how we in Christ are heaven’s heirs.
4. Be of good cheer for God’s own Son
forgives all sins which you have done;
and justified by Jesus’ blood,
your baptism grants the highest good.
5. If you are sick, if death is near,
this truth your troubled heart can cheer;
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
that is the firmest ground of faith.
6. Glory to God the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To you, O blessed Trinity,
be praise now and eternally!

PRAYER

Lord God heavenly King, we give you thanks and praise for the many kind expressions of your love in our lives and in the world around us. Thank you for giving us life in our bodies and calling us to be in the world. Thank you for calling us to Christ Jesus and giving us life as your people through faith in His Name and the washing of His precious blood. Bless us to live each day in the power of your Spirit and make your name and love known by sharing Jesus with others. In His name. Amen

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,

Forever and ever. Amen

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION Hosea 1:10

“Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ it shall be said to them, ‘children of the living God.’”