

Thursday, February 15, 2024 - Day 2 of Lent

Open in Prayer:

Lord Jesus, Thank you for suffering for me. I am eternally grateful. Thank you for your gift of salvation. Guide me in the way I should go. Lead me on a journey of growth this season, and along this journey, fill my heart with abounding joy! May I never grow weary of rejoicing in your goodness, and may I never forget your love and sacrifice. Amen.

Read Genesis 9:8-17 (ESV)

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Answer the following questions:

Yesterday, on Ash Wednesday, we saw the reality that life is fragile. We came from dust, and because of the sinful disobedience of Adam and Eve, it is to dust we shall return. Today we realize that life is not just fragile, but it is also marked by human depravity. We see in the Noah story that God was so grieved by the depravity of humanity, that God seems to be regretting the creation of man. That should make us think...how can we say that humanity is good in any way, if left to our own vices, we move toward division, become more and more corrupt, and enact violence – emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual violence.

What is even more difficult to swallow is that Scripture is speaking about not just overall sinfulness, but the reality of my depravity as well. God sees my heart, the depth of my sinful disobedience, and the idea of God’s regret for creating me based on how I have lived, breaks my heart.

Yet, in the face of such a stark reality, in the aftermath of God’s judgment, God’s grace shines through! Against the backdrop of the gloomy, grey clouds, Noah

looks up and sees a sign from God – the sign of God’s grace and peace in the space where sun and storm meet. And from that sign, a promise emerges. A promise that God will not turn His face against us again!

This passage from Genesis speaks about the depravity of humanity and the overwhelming Mercy and Grace of God.

1. What is the sign of God’s covenant with us?
2. When you see that sign “where sun and storm meet”, are you awed by the beauty, and do you experience the peace of God upon seeing it? Why or why not?
3. When you hear that God will not turn his face of wrath against us again in the future, how does that impact your understanding of the story of Jesus on the cross?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 and reflect on how God’s promise was fulfilled in Christ Jesus, our Lord.
5. What emotions, feelings, or thoughts well up within you hearing of this promise and Christ’s fulfillment of the promise on our behalf?

Read Psalm 95

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work. For forty years I loathed that generation and said, “They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways.” Therefore I swore in my wrath, “They shall not enter my rest.”

Close in Prayer

Lord, may we know deeply Your sorrow and grief at our sin. During the season of Lent, give us the courage to look directly into the gloom of our sin, so we might see through it the beauty and glory of your grace afforded us in Christ Jesus. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.