

Sunday, March 15, 2020

Old Testament

Exodus 17:1-7

As the Israelites are led in freedom by Moses, they quickly turn from trusting God's provision to complaining to Moses that they will surely die.

A reading from the Book of Exodus:

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

The Word of the Lord.

Psalm 95

1 Come, let us sing to the LORD; *

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *

and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

3 For the LORD is a great God, *

and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *

and the heights of the hills are his also.

5 The sea is his, for he made it, *

and his hands have molded the dry land.

6 Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *

and kneel before the LORD our Maker.

7 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep
of his hand. *

Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

8 Harden not your hearts, as your forebears did in the wilderness, *

***at Meribah, and on that day at Massah,
when they tempted me.***

9 They put me to the test, *

though they had seen my works.

10 Forty years long I detested that generation and said, *

***"This people are wayward in their hearts;
they do not know my ways."***

11 So I swore in my wrath, *

"They shall not enter into my rest."

We may find joy in suffering, knowing that trials mature and solidify the divine love in our hearts.

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans:

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person-- though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord.