

Sunday, September 13, 2020

Greeting: God is good **all the time**. All the time **God is good**.

Question of the Day:

Who is not a sibling of Moses? a) Miriam b) Zipporah c) Jethro d) Aaron

Hymn “Lead On, O Cloud of Presence”

Call to Worship

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of God.

Let us remember God’s marvelous works.

Surely God has saved us in difficult times.

How can we forget God’s guiding hand?

When evil surrounds us and we have been wronged,
God helps us turn the evil to good.

We need not be afraid whatever happens.

We are in God’s care wherever we go.

Sing the praises of God, our strength. Know that God is majestic and holy.

How great is God’s mercy for all who worship!

Prayer of Invocation

Holy God, your Word leads us to your holy dwelling place. Strengthen and guide us with your Word through the power of the Holy Spirit; we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Exodus 14:19—15:11, 20-21 *The Message*

The angel of God that had been leading the camp of Israel now shifted and got behind them. And the Pillar of Cloud that had been in front also shifted to the rear. The Cloud was now between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel. The Cloud enshrouded one camp in darkness and flooded the other with light. The two camps didn’t come near each other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and GOD, with a terrific east wind all night long, made the sea go back. He made the sea dry ground. The seawaters split.

The Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground with the waters a wall to the right and to the left. The Egyptians came after them in full pursuit, every horse and chariot and driver of Pharaoh racing into the middle of the sea. It was now the morning watch. GOD looked down from the Pillar of Fire and Cloud on the Egyptian army and threw them into a panic. He clogged the wheels of their chariots; they were stuck in the mud.

The Egyptians said, “Run from Israel! GOD is fighting on their side and against Egypt!”

GOD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea and the waters will come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots, over their horsemen.”

Moses stretched his hand out over the sea: As the day broke and the Egyptians were running, the sea returned to its place as before. GOD dumped the Egyptians in the middle of the sea. The waters returned, drowning the chariots and riders of Pharaoh’s army that had chased after Israel into the sea. Not one of them survived.

But the Israelites walked right through the middle of the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall to the right and to the left. GOD delivered Israel that day from the oppression of the Egyptians. And Israel looked at the Egyptian dead, washed up on the shore of the sea, and realized the tremendous power that GOD brought against the Egyptians. The people were in reverent awe before GOD and trusted in God and his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to GOD, giving voice together,
I’m singing my heart out to GOD – what a victory! He pitched horse and rider into the sea.
GOD is my strength, GOD is my song, and, yes! GOD is my salvation.

This is the kind of God I have and I'm telling the world!
This is the God of my father – I'm spreading the news far and wide!
 GOD is a fighter, pure GOD, through and through.
 Pharaoh's chariots and army he dumped in the seas,
 the elite of his officers he drowned in the Red Sea.
 Wild ocean waters poured over them;
 they sank like a rock in the deep blue sea.
 Your strong right hand, GOD, shimmers with power;
 your strong right hand shatters the enemy.
 In your mighty majesty you smash your upstart enemies,
 you let loose your hot anger and burn them to a crisp.
 At a blast from your nostrils the waters piled up;
 tumbling streams dammed up, wild oceans curdled into a swamp.
 The enemy spoke, "I'll pursue, I'll hunt them down,
 I'll divide up the plunder, I'll glut myself on them;
 I'll pull out my sword, my fist will send them reeling."
 You blew with all your might and the sea covered them.
 They sank like a lead weight in the majestic waters.
 Who compares with you among gods, O GOD?
 Who compares with you in power, in holy majesty,
 in awesome praises, wonder-working GOD?
 . . . Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine, and all the women followed
 her with tambourines, dancing. Miriam led them in singing,
 Sing to GOD – what a victory!
 He pitched horse and rider into the sea!

Romans 14:6-12 *The Message*

What's important in all this is that if you keep a holy day, keep it for *God's* sake; if you eat meat, eat it to the glory of God and thank God for prime rib; if you're a vegetarian, eat vegetables to the glory of God and thank God for broccoli. None of us are permitted to insist on our own way in these matters. It's *God* we are answerable to – all the way from life to death and everything in between – not each other. That's why Jesus lived and died and then lived again: so that he could be our Master across the entire range of life and death, and free us from the petty tyrannies of each other.

So where does that leave you when you criticize a brother? And where does that leave you when you condescend to a sister? I'd say it leaves you looking pretty silly – or worse. Eventually, we're all going to end up kneeling side by side in the place of judgment, facing God. Your critical and condescending ways aren't going to improve your position there one bit. Read it for yourself in Scripture:

"As I live and breathe," God says, "every knee will bow before me;
 every tongue will tell the honest truth that I and only I am God."

So tend to your knitting. You've got your hands full just taking care of your own life before God.

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

Why do we pass judgment on our brothers and sisters, or quarrel with those whose ways are different from our own? How can we despise another who is also a child of God? How can we ignore the suffering of other human beings? Surely we have much to confess to our God.

Prayer of Confession

We bow before you, God, to confess what we have done. We have ranked our sisters and brothers by the faulty standards of our society to decide who is worthy of our attention. We have rejected those whom we dislike and have been harsh with those we think do not measure up. We have been quite willing to overlook our own faults as we look down on other people. O God, you have shown us a better way. Save us from the pain we inflict and help us to discover the blessing of forgiveness.

(Time of silent prayer.)

Assurance

God has pity on us and releases us from our sin by equipping us to receive forgiveness when we extend it to others. How amazing is God's love for us, and God's expectation of us! Let us praise God by joining with Jesus in prayer:

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. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day

Time of Offering *Thank you to everyone for your faithful generosity.*

Offering Prayer

O God, we thank you for these gifts. Multiply them, and enable the work of love and the righteousness of your kingdom in the world. We thank and praise you. Amen.

Message "We Don't Part the Sea" Rev. Joyce Rich

Blessing

May the God who protects and defends keep you in safety, mercy, and love. In the name of our Creator, our Savior, and Sustainer. Amen. **And Amen.**

Hymn "Awesome God"

Announcements

Read For Next Week: Exodus 16:1-15, 31; Matthew 20:1-16

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