

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Sunday Closest to July 20

Genesis 28:10-19a

Jacob is "on the lam". His mom, Rebekah, helped disguise Jacob as his brother Esau in order to steal his older brother's blessing. Esau has threatened to kill Jacob so he is fleeing Canaan to Haran and his mother's people.

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place-- and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel.

1. Are these nice people? _____
 - a. Check your Bible, has Jacob ever done anything that we could conceive of that would make him worthy of God's favor? _____
2. So why does he appear to have God's favor? _____
3. What redeeming character does Jacob have? _____

Psalms 139: 1-11, 22-23 Page 794, BCP

This is one of my favorite psalms of David. It is both deeply theological and poetic. I picture David standing on his roof top in Jerusalem in the morning just before sunrise and seeing a soaring bird, maybe an eagle, gliding down the sky – the wings of morning. But then in vs. 18-21 he curses his enemies.

1. LORD, you have searched me out and known me; * you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

2. You trace my journeys and my resting-places * and are acquainted with all my ways.

3. Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, * but you, O LORD, know it altogether.

4. You press upon me behind and before * and lay your hand upon me.

5. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; * it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

6. Where can I go then from your Spirit? * where can I flee from your presence?

7. If I climb up to heaven, you are there; * if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

8. If I take the wings of the morning * and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

9. Even there your hand will lead me *
and your right hand hold me fast.

10. If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *
and the light around me turn to night,"

11. Darkness is not dark to you;

the night is as bright as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

22. Search me out, O God, and know my heart; *
try me and know my restless thoughts.

23. Look well whether there be any wickedness in
me * and lead me in the way that is everlasting.

1. In those times, Gods were commonly associated with places – countries, cities, mountains. Where is
David's God? _____

2. Describe David's relationship with God. _____

Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19

This is part of the Apocrypha – ancient texts found at the back of Protestant Bibles if they are found there at all, but found interspersed through the last half the Old Testament of Roman Catholic Bibles. Contrary to the title, the style and content suggest to scholars that, in its present form, it appears to have been written by a Hellenistic (Greek Speaking) unknown Jew probably living in Alexandria Egypt. But, the author may have drawn from original sources i.e. Salomon. Since he did not use footnotes, we will never know.

There is no god besides you, whose care is for all people,
to whom you should prove that you have not judged unjustly;
for your strength is the source of righteousness,
and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all.
For you show your strength when people doubt the completeness of your power,
and you rebuke any insolence among those who know it.
Although you are sovereign in strength, you judge with mildness,
and with great forbearance you govern us;
for you have power to act whenever you choose.
Through such works you have taught your people
that the righteous must be kind,
and you have filled your children with good hope,
because you give repentance for sins.

1. This describes God's power, patience and mercy. What is the message for us today?

or

Isaiah 44:6-8

This passage as much of Isaiah chap. 40-the end is an effort to convince the Jews in exile in Babylon that Yahweh is God of all the Earth and will gather his people, if they will allow themselves to be gathered, and lead them home to Canaan Land.

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
I am the first and I am the last;

Remember in Revelation "I am the Alpha and the

Omega?

besides me there is no god.
Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.
Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.
Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!
Is there any god besides me ?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

Ya think maybe John read Isaiah?

1. So what is the point? _____

Psalm 86:11-17 Page 710, BCP

Another psalm of David that is a prayer for deliverance from personal enemies.

11. Teach me your way, O LORD,
and I will walk in your truth; *
knit my heart to you that I may fear your Name.

12. I will thank you, O LORD my God, with all
my heart, * and glorify your Name for evermore.

13. For great is your love toward me; *
you have delivered me from the nethermost Pit.

14. The arrogant rise up against me, O God,
and a band of violent men seeks my life; *
they have not set you before their eyes.

15. But you, O LORD, are gracious and full of
compassion, *
slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

16. Turn to me and have mercy upon me; *
give your strength to your servant;
and save the child of your handmaid.

17. Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be
ashamed; * because you, O LORD, have helped me
and comforted me.

Romans 8:12-25

Paul is still on his flesh theme. Besides sexual lust, I think "flesh" refers to our biological tendencies – fear, lust for power, greed gluttony etc.

Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ- if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed

to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

1. Whose children are we and what does that mean? _____

2. Why do you think Paul uses the idea of hope? _____

Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

What's the big deal about a few weeds in the wheat? In the King James Version, the weed is identified as "tares" This is a very tenacious weed and by the time it is recognizable as a weed, it is so well established that to rip it out would mean ripping out the adjacent wheat plants.

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

1. What do you think this might explain about God, that the tares (a really tenacious weed) is allowed to grow with the wheat? _____

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

1. So what is this telling us?

a. Is this scary or what? _____