**Notes for Next Sunday**

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**The Point of this Week’s Readings**

With the exception of the Epistle, the main thought that runs through the other three readings is a concern for deliverance from difficult circumstances. They all in some way deal with a betrayal by those close to them.

Psalm (Psalm 54). This is a cry of deliverance on the part of David. As David fled from Saul’s murderous intent, he hid in the wilderness of Ziph in the southern part of Judah. In order to gain favor from Saul, the Ziphites betrayed David’s whereabouts. In spite of all that, David ends the psalm with thanksgiving and a renewed confidence in the Lord.

Old Testament (Jeremiah 11:18-20). The Lord reveals to Jeremiah that his own townspeople of Anathoth are plotting to kill him. What they were really against was God and they thought that if they could silence God’s messenger (Jeremiah) they would rid themselves of God. God vindicates His prophet’s jealous zeal for his Lord by ordering Jeremiah to declare the punishments of death and disaster for the people of Anathoth.

Epistle (James 3:13-4:10). The verses in chapter 3 of this reading have James challenging the people to have the kind of wisdom that shows itself in acts of compassion. In the chapter 4 verses James reminds them that when they use earthly means to get what they want they will only reap deep dissatisfaction. As they come near to God they will receive incredible helps, even making the devil flee from them.

Gospel (Mark 9:30-37). Jesus is nearing the time of His Passion and is taking time to more fully teach His disciples about what will soon happen. He pours His heart out to them during their private time together. But, they totally don’t get it. In fact they wind up disputing who among them is the greatest. This is just the opposite of what Jesus will do by giving His life as a ransom for all people.

*For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.*

**Psalm 54**

**Save me, O God, by your name; vindicate me by your might. ﻿2﻿ Hear my prayer, O God; listen to the words of my mouth. ﻿3﻿ Strangers are attacking me; ruthless men seek my life— men without regard for God. *Selah* ﻿4﻿ Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who sustains me. ﻿5﻿ Let evil recoil on those who slander me; in your faithfulness destroy them. ﻿6﻿ I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, O LORD, for it is good. ﻿7﻿ For he has delivered me from all my troubles, and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*54:1 by Your name* … *by Your might*. Parallel phrases. God’s name is synonymous with God Himself, who welcomes this prayer and will save from this treachery. (TLSB)

*54:3 selah.* This often occurs in the middle of a psalm and which apparently signals an interlude. “The Sela indicates that one must be still and quickly think through the words of the psalm; for they demand a quiet and restful soul, which can grasp and hold to that which the Holy Spirit there presents and offers” (Luther). (Psalms – The Prayer Book of the Bible – Dietrich Bonhoeffer p. 23)

*54:4* David looks to none but God. This centerpiece of the psalm expresses confidence in God, even as enemies attack. (TLSB)

*54:6 freewill offering.* Expression of gratitude, not required by the Law (Ex 35:29; 36:3–5; Lv 7:16). Pledged as confidently as if the deliverance were an accomplished fact. (TLSB)

**Old Testament – Jeremiah 11:18-20**

**18﻿ Because the LORD revealed their plot to me, I knew it, for at that time he showed me what they were doing. ﻿19﻿ I had been like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter; I did not realize that they had plotted against me, saying, “Let us destroy the tree and its fruit; let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name be remembered no more.” ﻿20﻿ But, O LORD Almighty, you who judge righteously and test the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*11:19 lamb led to the slaughter.* This type of lamb was tame because it had been raised in an environment without fear. That made it all the more vulnerable. This reflects Isaiah 53:7 and how Jesus was to and did die. Those who follow Jesus should come to expect the same treatment.

*11:19 destroy the tree and its fruit.* This was a good way to totally get rid of someone. If you don’t like what someone is saying then kill him and his speech will stop. People also do that to rulers whose governance they don’t like. Chapter 12:2 however, tells us that what God plants no one can destroy.

*11:20 to you have I committed my cause.* This he could do because he totally trusted God who had shown himself worthy of such confidence.

**Epistle – James 3:13-4:10**

**13﻿ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ﻿14﻿ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ﻿15﻿ Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. ﻿16﻿ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. ﻿17﻿ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ﻿18﻿ Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*3:13 wise and understanding*. This refers to the teachers of v. 1, who claimed to be faithful but were acting otherwise. Cf Dt 1:13–15. (TLSB)

*3:13 meekness of wisdom*. Both are attributes of a righteous person. (TLSB)

*3:14 jealousy and selfish ambition*. These were sins frequently singled out in the NT, for they destroy the community created by God (e.g., 1Co 3:3). (TLSB)

*3:15 earthly, unspiritual, demonic*. Sin is not from God but from the world, which is controlled by evil.

*3:17 then*. Good works flow from a heart that has been purified by Christ. The traits listed enable us to build others up. All contrast with cursing and boasting. (TLSB)

*3:18 harvest of righteousness*. This is a bounty of righteous actions. The list in v 17 is only representative; there is no limit to the benefits others receive from our righteous actions. (TLSB)

**What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? ﻿2﻿ You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. ﻿3﻿ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. ﻿4﻿ You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ﻿5﻿ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?﻿ ﻿6﻿ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”﻿ ﻿7﻿ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ﻿8﻿ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ﻿9﻿ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ﻿10﻿ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*4:1 what causes fights*. Desires, such as jealousy and ambition cause fights. (TLSB)

*4:5 Scripture. This m*ay be translated “Do you suppose that the Scripture speaks uselessly? Does the spirit that He causes to dwell in us crave jealously? (TLSB)

*4:6 He gives more grace*. Or, “He gives a greater gift,” referring to God as the giver of gifts, specifically wisdom (1:5, 17). (TLSB)

*4:7 submit yourselves, then to God.* This means to place oneself under God’s authority. Submit parallels “Humble yourselves” in v 10. How submission and humbling takes place is described in vv 7–10. The language of these verses strongly echoes OT calls to repentance. Cf Is 57:14–16. (TLSB)

*4:7 Resist the devil.* Parallels “Draw near to God” in v 8 and refers back to the evil wisdom of 3:15. Resisting the devil is, therefore, the same as turning to God in repentant prayer (cf 1Pt 5:8–9). (TLSB)

*4:8 come near to God.* In a prayer of repentance (cf Ps 119:169–70; Hos 12:6) (TLSB)

**Gospel – Mark 9:30-37**

**30﻿ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ﻿31﻿ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.” ﻿32﻿ But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*9:30 passed through Galilee.* Jesus’ public ministry in and around Galilee was and he was now on his way to Jerusalem to suffer and die From this point on Jesus spends much time with the disciples.

*9:32 they did not understand.* Partly why the disciples didn’t understand was that it was a totally foreign concept to the Jews then (and even now) that the Messiah should die. Since they had that mindset, it kept them from realizing what Jesus was telling them. It is keeping many Jews today from believing and having salvation in Jesus. (Buls)

**33﻿ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” ﻿34﻿ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. ﻿35﻿ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.” ﻿36﻿ He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, ﻿37﻿ “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*9:34 they kept quiet.* No doubt due to embarrassment. (CSB)

*9:34 who was the greatest.* Questions of rank and status are normal and played an important role in the life of Jewish groups at this time, but they had no place in Jesus’ value system. (CSB)

*9:36 He took a child.* This was a very young child perhaps even an infant. This child represented not even a hint of power.