

Devotion for Easter Thursday

Psalm 114

When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,
Judah became His sanctuary, Israel His dominion.

The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.

The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.

What ails you, O sea that you flee? O Jordan that you turn back?

O Mountains that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob,

Who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water!

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 17:1-16 *Israel complains and faces opposition*

New Testament Reading: John 20:19-29 Jesus appears to the disciples

Devotion: Written that You may Believe

What quality do you think God values most highly in His children? Certainly He values obedience. He rejected Saul as king of Israel, because Saul wouldn't do what He told him to do. The prophet Samuel rebuked Saul saying, "*Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as He delights in obeying the voice of the Lord.*" He chose David to replace Saul, because David was a man who did what He told him to do. He wants us to seek Him. Isaiah says, "*Seek the Lord while he may be found.*" He wants us to answer when He calls. In the letter to the Hebrews the Holy Spirit says, "*Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...*" These are all qualities that are as dear to God's heart, as they are to the human heart. However, there is one quality that God values above all others and that is faith. The author of Hebrews says that "*without faith it is impossible to please Him.*"

Faith is more than believing in God. Faith is believing God. Faith is believing God without seeing God. Jesus asked Thomas, "*Have you believed because you have seen me?*" And then He said, "*Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.*" God wants us to have faith in the promises of His word. Faith is taking God at His word. Faith is believing His promises, even when they defy our experience and are brought into question by the circumstances of our lives. Faith is the first and greatest gift of God in the human heart. Faith comes by the working of the Holy Spirit, through the hearing of God's word. God gave His word so that we would believe His promises, all of which receive their crowning glory in Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. St. John wrote of his gospel and of all scripture, "*These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that believing you may have life in His name.*" God bless us with faith through the word and by the working of the Holy Spirit that we may believe in Jesus as our Saviour and have life in His name.

Hymn: Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven CCLI 453681

Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to heaven and voices raise;
Sing to God a hymn of gladness, sing to God a hymn of praise;
He who on the cross a victim, for the world's salvation bled.
Jesus Christ the King of Glory, Now is risen from the dead.

Alleluia, Christ is risen! Death at last has met defeat;
See the ancient powers of evil, in confusion and retreat.
Once He died and once was buried: Now He lives forevermore.
Jesus Christ the world's Redeemer, whom we worship and adore.

Alleluia, Alleluia! Glory be to God on high;
Alleluia to the Saviour, who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity!
Alleluia, Alleluia to the triune Majesty!

Prayer:

Holy God, thank you for your holy word through which we hear the good news of forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Jesus. Thank you that by the word and through the working of the Holy Spirit, we believe even though we do not see. Thank you that because we believe, we see Jesus as our Saviour. In Jesus` Name. Amen

The Lord`s Prayer

The Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Benediction

2 Corinthians 13:14

`The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.`