



MORNING PRAYER

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

Wednesday, July 8th

Psalm 119:1-24

1 Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.

2 Happy are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole heart,

3 who also do no wrong but walk in his ways.

4 You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.

5 O that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!

6 Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.

7 I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous ordinances.

8 I will observe your statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

9 How can young people keep their way pure? By guarding it according to your word.

10 With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments.

11 I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you.

12 Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes.

13 With my lips I declare all the ordinances of your mouth.

14 I delight in the way of your decrees as much as in all riches.

15 I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

16 I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

17 Deal bountifully with your servant, so that I may live and observe your word.

18 Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

19 I live as an alien in the land; do not hide your commandments from me.

20 My soul is consumed with longing for your ordinances at all times.

21 You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones, who wander from your commandments;

22 take away from me their scorn and contempt, for I have kept your decrees.

23 Even though princes sit plotting against me, your servant will meditate on your statutes.

24 Your decrees are my delight; they are my counselors.

A reading from the letter to the Romans

(Romans 9:1-18)

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own brothers and sisters, my own flesh and blood.

They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

It is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all those descended from Israel are Israelites, and not all of Abraham's children are his descendants, but "it is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you." This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as descendants. For the word of the promise is this: "About this time I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." Nor is that all; something similar happened to Rebecca when she had conceived children by one husband, our ancestor Isaac: even before they had been born or had done anything good or bad (so that God's purpose of election might continue, not by works but by his call) she was told, "The elder shall serve the younger."

As it is written, "I have loved Jacob, but I have hated Esau." What then are we to say? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

So it depends not on human will or exertion but on God who shows mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I may show my power in you and that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 23:27-39)

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful but inside are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of uncleanness. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape the judgment of hell? For this reason I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.