

Notes for Next Sunday

Second Sunday after Pentecost

The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (Isaiah 65:1-9). The main gist of Isaiah's lament (63:7–64:12) is this: where is God in all of this? Yahweh now speaks and states his perspective. He is not the one who has been absent without leave. The apostates are the ones who have abandoned the relationship and broken the covenant. (CC) But God's grace will not be thwarted! If his people reject him he will turn to the Gentiles, whom he has already invited (Is 56:1–8; cf. Acts 13:46; Rom 10:20–21). "Had He waited until He had been sought after, there would never have been a revelation of God's grace." Yahweh initiates the relationship. Taking the first step, he says, "Here I am. Here I am" (Is 65:1). The roles of servant and master are reversed as Yahweh seeks to serve his people (cf. Phil 2:6–8). (CC)

Epistle (Galatians 3:23-4:7). The Law is to help us see our inadequateness and lead us to Christ. But when grace came we are no longer under the Law. Grace is for all people no matter their background or gender. Even when children will inherit the estate of their parents, there are guardians around to guide and protect them. But because Jesus was born to live under the Law and redeem us, we are now children who are now totally free from any restrictions and are complete heirs of God.

Gospel (Luke 8:26-39). The area where Jesus and His disciples landed was non-Jewish territory. Jesus is met by a demon possessed man. The man whom the demon possessed was greatly tortured by the demon. The demon that possessed him recognized who Jesus was and also knew that one day all demons would ultimately be condemned eternally to hell. He pleads with Jesus that Jesus would not condemn eternally at this time. In verse 30 Jesus asks for the demon's name and gets the response as legion meaning many. They join in pleading to be let go at this time and be placed in a herd of pigs. Interestingly when the people present at this event reported this action to the people the people did not rejoice for the man healed, but were more concerned over the loss of income. They asked Jesus and disciples to leave. Jesus and His disciples left but urged the man to stay and share his recovery with people all over the town.

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

OLD TESTAMENT – Isaiah 65:1-9

“I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, ‘Here am I, here am I.’² All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people, who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations—³ a people who continually provoke me to my very face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick;⁴ who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil; who eat the flesh of pigs, and whose pots hold broth of unclean meat;⁵ who say, ‘Keep away; don’t come near me, for I am too sacred for you!’ Such people are smoke in my nostrils, a fire that keeps burning all day.⁶ “See, it stands written before me: I will not keep silent but will pay back in full; I will pay it back into their laps—⁷ both your sins and the sins of your fathers,” says the LORD. “Because they burned sacrifices on the mountains and defied me on the hills, I will measure into their laps the full payment for their former deeds.”⁸ This is what the LORD says: “As when juice is still found in a cluster of grapes and men say, ‘Don’t destroy it, there is yet some good in it,’ so will I do in behalf of my servants; I will not destroy them all.⁹ I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah those who will possess my mountains; my chosen people will inherit them, and there will my servants live.

65:1 did not call on my name. God chose Israel. They had no merit or worthiness that attracted Him to them. (TLSB)

65:3 *provoke me*. Isaiah lashes out at pagan rites and forms of divination of which Israel was guilty from the days of their fathers. (TLSB)

65:4 *sit among the graves*. Engaging in occult forms of divination such as consulting the dead (cf 8:19). (TLSB)

65:7 *defied me*. Israel prided had themselves on being renegades and this amounted to a reviling of God upon the hills. (Leupold)

65:8 *do not destroy it*. The owner of the vineyard is told not to discard an entire cluster of grapes if some of them are dried or rotten, because there are enough good ones left to produce excellent wine. In the same way, the Lord will not cast out the whole nation because there will be faithful servants in its midst. (TLSB)

EPISTLE – Galatians 3:23-4:7

²³ Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁴ So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

3:23 *held prisoners by the law*. This means that before the time of the Gospel and of grace came, it was the function of the Law to keep us confined under it as though we were in prison.

²⁶ You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

3:25–26 By adoption, the justified believer is a full adult and heir in God's family, with all the attendant rights and privileges (4:1–7; Ro 8:14–17). (CSB)

Through Baptism, God incorporates believers into union with Christ (cf Mt 28:19). Thus His righteousness becomes theirs. (TLSB)

What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. ² He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. ³ So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. ⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

4:2 *guardians*. These were legally appointed individuals to whom a child's welfare, support, and household affairs were entrusted. Under the Roman legal system, the status of a child still under the care of a guardian was roughly that of a slave (both were unable to enjoy the inheritance). The precise legal details of the procedure, however, are not known to us. (TLSB)

4:6 *Abba, Father*. Aram for "papa," an address of special intimacy not typically found in Judaism. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Luke 8:26-39

²⁶ They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had

not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don’t torture me!” ²⁹ For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places. ³⁰ Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “Legion,” he replied, because many demons had gone into him. ³¹ And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. ³² A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. ³³ When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, ³⁵ and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus’ feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. ³⁷ Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ “Return home and tell how much God has done for you.” So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

8:27 tombs. An isolated burial ground avoided by most people. (CSB)

8:28 Son of the Most High God. Demons often recognized Jesus’ divinity before humans did. Fully aware of Jesus’ authority, the demons pleaded for mercy. (TLSB)

8:31 Abyss. Cast into hell. As numerous and powerful as these demons were, they knew Jesus had dominion over them and so again begged not to be cast into hell. (TLSB)

8:32 pigs. Pigs were unclean to Jews, and eating them was forbidden (Lev 11:7–8), but this was the Decapolis, a predominantly Gentile territory. (CSB)

8:34 ran off and reported. These men were not merely reporting the loss of the pigs to their owners, but also recounting an amazing show of divine power. (TLSB)

8:35 went out to see. And the people, undoubtedly with some resentment, went out to the spot to see what had happened. They came to Jesus, not in a gentle, receptive, but in an aggressive mood. (Kretzmann)