

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

March 5-11, 2018

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?q=382688298>).

Other readings are: Numbers 21:4-9; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21.

The theme is: God's Love Is Steadfast.

The question came up again at a Bible study I led this week: "Why do bad things happen to good people?" We want things to make sense. We want to get what we deserve, or perhaps we want what a good, loving God would want to give us. Isn't well-being a sign of God's pleasure and suffering a result of God's curse? They are questions that human beings have wrestled with in every age and culture. The literature of the Hebrew Scriptures reflects the dominant worldview of the day that good things come to good people, while bad things happen to bad people (or at least to misbehaving or unfaithful people). It is a worldview that is also evident in Jesus' day. Those who come to Jesus in need of healing are seen as being responsible for their condition. The ill (or their parents) must have committed some sin that caused the illness. We see similar beliefs today in the form of a health and wealth gospel or attempts to explain anything from AIDS to a tsunami as God's punishment upon sinful people. Clearly lifestyle choices have an impact upon our health and the health of our planet, but we must be careful about making those connections in ways that lead to judgment. Psalm 107, speaking from within a culture that sees sickness as God's judgment and seeks answers in sorcery and magic, focuses on God's gift of restoration, given in love. The psalmist offers thanksgiving to the God who restores and heals. No matter what the cause of the trouble is, God's desire is for health and wholeness.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

Are you seeking God's healing this Lent, or are you giving thanks for healing and salvation received? What might your "thanksgiving sacrifice" (verse 22) be?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of March 4:

Listen for ways in which "the heavens are telling the glory of God."

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