

Monday, May 25, 2020

Daily Lectionary Passages:

Psalm 99; Leviticus 9:1-11, 22-24; 1 Peter 4:1-6

Psalm 99 (NRSV)

The Lord is king; let the peoples tremble!  
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!  
The Lord is great in Zion;  
he is exalted over all the peoples.  
Let them praise your great and awesome name.  
Holy is he!  
Mighty King, lover of justice,  
you have established equity;  
you have executed justice  
and righteousness in Jacob.  
Extol the Lord our God;  
worship at his footstool.  
Holy is he!  
Moses and Aaron were among his priests,  
Samuel also was among those who called on his name.  
They cried to the Lord, and he answered them.  
He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud;  
they kept his decrees,  
and the statutes that he gave them.  
O Lord our God, you answered them;  
you were a forgiving God to them,  
but an avenger of their wrongdoings.  
Extol the Lord our God,  
and worship at his holy mountain;  
for the Lord our God is holy.



Thought:

Each morning, we wake up and choose who or what will be king in our lives. If it was a poor night sleep, or my joints are sore, I may be ruled by negative thoughts, hostility or the thought to simply go back to sleep. On a morning like this morning, I wake up and go outside to enjoy the morning sunshine. I spend a moment thinking of what the day will hold. It will definitely include spending time outside, preferably on a bike at some point. If I focus on the birds, the dragonflies, the clouds, I find enjoyment. Yet, I miss out on the one who created it all. In the morning, we are invited to worship the Lord in the splendor around us. Who will be Lord of your life today?

Leviticus 9:1-11, 22-24 (NRSV)

On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. He said to Aaron, "Take a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before the Lord. And say to the people of Israel, 'Take a male goat for a sin offering;

a calf and a lamb, yearlings without blemish, for a burnt offering; and an ox and a ram for an offering of well-being to sacrifice before the Lord; and a grain offering mixed with oil. For today the Lord will appear to you.” They brought what Moses commanded to the front of the tent of meeting; and the whole congregation drew near and stood before the Lord. And Moses said, “This is the thing that the Lord commanded you to do, so that the glory of the Lord may appear to you.” Then Moses said to Aaron, “Draw near to the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people; and sacrifice the offering of the people, and make atonement for them; as the Lord has commanded.”

Aaron drew near to the altar, and slaughtered the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. The sons of Aaron presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar; and the rest of the blood he poured out at the base of the altar. But the fat, the kidneys, and the appendage of the liver from the sin offering he turned into smoke on the altar, as the Lord commanded Moses; and the flesh and the skin he burned with fire outside the camp.

Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them; and he came down after sacrificing the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the offering of well-being. Moses and Aaron entered the tent of meeting, and then came out and blessed the people; and the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. Fire came out from the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

#### Thought:

The day of Atonement was a day when Israel became “At-One-Ment” or at one with God. On this day, the priests would offer two sacrifices, the burnt offering and the sin offering. The burnt offering was a complete offering, meaning everything was given to God as a pleasing aroma to the Lord. In Genesis, Abraham was to give Isaac as a burnt offering until God provided the ram. So, when Israel sacrificed a ram for a burnt offering, they knew the animal was dying in their place. The sin offering was offered for specific sins. These sins could be willful or ignorance, passive or active. The idea was a person named their sins before God, and the offering covered the sins. When we sin, we separate ourselves from God. The offering brought us back into relationship with God. Once the offerings were given, the priest would give a blessing to the people. In this story, Aaron is offering the sin offering and burnt offering for all the people.

When Jesus died on the cross, he was the ultimate sacrifice for the sin offering and the burnt offering. He gave his life that we can be at one with God. Jesus is the High Priest that offered the sacrifice that we can be free of our sin and receive the gift of life anew. On Memorial Day, we remember the men and women who gave their lives that we may remain a free nation. May we also remember the one who gave his life that we can be free in Christ.

#### 1 Peter 4:1-6 (NRSV)

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was

proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

Thought:

Peter used this image of Jesus as the sacrifice to call us to live according to the grace that was given to us in Christ. Since Jesus has suffered and died for our sins, we are to live the rest of our lives without sin. We are no longer to live according to the flesh and the way of the world. In Christ, the price has been paid. When we realize the cost God paid for our freedom, we want to live for Christ. When people knowingly sin, they blaspheme what Jesus offers. Jesus took our place, not that we can sin knowing it is forgiven. That is taking the sacrifice too lightly. We realize the cost and live anew in Christ. Each day, we seek to do the will of God.

Prayer:

Holy God, through Jesus Christ you have washed us of our sins and given us the gift of life. We give you thanks for your sacrifice for our sins. With your Spirit, guide us to live worthy of your calling. May we live at one with you and one another.

Eternal God, we give you thanks for the men and women who gave their lives that we can have the freedom we experience today. We pray for the men and women serving in the armed forces today risking their lives to continue our freedom. We long for the day when nations will not raise arms against nations, but all nations will hold their hands in unity in you. Come Lord Jesus.

(Spend time in silent prayer, praying for those you know. Name them before God and place them in God's loving arms).

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.