

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
27TH SEPTEMBER 2020**

***Readings for Today:***

Jeremiah 17.5-8  
Psalm 62.1-8  
Romans 8.28-39  
Matthew 4.1-11

***Sentence:***

Man shall not live on bread alone,  
but on every word that come from  
the mouth of God.

*Matthew 4.4*



**Prayer of the day:**

Almighty God,  
After fasting 40 days in the wilderness, Your Son Jesus resisted Satan's  
temptation to prematurely eat food by quoting appropriate scripture.  
Today's scriptures encourage us to so feed on your word, that we may draw  
from it for guidance in all aspects of our lives. Help us so to do.  
In Jesus' precious name. **Amen.**

**SUNDAY SERVICE**

**9am St James' Lowood**

**Zoom Meeting ID: 894 5855 9147**

**Meeting Password: 341337**

Dear Friends,

Some Christians have believed that OT prophets, even Jesus himself, direct us through scripture to literally eat God's words in the bible. These are unaware of scripture's use of metaphor in establishing particular truths. In our gospel reading, Jesus rejects Satan's temptation, telling him that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

What Jesus means by use of metaphor, is that in the same manner we regularly take food in to sustain our lives physically, we need to take God's word in to sustain our lives spiritually.

My trust is that you will leave the service this morning, or having read my sermon; committed to spending time regularly reading your bible.

*Rev'd Rex*

**Daily Readings for the coming week:**

**Mon:** Job 1.6-22; Psalm 17.1-7; Luke 9.46-50

**Tue:** Job 3.1-23; Psalm 88.1-7; Luke 9.51-56

**Wed:** Job 9.1-16; Psalm 88.8-15; Luke 9.57-62

**Thu:** Job 19.21-27; Psalm 27.9-17; Luke 10.1-12

**Fri:** Job 38.1,12-21; 40.3-5; Psalm 139.6-11; Luke 10.13-16

**Sat:** Job 42.1-17; Psalm 119.65-72; Luke 10.17-24

**Sun:** Exodus 20.1-4,7-9,12-20; Psalm 19; Philippians 3.4b-14;  
Matthew 21.33-46

**Come Join Us This Week in the Parish:**

**Monday** 10.30am Bible Study  
Zoom Meeting ID: **845 0225 3000**  
Meeting Password: **786716**

**Tuesday** Morning Prayer 9 am. St Luke's Outreach Centre.

**Wednesday** Morning Prayer 9.30 am. All Saints' Marburg

**Wednesday** Morning Prayer 9.30 am. St Luke's Rosewood

**Prayers.**

Dearest Father,  
Although hindered by COVID19, we thank you we have opportunities to meet together, or with the assistance of technology and the written word; to engage meaningfully in worship of and prayer to you, and in digesting your word. Meet with us at this time that we might spiritually grow in you.

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**

We pray today for your church around the world and especially the Anglican church with which we are in Communion. This day we particularly pray for:

- The Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, for Ezekiel Kumir Kondo,
- Archbishop of the province and bishop of Khartoum, and the clergy and people who serve with him;
- In our province we pray for the diocese of Willochra, Bishop John Stead, the clergy and people of that diocese;
- In our diocese and deanery, we pray today for the parish of Boonah-Harrisville, the priest in charge, Helen Paget and the people of the parish; and for Second year formation students of St. Francis Theological College, Melissa Conway, Gemma Dashwood, Lorraine Lynch, Gary Tognola and Loretta Tyler-Moss.

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**

We pray also Lord for all those who are facing adversity and other challenges in these trying times.

While we thank you for protecting the vast majority of residents of this land against the threat of COVID19, we pray for residents of other countries in which this virus has had far more devastating consequences.

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**

We pray for those named in this newsletter as having immediate, or ongoing needs and for those known to us presently grieving the loss of loved ones.

Hear our prayers through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

**Pray for those in need:**

We give thanks for prayers answered and ask for continued prayers for: Joy and family, Anita, Ann P. Robyn, Ian, Paul, Kristy and family.

**Pray for those whose need is ongoing:**

Brenda and David, May, Lyn, Kevin Lee and family, Judy and Adrian, Mark, Graham and family, Wilma, Ron, Irene and Michael.

**An Acknowledgement of Country**

**As we gather in the various churches of our parish, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, and their elders past and present.  
We honour the connection the traditional custodians have with this land.**

**Sunday Services in the Parish in Coming Weeks:**

**Please register for services on: 0402-482-174**

**Sunday 27th September Prayer and Praise @ St Luke's 5pm**

**Sunday 4th October St Luke's Rosewood 9am**

**Sunday 4th October Blessing of the Animals Service St Luke's Rosewood 4pm**

**Sunday 11th October All Saints Marburg 9am**

**Sunday 11th October Prayer and Praise @ St Luke's 5pm**

**Notices.**

**Markets.** If you are interested in the markets continuing at some stage in the future please come to a meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup> at 9.30am at the Outreach Centre, Rosewood.

**Blessing of the Animals.** Will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> of October at 4pm under the tree in Rosewood. Feel free to invite your friends, animal and humans to join us!

**Parish Directory**

**Priest in Charge -Reverend Louise Orpe                      Phone    0402 482 174**

**Priest Email: [louise.orpe@anglicanchurchsq.org.au](mailto:louise.orpe@anglicanchurchsq.org.au)**

**Honorary Assistant Priest—Reverend Rex Marré    Phone    0411 162 517**

**Parish Office—Phone 07 5464 2797    Parish Website: [rosewoodanglican.org.au](http://rosewoodanglican.org.au)**

**Postal Address: Post Office Box 176, Rosewood QLD 4340**

**Office Email: [rosewood@anglicanchurchsq.org.au](mailto:rosewood@anglicanchurchsq.org.au)**

**The deadline for the weekly Pew Sheet is Tuesday Evening to Office email.**

**Churchwardens—                      Anne Parker                      0423 369 000**

**Ann Abraham                      0402 411 375**

**Courtney Smith                      0474 769 660**

**Prayer chain coordinator- Desley Greensill-0437 374 407**

**Pastoral Care coordinator Ann Abraham-0402 411 375**

**Giving: Envelopes are available at each centre. To deposit offerings:**

**Anglican Parish of Rosewood BSB 704 901 A/c 00008030**

**Romans 8:28**

**“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”**

DEEPLY ROOTED (IN GOD)  
Jeremiah 17.5-8, Ps 62.1-8, Romans 8.28-39, Matthew 4.1-11

Throughout history, humans and other creatures of this world have faced many threats to their existence.

Last century we experienced two world wars of dimension and damage never before imagined; then the Korean and Vietnamese wars followed and then there were the health threats such as the Spanish flu.

We are now threatened by a virus not unlike that flu - variously known, but perhaps best so as COVID19, it has potential to cleave great holes in the world's population – and economies!

While scientists desperately search for a vaccine, the only real option for people is to stay away from each other.

*Easily done*, some might say; but as social creatures, we thrive on human contact – a need made difficult under restrictions imposed by the medical and political authorities.

What can we Christians offer a suffering world at this time?

One answer – although many might not accept it – is God – more specifically, *getting closer to Him*.

Christina and I commence most days drawing spiritual strength from devotions prepared by the late Dr. Selwyn Hughes called *Every Day with Jesus*.

The current series, titled *Deeply Rooted* is based on the analogy **Jeremiah** uses in the passage we heard minutes ago, *blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord ... they will be like a tree that **send out its roots** by the stream*.

If you get the prophets meaning here please bear with me while I try to explain it to the others.

My first parish as an Anglican minister was Mt. Isa where I served an area about three times the size of Tasmania, which involved lots of driving when I was not fortunate enough to be invited into a small Cessna to fly to the more remote locations.

From the air, I was fascinated by little patches of green among the mostly harsh brown surface below – an otherwise seemingly barren, waterless, landscape.

The *patches of green* I saw were clusters of trees whose tap roots had searched down into the earth beneath, sometimes, I was told, up to 12 metres, to find life from underground streams of water.

Patches similar to these were what Jeremiah had in mind in his attempt to illustrate the relationship God wants to have with us.

I invite you to keep that image in mind as we draw insights of the late Dr. Hughes' from our Jeremiah passage and other scriptures we have just shared.

We might start with a question, *from whence do I draw spiritual nourishment?*

Some might answer, *from books*, or from *spiritual teachers* – but while these can help, God wants us to go better!

V.5 of our Jeremiah passage identifies people who try to meet spiritual needs through ideas and philosophies rooted in human experience, as those who *trust in man* and who *draw strength from mere flesh*.

The person who does this, to quote the prophet, ***is cursed!***

Cursed particularly when contrasted with those he refers to in v.7, ***blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord ... they will be like a tree that send out its roots by the stream.***

These persons are blessed because having sent roots deep into God, they thereby can be unshakeably calm and poised when their lives are threatened in a manner such as they are today.

Going deep into God means we rest in the truth that *He is in control* of all things and that *through Him*, a good and benevolent providence is at work – such that we will be able to remain steady in the middle of *all of* life's uncertainties, including Covid19!

That said, many, including some Christians, believe they are duty-bound to worry about issues going on and around their lives – because if they don't, then things would go to pieces.

Others think we should be pessimists, because that way we won't be disappointed when things do go wrong.

Neither of these beliefs are true – rather they develop unhealthy approaches to life.

It is only when our confidence in the goodness of God grows, we can say with verse 6 of today's **psalm 62**, *Truly (God) is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I shall not be shaken.*

And it is only when, having put down roots deep into God and our trust in God and confidence in His goodness, grows; we are better able to handle the unsettling things that *life* brings our way.

Now if what I am saying is true, why is it that *not all* people, not even all Christians, put roots deep down into God?

It's partly because it is easier to put our confidence in things we can see or somehow quantify, than in things we cannot see.

So we drift into believing that our security – our significance depends on things that are tangible, such as money and possessions, academic qualifications, business success, personal skills or physical attractiveness.

While none of these things are wrong in themselves, they cannot provide the security and significance available to those who put down roots deep into God.

So we must ask, *do I trust in God to provide as He has promised to? Can we so trust Him?*

Because many Christians struggle with this, we must turn to – to read – *and then reread*, the passage from **Romans 8** we shared earlier.

It is a vital text for all Christians – ***it is vital for all people!***

I remember commenting to someone recently that if some dark force limited my memory of scripture to just 12 verses that I could choose – then I would likely pick the twelve verses from Romans that we read this morning.

The first verse reads;

- *And we know that in **all things** God works for the good of those who love Him, and the passage concludes.*
- *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor power, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

Did you get that? *Christians can know that in **all** things God works for the good of those who love Him – and that **nothing**, absolutely nothing, can separate us from God’s love.*

If I was to ask Paul, **what are** the *things* you refer to in those verses, I suspect he would reply, *I didn’t mention **what** the things were because I told you it is in **all** things that God works for the good of those who love Him – and that **no thing** can separate us from Him and His love.*

***You don’t need to know what these things are!***

Do we place – *dare we place* our confidence – our trust in God as we face together with our community and the world, the threat of this Corona virus?

Now, *I am not suggesting* we ignore the advice and restrictions from the authorities on the precautions we need to take.

For the very most part I believe the authorities act as God’s agents helping us deal with this threat.

What we must do is to *trust God* regardless of the reports that flood our news media – *trust* that He will *work for the good* of all those who love Him, and hopefully also, for the good of those of our loved ones who do not yet do so!

And that trust in God grows as we put our roots down deep into Him.

But how do we do that? You haven’t told us yet **how** we put down roots deep into God!

Oh! No, I haven’t.

We put down roots deep into God *through regular reading* – or to use a metaphor He uses – regular **feeding** on His word, the Bible!

Our last reading today – from chapter 4 of **Matthew’s** gospel – confirms this.

In it, Jesus uses a metaphor of food in His response to the devil who tempted Him in the wilderness, *Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that come from the mouth of God.*

The prophet Ezekiel uses a similar metaphor when speaking of how we might respond to God’s word, when he tells of God giving him a scroll, or a book, **to eat**.

He too was speaking metaphorically – neither the prophet nor Jesus commend us to literally **eat** the bible!

There is a story told that many centuries ago, a bishop of Alexandria took this instruction literally and ate many pages from the book of Lamentations.

He took ill and died – so I recommend you avoid following the poor bishop’s lead on this.

But we learn from the metaphors used in these scriptures that just as we need to take physical food deep into our beings for it to be of benefit to us *physically* – so we need to take God’s word deep into our beings to benefit us *spiritually*.

We need to assimilate God’s word deep into our minds so as to be able to recall it, and deep into our hearts, that His word might enable us to live the life that God intended for all of humankind from the very beginning!

When our roots go so deep into God such that we, metaphorically *dine on* His word, it becomes part of us – and when the flood of everyday worries – and in particular, the concerns of this COVID time, come upon us, God’s word is there – in us – to sustain us!



## BIBLE STUDIES THAT WORK

**Pentecost 17**  
**Proper 21 (A)**  
**September 27, 2020**

**RCL: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16; Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32**

### **Exodus 17:1-7**

Anyone who has been in a position of leadership can relate to Moses' dilemma in this passage. Acting on faith and with divine guidance, he is leading his people from slavery into the promised land. Moses might be tempted by the potential for personal power, but he never really gets a chance. Instead, he finds himself in a "don't shoot the messenger!" situation when there is a scarcity of water for his people. His people did what people do: they complained, they quarreled, and they turned on Moses. And Moses, in turn, sought the ear of the Lord in his frustration, asking, "What shall I do with this people?" As you might hear, the narrative becomes more about quarrelling and blame than it does about the vital, living water. The instruction Moses receives from the Lord isn't about managing the people, but about how to draw that life-giving water in abundance from a place of seeming scarcity. And, no surprise, at the source of this water is the Lord, "I will be standing there in front of you..." reminding us of God's eternal presence even in times when we are parched, quarrelsome, and doubtful.

- What are the quarrels and complaints that can keep us from experiencing the providential love of God?
- When have you noticed unexpected abundance, exactly when you needed it most? Where was God in that time?

### **Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16**

In these sections of Psalm 78, the narrative from Exodus can be found woven into the larger life and context of the people of Israel. Psalm 78 is often characterized as a Covenant or Liturgical Psalm. Neither a lament nor a song of praise, these psalms were used to characterize the public worship of the people as a community of faith. This psalm recounts praise-worthy actions of divine intervention: freedom from oppression, splitting open the sea, leading by a cloud, splitting open the rocks to provide water. This ritual of remembering and recounting is a community-building act of worship. It is, perhaps, the exact opposite of selfish complaining because it draws attention to communal recognition of God, whose actions are greater than any of us individually could accomplish.

- What is the earliest story you remember hearing about God's providence for God's people from the Hebrew Scriptures? What stands out about these "Sunday School Stories" for us today?



- What are the actions of God toward the people of God that should be remembered and retold to our own children, and our children's children?

### **Philippians 2:1-13**

*"... be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind."*

There are many times in our contemporary lives when it seems like being of one mind is an impossible reality. Political and ideological differences pull us in different directions and fill our minds with sounds bites of divisive rhetoric. And yet, the language of this Epistle to the Philippians tells us to be of the same mind, to have the same love and to do all of this because of the lavish and loving example set forth by Jesus Christ. It is sobering to read words written thousands of years ago and feel them still convicting our hearts and exhorting our actions about how to be Church in the world. At the core of the reminders of this Epistle are the virtues of humility and service. Or, in other words, "is it better to be *right*, or to be *kind*?" There are lessons in this Epistle for vestries, for church leaders, for our own devotional reflections. Jesus is our example: how do we find the humility to live into that example rather than succumbing to our own wants and needs?

- How does our Baptismal Covenant instruct us to act out of the same mind and the same love of Christ? Name examples of the way you have observed this lived out covenant in your lives both in the church and in the world.
- What are the areas where you struggle to be of the same mind and the same love as Christ and each other: as a person, as a parish, and/or as the Church? Name these areas, and consider ways to hold both the division and the possibility of reconciliation in Christ in your prayers.

### **Matthew 21:23-32**

This Gospel lesson plays out almost like a theatrical scene: Jesus is met with a question and responds with a question which is lobbed around almost like a tennis ball among the officials and the people. With all the banter back and forth about how to answer the question and what that answer might imply, it quickly becomes clear that what was posed to Jesus as he approached was really more of a trap than an honest question. And so it is that Jesus uses a parable to further illustrate the folly of our attempts to please others (or God), which end up revealing our own lack of moral grounding. Jesus illustrates what we might call the "question behind the question" to strip away all of the pretense and break down the rhetoric around what one *should* say, in order to reveal one's true intentions. The almost incomprehensible reality is that God doesn't ask us to say and do what we think will please God. God asks us to come, humbly and honestly, exactly as we are with our hearts open to God's transforming love.

- What are places in our lives where our lips are saying "yes" to God, but our actions are not following through? How can we align our yes-saying with our yes-doing?
- How can we ask questions of others with openness, inviting genuine conversation without expecting a particular response? How does this apply to our lives of prayer, and to our lives of Christian service?

*This Bible study, written by Sarah Kye Price, originally ran in 2017.*