

Today is March 31, 2019 - Day 26 of the Lenten Season

"May these words and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer." - Psalm 19:14

Thank you for joining me on my Lenten journey of faith. We are just a little over half way there. I have enjoyed our journey together. A life of faith can be sometimes lonely, and the way difficult at times. However, through the Grace of God and the support of family and friends, we will get there.

Because everyone is familiar with the Parable of the Prodigal Son, I will concentrate on the other two suggested readings:

(OT) The Book of Joshua 5:9-12 (NIV) "The Passover at Gilgal"

(NT) The Gospel of Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 (NIV) "The Prodigal Son"

(NT) 2nd Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 5:17-21(NIV) "The Ministry of Reconciliation"

The Book of Joshua: *Then the Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.' So, the place has been called Gilgal to this day. On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, while camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, the Israelites celebrated the Passover. The day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain. The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate the produce of Canaan."*

Gilgal was the base camp and center of life for the Israelites before they invaded Canaan. The people had renewed their commitment to God's covenant. It was here that Israel's first king, Saul, was crowned. This was the first Passover celebrated in the Promised Land. They had spent 40 years in the wilderness, surviving on the gifts from of God. Now they ate in celebration of God's blessings and promises. In the Promised Land, they no longer needed a daily food supply from God. Prayer is not an alternative to preparation and faith is not a substitute for hard work. Prayers are answered. Pray for the wisdom to see it and the energy and motivation to do it.

Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians: *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old is gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God. God made Him Who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."*

We Christians are changed, a new people because the Holy Spirit has given us new life – we are recreated. Once we have committed to God, we begin a new life in Christ. There is a new covenant, a new perspective, a new body, a new church! Our church is being energized even as we each are being energized with a whole new creative energy. Can't we feel it? As believers, how well are we fulfilling our duties and responsibilities as Christ's ambassadors? When we trust in Christ, we exchange our sin for His righteousness. How grateful we should be for His kindness to us.

I pray that during this season of Lent our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will lift you up and with the grace of the Holy Spirit bring you peace and the sure knowledge that you are loved. Amen.