

Monday August 31st

Psalm 98

Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvellous things;
his right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.

**² The Lord has made his salvation known
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.**

³ He has remembered his love
and his faithfulness to Israel;
all the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

**⁴ Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth,
burst into jubilant song with music;**

⁵ make music to the Lord with the harp,
with the harp and the sound of singing,

**⁶ with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—
shout for joy before the Lord, the King.**

⁷ Let the sea resound, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it.

**⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands,
let the mountains sing together for joy;**

⁹ let them sing before the Lord,
for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples with equity.

Acts 8: 26-the end

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian^[a] eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Candace (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot

reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth."

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" ^[37] ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and travelled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Tuesday 1st September

Psalm 106: 1-12

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

**² Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord
or fully declare his praise?**

³ Blessed are those who act justly,
who always do what is right.

**⁴ Remember me, Lord, when you show favour to your people,
come to my aid when you save them,**

⁵ that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones,

that I may share in the joy of your nation
and join your inheritance in giving praise.

**6 We have sinned, even as our ancestors did;
we have done wrong and acted wickedly.**

⁷ When our ancestors were in Egypt,
they gave no thought to your miracles;
they did not remember your many kindnesses,
and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea.^[a]

**8 Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
to make his mighty power known.**

⁹ He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up;
he led them through the depths as through a desert.

**10 He saved them from the hand of the foe;
from the hand of the enemy he redeemed them.**

¹¹ The waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them survived.

**12 Then they believed his promises
and sang his praise.**

Acts 9: 1-19a

⁹ Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Wednesday 2nd September

Psalm III

Praise the Lord.

I will extol the Lord with all my heart
in the council of the upright and in the assembly.

**² Great are the works of the Lord;
they are pondered by all who delight in them.**

³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds,
and his righteousness endures forever.

**⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and compassionate.**

⁵ He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.

**⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works,
giving them the lands of other nations.**

⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.

⁸ **They are established for ever and ever,
enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.**

⁹ He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.

¹⁰ **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.**

Acts 9: 19-31

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰ At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. ²¹ All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?” ²² Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

²³ After many days had gone by, there was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill him, ²⁴ but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. ²⁵ But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

²⁶ When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹ He talked and debated with the Hellenistic Jews,^[a] but they tried to kill him. ³⁰ When the believers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

³¹ Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

Thursday 3rd September

Psalm 115: 1-11

¹ Not to us, Lord, not to us
but to your name be the glory,
because of your love and faithfulness.

² **Why do the nations say,
“Where is their God?”**

³ Our God is in heaven;
he does whatever pleases him.

⁴ **But their idols are silver and gold,
made by human hands.**

⁵ They have mouths, but cannot speak,
eyes, but cannot see.

⁶ **They have ears, but cannot hear,
noses, but cannot smell.**

⁷ They have hands, but cannot feel,
feet, but cannot walk,
nor can they utter a sound with their throats.

⁸ **Those who make them will be like them,
and so will all who trust in them.**

⁹ All you Israelites, trust in the Lord—
he is their help and shield.

¹⁰ **House of Aaron, trust in the Lord—
he is their help and shield.**

¹¹ You who fear him, trust in the Lord—
he is their help and shield.

Acts 9: 32-the end

³² As Peter travelled about the country, he went to visit the Lord’s people who lived in Lydda. ³³ There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. ³⁴ “Aeneas,” Peter said to him, “Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat.” Immediately Aeneas got up. ³⁵ All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

³⁶ In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. ³⁷ About that time she became sick

and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. ³⁸ Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"³⁹ Peter went with them, and when he arrived, he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.⁴⁰ Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. ⁴² This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

Friday 4th September

Psalm 139

¹ You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.

² **You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.**

³ You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.

⁴ **Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.**

⁵ You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.

⁶ **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.**

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ **If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.**

⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰ **even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.**

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"

¹² **even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.**

Acts 10: 1-15

¹⁰ At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. ² He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. ³ One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"⁴ Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. ⁵ Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. ⁶ He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea."⁷ When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. ⁸ He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.⁹ About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. ¹⁰ He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. ¹¹ He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. ¹² It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. ¹³ Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."¹⁴ "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

¹⁵ The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."