

Monday September 21st

Psalm 49: 1-10

Hear this, all you peoples;

listen, all who live in this world,

**² both low and high,
rich and poor alike:**

**³ My mouth will speak words of wisdom;
the meditation of my heart will give you understanding.**

**⁴ I will turn my ear to a proverb;
with the harp I will expound my riddle:**

**⁵ Why should I fear when evil days come,
when wicked deceivers surround me—**

**⁶ those who trust in their wealth
and boast of their great riches?**

**⁷ No one can redeem the life of another
or give to God a ransom for them—**

**⁸ the ransom for a life is costly,
no payment is ever enough—**

**⁹ so that they should live on forever
and not see decay.**

**¹⁰ For all can see that the wise die,
that the foolish and the senseless also perish,
leaving their wealth to others.**

2 Timothy 3: 14-the end

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Tuesday 22nd September

Psalm 36

I have a message from God in my heart
concerning the sinfulness of the wicked:
There is no fear of God
before their eyes.

**2 In their own eyes they flatter themselves
too much to detect or hate their sin.**

**3 The words of their mouths are wicked and deceitful;
they fail to act wisely or do good.**

**4 Even on their beds they plot evil;
they commit themselves to a sinful course
and do not reject what is wrong.**

**5 Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.**

**6 Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.**

You, Lord, preserve both people and animals.

**7 How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.**

**8 They feast on the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.**

**9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.**

**10 Continue your love to those who know you,
your righteousness to the upright in heart.**

**11 May the foot of the proud not come against me,
nor the hand of the wicked drive me away.**

**12 See how the evildoers lie fallen—
thrown down, not able to rise!**

Acts 16: 25-the end

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. ²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

³⁵ When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." ³⁶ The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace."

³⁷ But Paul said to the officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

³⁸ The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. ³⁹ They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.

Wednesday 23rd September

Psalm 34: 1-14

I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.

² **I will glory in the Lord;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.**

³ Glorify the Lord with me;

let us exalt his name together.

⁴ **I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.**

⁵ Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.

⁶ **This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.**

⁷ The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,
and he delivers them.

⁸ **Taste and see that the Lord is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.**

⁹ Fear the Lord, you his holy people,
for those who fear him lack nothing.

¹⁰ **The lions may grow weak and hungry,
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.**

¹¹ Come, my children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

¹² **Whoever of you loves life
and desires to see many good days,**

¹³ keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies.

¹⁴ **Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.**
the foes of the righteous will be condemned.

Acts 17: 1-15

When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said. ⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.

⁵ But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.^[a] ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." ⁸ When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. ⁹ Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

In Berea

¹⁰ As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. ¹² As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

¹³ But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. ¹⁴ The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. ¹⁵ Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible. In Athens

Thursday 24th September

Psalms 37

Do not fret because of those who are evil
or be envious of those who do wrong;

² **for like the grass they will soon wither,
like green plants they will soon die away.**

³ Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

⁴ **Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.**

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:

⁶ **He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.**

⁷ Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him;

do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.

⁸ **Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
do not fret—it leads only to evil.**

⁹ For those who are evil will be destroyed,
but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

¹⁰ **A little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look for them, they will not be found.**

¹¹ But the meek will inherit the land
and enjoy peace and prosperity.

¹² **The wicked plot against the righteous
and gnash their teeth at them;**

¹³ but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he knows their day is coming.

Acts 17: 16-the end

¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean." ²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this

inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’^[b] As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’^[c]

²⁹“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. ³⁰In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

³²When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” ³³At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

Friday 25th September

Psalm 31

In you, Lord, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.

²**Turn your ear to me,
come quickly to my rescue;
be my rock of refuge,
a strong fortress to save me.**

³Since you are my rock and my fortress,
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.

⁴**Keep me free from the trap that is set for me,
for you are my refuge.**

⁵Into your hands I commit my spirit;
deliver me, Lord, my faithful God.

⁶**I hate those who cling to worthless idols;
as for me, I trust in the Lord.**

⁷I will be glad and rejoice in your love,
for you saw my affliction
and knew the anguish of my soul.

⁸**You have not given me into the hands of the enemy
but have set my feet in a spacious place.**

Acts 18: 1-9

18 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ²There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

⁵When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. ⁶But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

⁷Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. ⁸Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

⁹One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. ¹⁰For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.” ¹¹So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.