

Monday 12th October

Psalm 80 1-7

Hear us, Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who sit enthroned between the cherubim,
shine forth ²before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

**Awaken your might;
come and save us.**

³Restore us, O God;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.

⁴**How long, Lord God Almighty,
will your anger smoulder
against the prayers of your people?**

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have made them drink tears by the bowlful.

⁶**You have made us an object of derision to our neighbours,
and our enemies mock us.**

⁷Restore us, God Almighty;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.

Acts 26: 1-19

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defence: ²"King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defence against all the accusations of the Jews, ³and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

⁴"The Jewish people all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. ⁵They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that I conformed to the strictest sect of our religion, living as a Pharisee. ⁶And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our ancestors that I am on trial today. ⁷This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve

God day and night. King Agrippa, it is because of this hope that these Jews are accusing me. ⁸Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

⁹"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.

¹²"On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic,^[a] 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

¹⁵"Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'

" 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. ¹⁶'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. ¹⁷I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

¹⁹"So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds

Tuesday 13th October

Psalm 89: 1-8

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known
through all generations.

²**I will declare that your love stands firm forever,**

that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

³ You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David my servant,

⁴ **‘I will establish your line forever
and make your throne firm through all generations.’”**

⁵ The heavens praise your wonders, Lord,
your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.

⁶ **For who in the skies above can compare with the Lord?
Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings?**

⁷ In the council of the holy ones God is greatly feared;
he is more awesome than all who surround him.

⁸ **Who is like you, Lord God Almighty?
You, Lord, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.**

Acts 26: 24-end

²⁴ At this point Festus interrupted Paul’s defence. “You are out of your mind, Paul!” he shouted. “Your great learning is driving you insane.”

²⁵ “I am not insane, most excellent Festus,” Paul replied. “What I am saying is true and reasonable. ²⁶ The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do.”

²⁸ Then Agrippa said to Paul, “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”

²⁹ Paul replied, “Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.”

³⁰ The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. ³¹ After they left the room, they began saying to one another, “This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment.”

³² Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.

Wednesday 14th October

Psalm 119: 105-112

Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.

¹⁰⁶ **I have taken an oath and confirmed it,
that I will follow your righteous laws.**

¹⁰⁷ I have suffered much;
preserve my life, Lord, according to your word.

¹⁰⁸ **Accept, Lord, the willing praise of my mouth,
and teach me your laws.**

¹⁰⁹ Though I constantly take my life in my hands,
I will not forget your law.

¹¹⁰ **The wicked have set a snare for me,
but I have not strayed from your precepts.**

¹¹¹ Your statutes are my heritage forever;
they are the joy of my heart.

¹¹² **My heart is set on keeping your decrees
to the very end.**

Acts 27: 1-4 and 9-26

When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ² We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

³ The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs. ⁴ From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us.

⁹ Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement.^[a] So Paul warned them, ¹⁰ “Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also.” ¹¹ But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the

ship. ¹² Since the harbour was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbour in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest. ¹³ When a gentle south wind began to blow, they saw their opportunity; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. ¹⁴ Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the Northeaster, swept down from the island. ¹⁵ The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶ As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure, ¹⁷ so the men hoisted it aboard. Then they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Because they were afraid they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor¹ and let the ship be driven along. ¹⁸ We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. ¹⁹ On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. ²⁰ When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. ²¹ After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. ²² But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. ²³ Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴ and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' ²⁵ So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. ²⁶ Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

Thursday October 15th

Psalms 92: 1-8

¹ It is good to praise the Lord
and make music to your name, O Most High,
² **proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,**
³ to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.

**⁴ For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord;
I sing for joy at what your hands have done.**

⁵ How great are your works, Lord,
how profound your thoughts!

**⁶ Senseless people do not know,
fools do not understand,**

⁷ that though the wicked spring up like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they will be destroyed forever.

⁸ But you, Lord, are forever exalted.

Acts 27: 27-the end

²⁷ On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic^[c] Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. ²⁸ They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet^[d] deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet^[e] deep. ²⁹ Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. ³⁰ In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. ³¹ Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." ³² So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it drift away. ³³ Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food—you haven't eaten anything. ³⁴ Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." ³⁵ After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. ³⁶ They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. ³⁷ Altogether there were 276 of us on board. ³⁸ When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea. ¹¹ After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island—it was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. ¹² We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. ¹³ From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on

the following day we reached Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brothers and sisters who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵ The brothers and sisters there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At the sight of these people Paul thanked God and was encouraged. ¹⁶ When we got to **28** Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta.

Friday October 16th

Psalm 95

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;

let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

**² Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.**

³ For the Lord is the great God,
the great King above all gods.

**⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.**

⁵ The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

**⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;**

⁷ for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

Acts 28: 1-16

Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. ² The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. ³ Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. ⁴ When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, the goddess Justice has not allowed him to live." ⁵ But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. ⁶ The people expected him to swell up or

suddenly fall dead; but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

⁷ There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and showed us generous hospitality for three days. ⁸ His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. ⁹ When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and **were** cured. ¹⁰ They honoured us in many ways; and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

Paul's Arrival at Rome

¹¹ After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island—it was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. ¹² We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. ¹³ From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on the following day we reached Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brothers and sisters who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵ The brothers and sisters there had heard that we were coming, and they travelled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At the sight of these people Paul thanked God and was encouraged. ¹⁶ When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.