

SERIES B TEXTS

Eighth Sunday after Epiphany/Lectionary 8

Hosea 2:14-20

¹⁴ Therefore, I will now allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. ¹⁵ From there I will give her her vineyards, and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she shall respond as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁶ On that day, says the LORD, you will call me, "My husband," and no longer will you call me, "My Baal." ¹⁷ For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be mentioned by name no more. ¹⁸ I will make for you a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety. ¹⁹ And I will take you for my wife forever; I will take you for my wife in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. ²⁰ I will take you for my wife in faithfulness; and you shall know the LORD.

Psalm 103:1-13, 22

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. ² Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits-- ³ who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, ⁵ who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. ⁶ The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. ⁸ The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹ He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. ¹⁰ He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

²² Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul.

2nd Corinthians 3:1-6

¹ Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of recommendation to **you** or from **you**, do we? ² **You yourselves** are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all; ³ and **you** show that **you** are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. ⁴ Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, ⁶ who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

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Mark 2:13-22

¹³ Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. ¹⁴ As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. ¹⁵ And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples-- for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners." ¹⁸ Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day. ²¹ "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. ²² And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."