

SERIES B TEXTS

Lectionary 23

Isaiah 35:4-7a

⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is **your** God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save **you**.” ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ^{7a}the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

Psalm 146

¹ Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! ² I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long. ³ Do not put **your** trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. ⁴ When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. ⁵ Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God, ⁶ who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; ⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free; ⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. ⁹ The LORD watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. ¹⁰ The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17

¹My brothers and sisters, do **you** with **your** acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? ²For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into **your** assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³and if **you** take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Have a seat here, please,” while to the one who is poor **you** say, “Stand there,” or, “Sit at my feet,” ⁴have **you** not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶But **you** have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress **you**? Is it not they who drag **you** into court? ⁷Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over **you**? ⁸**You** do well if **you** really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ⁹But if **you** show partiality, **you** commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. [¹¹For the one who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.] ¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶and one of **you** says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat **your** fill,” and yet **you**

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do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Mark 7:24-37

²⁴From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁸But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone. ³¹Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³²They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” ³⁵And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”