

SERIES A TEXTS

Lectionary 26

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² What do **you** mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"?

³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by **you** in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵ Yet **you** say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not **your** ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die.

²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹

Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not **your** ways that are unfair? ³⁰ Therefore I will judge **you**, O house of Israel, all of **you** according to **your** ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all **your** transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be **your** ruin. ³¹ Cast away from **you** all the transgressions that **you** have committed against me, and get **yourselves** a new heart and a new spirit! Why will **you** die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

Psalm 25:1-9

¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. ² O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. ³ Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. ⁴ Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. ⁵ Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. ⁶ Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. ⁷ Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O LORD! ⁸ Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. ⁹ He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

Philippians 2:1-13

¹ If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of **you** look not to **your** own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in **you** that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶

who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death--

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even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

²³ When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.