



21 FEB

1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF **LENT**

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION **22-27 FEB**



## AN ATONEMENT

### READ

In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again he says, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. (Hebrews 2:10-18)

### REFLECT

Sometimes it's hard to capture scripture truth in simple language, but Charles Wesley did it pretty well with this verse of "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing":

"He breaks the power of canceled sin,  
He sets the prisoner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean;  
His blood avails for me."

### REACT

Is there a song or verse of scripture that you can carry through the day to celebrate your freedom in Christ? Sing it, repeat it, share it with someone who needs to hear it!

23 February 2021



## BECAUSE OF HIM

### READ

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

### REFLECT

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Jesus, our great high priest, understands. He totally gets it. In fact, He empathizes with our weaknesses, our very humanity. Tempted just as we are, He conquered the power of sin and death. We can pray with confidence, fully expecting to receive mercy and grace, because of Him.

### REACT

What would it look and sound like for you to pray with confidence? Today might be a good day to try something new – a different posture, a different place, a different time of day – for your prayer.



## NOT ALONE

### READ

Timothy, I thank God for you—the God I serve with a clear conscience, just as my ancestors did. Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. I long to see you again, for I remember your tears as we parted. And I will be filled with joy when we are together again.

I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you. This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. (Timothy 1:3-7, NLT)

### REFLECT

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We are in this together. None of us walks with God alone. We need each other as we live our faith in this world, which specializes in fear and intimidation. The gifts of God – power, love, self-discipline – are not just for us to enjoy on our own. They are sources of strength and encouragement for those who journey with us.

### REACT

Who is your Timothy – the person you long to see again, because you just know you'll be encouraged when you do? Whose very presence fills you with joy every time you get together? Today is the perfect day to tell them how important sharing the faith journey with them is to you. Meet up in person if you can, write a note if you can't. Encourage someone today. Your words might just fan the flame of the Holy Spirit in them!



## JUMPS FOR JOY

### READ

Who is a God like you,  
who pardons sin and forgives the transgression  
of the remnant of his inheritance?  
You do not stay angry forever  
but delight to show mercy.  
You will again have compassion on us;  
you will tread our sins underfoot  
and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.  
You will be faithful to Jacob,  
and show love to Abraham,  
as you pledged on oath to our ancestors  
in days long ago. (Micah 7:18-20)

### REFLECT

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What is your picture of God? The Bible is full of word pictures that try to describe God to us. Some of them are familiar – parent, judge, shepherd, and so on. Here's one I don't hear very often – One who takes delight in showing mercy. Here is a picture of a God who jumps for joy when His people give Him the opportunity to show His unfailing love and grant forgiveness. And that's not all! He takes our sins and tramples them under His feet, He throws them into the depths of the ocean . . . never to surface again. This is rich and maybe surprising imagery. It might take some doing to even think about a God who delights in showing mercy. Let Him do it for you today!

### REACT

Do something that brings you pure delight today. Better still, do something that will bless someone else today. Jump for joy – and give someone else a reason to do the same!



## WHO'S INVOLVED

### READ

When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people who were listening, he entered Capernaum. There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." So Jesus went with them.

He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well. (Luke 7:1-10)

### REFLECT

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In one way, this is a really simple story – a centurion has a sick servant, he goes to Jesus and asks for help, Jesus rewards his faith, the servant gets better.

If you read it again, though, you might notice that a whole group of people were involved. Someone told the centurion about Jesus. He got some Jewish elders to go to Jesus on his behalf. Jesus heard their plea and started toward the centurion's house with the elders. The centurion sends some other friends out to meet Jesus with a message of great faith: "Say the word and my servant will be healed." A whole crowd of people hear the whole exchange and become witnesses to a miraculous healing. Here is a case where it literally took a village to raise the servant from his sick bed.

## REACT

Jesus showed great love and great mercy to a Roman centurion, a person who could legitimately be categorized as an enemy. A whole chain of people were involved in the miraculous healing of a nameless, faceless servant.

Will you approach Jesus on behalf of someone who needs something today? You may or may not get credit for your role ... but you will know. Jesus will know. That is enough.



### READ

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. (Genesis 12:1-4)

### REFLECT

When we use the word "unsettling," we generally mean something that makes us feel a little uncomfortable, that feeling that something just isn't right. In Abram's case, God's call was literally to become un-settled – to leave his country, his people and his father's household. Really, and significantly, the only thing we even know about Abram before this dramatic call to leave home and family is that his family had settled – put down roots – in Harran (Gen. 11:31) as they were moving from Ur to Canaan.

And then God said "Go."

That would be a very unsettling moment, indeed, but God also made some important promises:

- ❖ I will show you a new land
- ❖ I will make you a great nation
- ❖ I will bless you
- ❖ I will make your name great
- ❖ I will bless those who bless you
- ❖ I will curse those who curse you

God said "go" (v. 1), so Abram went (v. 4). In between, we don't know how many tense conversations, tears, prayers, arguments, or soul-searches happened. We only know that Abram went and God kept His promises. As He always does.

## **REACT**

What promise of God is especially dear to you these days? Is there someone you know who needs to hear it too? Today is a good day to bless someone with a word of hope.