

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020 – ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup>Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice and do what is right.

*Cf. Amos 5: 24 – Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.  
Micah 6: 8 – What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.*

<sup>6</sup>The foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, <sup>7</sup>these I will bring to my holy mountain.

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Mark 11: 17, Matt 21: 13, Lk 19:46

<sup>8</sup>Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

### Psalm 67 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup>May God be gracious to us and bless us

<sup>2</sup>that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.

<sup>3</sup>Let the peoples praise you, O God. <sup>4</sup>Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.

*Cf. verses from August 2 - Genesis 12: 3 – In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.  
Isaiah 42: 6 – I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations.*

### Romans 11:1-2, 21-28 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup>I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

<sup>2</sup>God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

<sup>29</sup>The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

<sup>30</sup>Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup>so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

<sup>32</sup>God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

*Cf. Exodus 7-10 - Pharaoh hardened his heart – God hardened Pharaoh’s heart.  
Romans 1: 24, 26, 28 – God gave them up*

### Matthew 15:21-28 (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup>Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

*In present day Lebanon – north of Israel - looked down upon as the most wicked of people.*

<sup>22</sup>Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon."

*A member of the enemy – someone from the most spiritually degraded of people.*

*This is the first of three times she calls Jesus "Lord." She shows respect as she pleads for help.*

*"Son of David" - though a foreigner, she knows something about the Jewish faith.*

<sup>23</sup>But he did not answer her at all.

*Matthew does not try to hide, instead he intentionally points out Jesus's response.*

*I think because he is writing many years later. He knows how this will end.*

And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us."

*The disciples do not seem surprised by Jesus' response. Instead they agree with it as they show an over-inflated view of themselves – "she keeps shouting after us."*

*Cf. the disciples' response to the young children in Mark 10: 13.*

<sup>24</sup>He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

*I believe Jesus is testing His disciples as He appears to agree with them.*

*He does not send her away. Instead He wants to see how the disciples will respond.*

<sup>25</sup>But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."

*Her concern for her child is so deep, and her confidence in Jesus' power and compassion is so strong, that she perseveres. She also has nowhere else to go.*

*A second time she calls Jesus "Lord."*

<sup>26</sup>He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

*Jesus is using some pretty harsh language as He forces the disciples to face the truth about themselves. He also uses the word for a little dog, a puppy.*

<sup>27</sup>She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

*Again, her love for her daughter is so intense, and her faith in Jesus' compassion and power to heal is so strong, that she perseveres. She simply will not give up.*

*A third time she calls Jesus "Lord."*

<sup>28</sup>Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish."

And her daughter was healed instantly.

*Cf. the words of Jesus to Peter in Matthew 14: 31 – You of little faith, why did you doubt?*

*What would Jesus say to you today – "Great is your faith" or "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"*

*If the latter, how could you grow in your faith so that He would say the former?*

*The disciples had seen this woman as their inferior.*

*She is their superior in every way.*

*The disciples failed the love test. The woman passed the endurance test – and with flying colors.*

*How would you do today with the love test and/or the endurance test?*