

No, You Do It!

Liturgical Year A

Seeds of Hope

March 12, 2023

Exodus 17:1-7

I truly believe that each and everyone of us has certain gifts or talents that sometimes go unused. These talents go unused because we would rather someone else do it.

I hang my cap on the ability of raising tropical fish and particularly the art of mating and raising baby Angel Fish. I feel qualified in teaching Rational Emotive Therapy by Ellis and I'm Ok-You're Ok by Berne. Since a kid in grade school, I have been playing marbles and today I have a large collection of antique marbles where I can even tell who made them.

Although my last talent has become a dinosaur, I feel very confident in bringing the Bible to life. I love digging into the original meaning of the manuscript and critically interpreting it for today. I like the way the scriptures provoke me and challenges my prejudices, my narrow way of looking at life.

This week's text Exodus 17:1-7 is neatly tied to Psalm 95 and Romans 5:1-11. Let's do a little digging into our first text. Moses and his motley crew of Israelites have escaped Pharaoh and his troops have now spent fourteen weeks in the wilderness.

The ex-slaves begin to carp, they were in a combative mood. On the way to Sinai, they begin to doubt why they ever made this trip. "What are you trying to do, kill us?" "Our throats are parched with thirst." Instead of yelling at God, which was not a cool thing to do, the Israelites just took it out on Moses.

On their way to spiritual freedom the Israelites, like many of us has forgotten that God did not free us from work but they were free for work. Before the slaves had to build bricks for Pharaoh now they could work to create a better neighborhood, a better world. In the past I stayed with how we like the Israelites carp and keep our leaders feet to the fire.

With this reading I am focusing on when we are pressed to act, we kick the can, we expect the people in the corporate office to handle our problems. Moses was a poor leader here and he asked God to handle the situation. So, Moses took a stick, a few elders hit the rock with the stick and water came a gushing.

This story should not be interpreted that God is like a Santa Claus granting all of our wishes. It is a story about always looking for the easier way, kicking our problem up-stares, the Governor, the president the person in charge.

We are being called to be that leader when times get rough. We all have experienced wilderness experiences. In dry places Gods "abuse" can sometimes seem overwhelming.

God told Moses to lead them. We are being called to do the same. Like the Israelites we have been freed to work for a better neighborhood.

This piece of scripture hit me right between my eyes. I was canceling my weekly Biblical analysis, kicking it upstairs to other ministers or churches but God also set me free to work for others so I shall continue to provoke, to inspire and to irritate you with my interpretations.

Romans 5:3 reads, "glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulations produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character hope."

The only way that God is going to swoop in and fix our messed-up world is when we use our God given talents and stop kicking the can down the road.

On the way to Sinai the Israelites went astray in their hearts. On our way to Sinai, or to a more sane world let us not lose heart, let us lead in any way we can.