

**Bible Study**  
**Proper 27, Year C**  
**November 6, 2016**

**[RCL] Haggai 1:15b-2:9; Psalm 145:1-5, 18-22 or Psalm 98; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38**

**Haggai 1:15b-2:9**

Lately there have been disastrous shakings of earth and sky as hurricane season is upon us. Many have lost their homes, and hundreds upon hundreds have lost their lives. The prophecy of Haggai is directed towards the “remnant of the people,” those that are left in the midst of ruin and turmoil. Their temple is in ruin, and the glory of their city lies in rubble. Haggai prophesies into destruction, calling the people three times in this passage to “take courage.” God promises to be with the remnant on the liminal edges of potentiality and possibility, just as God was with them as they fled Egypt and walked into the unknown. “My spirit abides among you; do not fear.”

- What in your life, region, or community currently lies in ruin?
- How is God empowering you to “work, *for I am with you*” for the restoration of what is damaged?
- In the midst of instability and chaos, what does courage mean to you?

**Psalm 98**

Saint Augustine famously said, those who sing pray twice. This Psalm of exaltation and praise calls the people to join with creation in the celebration of what God has done for them. Why are we to sing to God? *Because* God “has done marvelous things.” God “remembers his mercy and faithfulness” to the people, thus we are called to remember what God has done for us and join in creation’s hymn. Psalm 98 calls the people to “shout with joy,” and “lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.” This Canticle highlights the goodness of embodiment, reminding us of the importance of utilizing our voices, talents, musical abilities, and creation in communally celebrating God.

- Have you ever “shouted with joy” towards God?
- Has singing out loud in prayer ever been a challenge for you?
- If you were to compose a “new song” directed towards God right now, what might it say or sound like?

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17**

Where we perceive we are headed often shapes how we live in the present moment and understand ourselves. Many of us carry scars on our psyches that leave us feeling fractured from the God of our present and future. Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians speaks to the people in the midst of their anxiety over “the day of the Lord.” Paul calls the people not to live in anxiety or be “quickly shaken.” Paul’s letter ends with a call to comfort and rest in the God “who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope.”

- What images of “end times” were prevalent in your childhood?
- What shaped and formed your ideas about “the end”?
- What gives you comfort and hope?

## **Luke 20:27-38**

The Sadducees approach Jesus in this story in an attempt to trip him up. They project the current customs of human life onto the life of the resurrection. Jesus reverses their logic, stating that the “children of the resurrection” do not die, marry, or are bound by the laws of mortality.

Throughout Christian history there has been a tendency to divorce spirit from the body, and to consider marriage or sexual relationships contaminating or desecralizing: this passage has been used in this manner. This passage attests to the *life* present in the resurrection; Isaac, Jacob, and Abraham are all listed as distinct living persons. Christian doctrine has been committed to the embodied and personal nature of the resurrection; yet Jesus is clear in this passage, the resurrected life will be quite different from the present life.

- What elements of embodied human life speak to or foreshadow the “life to come”?
- What does your relational life (be it friendship, family, a spouse, or an intimate partner) speak to you about the meaning of human life? How does that meaning relate to life in the resurrection?

*Written by Leigh M Kern. Kern is a transitional deacon working at Saint James Cathedral in the diocese of Toronto and Anglican Church of Canada. She is on the Primate's Commission on Justice and Healing. She is a graduate of Yale Divinity School, where she also served in New Haven as a chaplain working with people living with addictions and poverty. In her free time Leigh enjoys print making and writing music.*

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