

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKLEY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

1 July 2018

Bulletin for the 6th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 439 870 372 386

INTROIT: I shall extol You, O LORD. For You have lifted me up, and You have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O LORD, my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me.

O LORD, You have brought my soul up from Sheol. You have kept me alive from among those who go down to the pit.

Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His, and give thanks to the memorial of His holiness!

For His anger lasts for only a moment. In His favour there is life. Weeping may last for the evening, but there is a shout of joy in the morning.

When I was at ease, I said, "I shall never be shaken."

LORD, by Your favour, You have made my mountain stand strong. When You hid Your face, I was terrified.

I shall call out to You, O LORD. I shall plead to the LORD for grace: "What profit is there if my blood is shed, if I go down into the pit? Will dust praise You? Will it proclaim Your truth?"

"Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me! LORD, be my Helper!"

You have changed for me my rites of mourning into dancing. You have removed my sackcloth and You have clothed me with joy, so that what is glorious may praise You with music and may not be silent. O LORD, my God, I shall praise You for ever.

Psalm 30

COLLECT: O God, since You have prepared Your blessings beyond our understanding, so fill our hearts with love for You that we may praise You above everything else, and receive those things that You have promised, which exceed all of our desires; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

READINGS: Lamentations 3:22-33 The LORD'S goodness and mercy will not fail.

2 Corinthians 8:1-9, 13-15 Paul asks the Corinthians to finish their collection.

Mark 5:21-43 The daughter of Jairus and the woman with a haemorrhage.

SERMON: 2 Corinthians 8:1-9 God's grace of giving

¹ Fellow-Christians, we make known to you the grace that God has bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. ² While they were severely tested by trouble, their overflowing joy and their deep poverty overflowed to produce their rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they were freely willing, according to their ability and beyond their ability. ⁴ They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to God's holy people. ⁵ They did not do as we expected but through the will of God first gave themselves to the Lord and to us. ⁶ This has led us to urge Titus to complete among you this work of kindness also, in the same way as he had earlier begun it. ⁷ As you abound in everything, in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all eagerness and in your love for us, see that you abound in this work of kindness also! ⁸ I do not say this as a command but am using the eagerness of others to test how genuine your love is. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, although He was rich, yet because of you He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich...

The Goodness of the LORD

Lamentations was written at the time that Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians. Tradition assigns the authorship to Jeremiah, and he is a very good choice. He certainly was a capable poet and did write in the style of poetry common to Lamentations (see 2 Chronicles 35:25). Many of the pictures and images found throughout Jeremiah's prophecy also appear in Lamentations. In chapter 3 the author mentions his own life's troubles and applies them to the nation. They match well with some of the troubles we know Jeremiah himself experienced. In the face of Jerusalem's destruction, the prophet encouraged the believers to keep on clinging to the Lord. The nation was without excuse. It had had plenty of time to repent, but it chose the path of sin. Now its sins had brought the present terror. On its own the nation could not deliver itself. Its only hope lay in a return to the Lord.

The words that the apostle Paul would later speak about himself and his fellow apostles apply well to the condition of Jeremiah and the handful of believers who remained after the fall of Jerusalem: "*We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed,*" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

It seemed to Jeremiah and his fellow Jews that they could fall no lower. They had no visible resources, either from within or from without. The whole world

had declared them a loss. They were thrown back upon their one last resource - in truth, their first and only resource - the LORD. At the very centre of his lament, Jeremiah broke out of the gloom by turning his attention to the character of the LORD, whose Word he had come to know and whose person he had learned to trust.

Because of the LORD's great love, God's people would survive. God's loyal love, which first made them His people, would keep them and protect them. By an oath and a promise, the Lord had separated them from all other nations. Purely by grace He had called them to belong to Him. Because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He had rescued them from Egypt. Because of that same promise, He had kept them through 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Because of that same promise, He had loved them down to the very end, always trying to reach them with the Word that would change their hearts and lead them to appreciate how much He cared for them.

His love had shown itself in His actions again and again. He could not help Himself. His love fired His compassion so that out of His deep feeling for them, He was stirred to come to their rescue time after time. Their history was a record of His love and action on their behalf. Every morning, every week, every year of their national and personal existence, they had received new evidence of God's mercy. Nevertheless, they brought themselves to this desperate condition. They had failed. They had broken faith on their part. Even so, they could still rely on their God. He does not break faith. He keeps His word. They could still confess joyfully, "*Your faithfulness is great*"!

Deprived of all, they still had an inheritance. It is an inheritance richer than any person could supply. The Lord Himself was their portion. As the psalmist says, "*The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places,*" (Psalm 16:6). As members of the Lord's family and His heirs through faith, His people simply and quietly waited for the riches that would surely come to them. They already had the greatest possession: they belonged to the LORD. Sitting in the ashes of their ruined city, they could wait with confidence and hope, knowing that He would not disappoint them.

Jeremiah was certain of what the future held. He himself had experienced the goodness of God. To those who hope in Him, He is good. To those who seek Him, He gives good things, for He has promised, "*Seek and you will find.*" Knowing that He is good and knowing that good will surely come, it is good for us to wait in silence for the salvation of the LORD. His goodness will not fail.

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! May God bless our worship of Him by His serving of us!
 Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.
 Email him at paziebell@gmail.com
 Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at www.aelc.org.au.
Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

COMING SERVICES

8 July 7 Pentecost	15 July 8 Pentecost	22 July 9 Pentecost
8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC	8.30am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.30am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC
Sunday, 8 July		
READINGS: Ezekiel 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 12:1-10; Mark 6:1-13		
HYMNS: 498 217 426 822		
Sunday, 15 July		
READINGS: Amos 7:7-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29		
HYMNS: 465 149 271 (315 335) 459		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor will be away from 1-14 July. If there is an emergency, please call Pastor Ohlson on 53599802 or 0409 169991.

There will be NO Women's Guild in July.