

**Monday, 2 December 2019** Psalm 78:17-31 Yet they sinned still more against him, rebelling against the Most High in the desert. They tested God in their heart by demanding the food they craved. They spoke against God, saying, "Can God spread a table in the wilderness? He struck the rock so that water gushed out and streams overflowed. Can he also give bread or provide meat for his people?" Therefore, when the LORD heard, he was full of wrath; a fire was kindled against Jacob; his anger rose against Israel, because they did not believe in God and did not trust his saving power. Yet he commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven, and he rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. Man ate of the bread of the angels; he sent them food in abundance. He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens, and by his power he led out the south wind; he rained meat on them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas; he let them fall in the midst of their camp, all around their dwellings. And they ate and were well filled, for he gave them what they craved. But before they had satisfied their craving, while the food was still in their mouths, the anger of God rose against them, and he killed the strongest of them and laid low the young men of Israel.

Israel, delivered from bondage in Egypt, quickly forgot that they had been redeemed from slavery by Your grace and mercy, testing You for trivialities and the materialisms of Egypt. Give us the garlics and leeks, forgetting the toil and labor. In like manner, the church lifts up their voices crying for worldly goods, decrying the transformation of their retirement funds; we forget the sin and death from which we have been lifted, give us our garlics and leeks.

---

**Tuesday, 3 December 2019** Psalm 78:32-39 In spite of all this, they still sinned; despite his wonders, they did not believe. So he made their days vanish like a breath, and their years in terror. When he killed them, they sought him; they repented and sought God earnestly. They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God their redeemer. But they flattered him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues. Their heart was not steadfast toward him; they were not faithful to his covenant. Yet he, being compassionate, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them; he restrained his anger often and did not stir up all his wrath. He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and comes not again.

When catastrophe strikes, the church prays. When the sun shines, the church deserts You for the gods of the culture. The faith of the church cannot endure the lures and siren calls of the world, it is weak and spineless with no resistance against mammon and the gods of the age.

---

**Wednesday, 4 December 2019** Psalm 78:40-55 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert! They tested God again and again and provoked the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember his power or the day when he redeemed them from the foe, when he performed his signs in Egypt and his marvels in the fields of Zoan. He turned their rivers to blood, so that they could not drink of their streams. He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them, and frogs, which

destroyed them. He gave their crops to the destroying locust and the fruit of their labor to the locust. He destroyed their vines with hail and their sycamores with frost. He gave over their cattle to the hail and their flocks to thunderbolts. He let loose on them his burning anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels. He made a path for his anger; he did not spare them from death, but gave their lives over to the plague. He struck down every firstborn in Egypt, the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham. Then he led out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid, but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. And he brought them to his holy land, to the mountain which his right hand had won. He drove out nations before them; he apportioned them for a possession and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.

How can the church forget Your mighty hand in delivering us from the bondage of sin and death? Is it that we never truly believed that we were slaves to sin? Do we not recognize that only the obedience of Jesus Christ on the cross is our salvation? How can we not be on our knees without ceasing in praise for Your love, grace and mercy?

---

**Thursday, 5 December 2019** Psalm 78:56-64 Yet they tested and rebelled against the Most High God and did not keep his testimonies, but turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers; they twisted like a deceitful bow. For they provoked him to anger with their high places; they moved him to jealousy with their idols. When God heard, he was full of wrath, and he utterly rejected Israel. He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh, the tent where he dwelt among mankind, and delivered his power to captivity, his glory to the hand of the foe. He gave his people over to the sword and vented his wrath on his heritage. Fire devoured their young men, and their young women had no marriage song. Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentation.

What are the idols of the church today, Lord? Pride? Fame? Wealth? Acceptance? Choice? Self? Greed? Sexual iniquity? Possessions? Gossip? Anger? Celebrities? A partial listing. All these and more are what we turn to to find solace and freedom from our mundane lives. Where Oh where is the urge to turn to You and Your peace?

---

**Friday, 6 December 2019** Psalm 78:56-64 Yet they tested and rebelled against the Most High God and did not keep his testimonies, but turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers; they twisted like a deceitful bow. For they provoked him to anger with their high places; they moved him to jealousy with their idols. When God heard, he was full of wrath, and he utterly rejected Israel. He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh, the tent where he dwelt among mankind, and delivered his power to captivity, his glory to the hand of the foe. He gave his people over to the sword and vented his wrath on his heritage. Fire devoured their young men, and their young women had no marriage song. Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentation.

What are the idols of the church today, Lord? Pride? Fame? Wealth? Acceptance? Choice? Self? Greed? Sexual iniquity? Possessions?

Gossip? Anger? Celebrities? A partial listing. All these and more are what we turn to to find solace and freedom from our mundane lives. Where Oh where is the urge to turn to You and Your peace?

---

**Saturday, 8 December 2019** Psalm 119:108-109 *Accept my freewill offerings of praise, O LORD, and teach me Your rules. I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget Your law.*

Lord, how precious it is, to be able to come to You, freely offering praise to You and to Your name, without compulsion, not of duty but of gratitude, love and joy. You have transformed me from a dirge of rebellion into a hymn of praise. You have opened the eyes of my heart to see Your glory shining all around me in creation and in the advancing Your Kingdom.

You teach me and reveal Yourself to me through Your word and law, showing me where life is to be lived but always allowing me to choose to obey. There are times, Lord, when I am awestruck to think that the Master of the Universe would have the grace to allow me to freely choose a life of joy or a death by self.

---

**Lord's Day, 8 December 2019** Exodus 20:1-2, 13 *And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ... You shall not murder"* Leviticus 19:17-18 *"You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

Lord, there have been a few neighbors in my life that downright refused to reason frankly with me. How can I be expected to put up with their unwillingness to see the reasonableness of my suggestions? You are telling me that I am only responsible for my own attitudes and words? That I am to approach each situation with an attitude of love, grace, and service that flows out of the well of Your love for me? This is a hard teaching, Lord, I need the Holy Spirit.

*Voices Together* is available as two annual volumes of meditations based on Psalm 1 through 75 and Psalm 76 through 150. A companion book, *The Love Story*, is a 22 week series of meditations based on Psalm 119. They are available through the Fellowship of Ailbe book store at [www.ailbe.org/bookstore/christian-discipline](http://www.ailbe.org/bookstore/christian-discipline)

# VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



December 2-8, 2019

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13**

*How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.*

LORD, as we meditate on this precious prayer from the Apostle Paul for his flocks and reflect on our callings, we find similar concerns for our [congregation] and our missions.

We pray that we may increase in love for each other. We pray that in spite of the constraints of family and work, that we may find suitable means to employ the technology to bring us into a closer relationship; that we will become as *cara anum*. (soul friends, like Jonathan and David, see 1 Sam. 18:1-3)

We pray that we will be holy and blameless on that Day when You come to carry Your chosen ones home; to enter into Your presence and assume our callings as Your stewards of Your creation. *Amen*

**To fear or not to fear, that is the question.**

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org); along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. All Scripture is from the ESV unless otherwise noted. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc.  
PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452 or to [prior@ailbe.org](mailto:prior@ailbe.org)

The Fellowship of Ailbe, ([www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org))  
Realizing the presence, promise and power  
of the Kingdom of God.