

July 2020
Summer Sermon Series:
Hot Times in the Bible
“A Large Rock in a Hot Land”
July 12, 2020

First Reading ~ *Isaiah 32:1-8, adapted from the New Century Version*

A ruler will rule in a way that brings justice,
and leaders will make fair decisions.
Then each ruler will be like a shelter from the wind,
like a safe place in a storm,
like streams of water in a desert,
like a cool shadow from a large rock in a hot land.

People will look to the leader for help,
and they will truly listen to what they say.
People who are now worried will be able to understand.
Those who cannot speak clearly now will then be able to speak clearly and quickly.
Fools will not be called great,
and people will not respect the wicked.

A fool says foolish things,
and plans evil in their mind.
A fool does things that are wicked,
and misrepresents YHWH.
A fool does not feed the hungry
or let thirsty people drink water.
The wicked person uses evil like a tool.
The wicked person plans ways to take everything from the poor.
The wicked person destroys the poor with lies,
even when the poor person is in the right.
But a good leader plans to do good,
and those good things make them a good leader.

Second Reading

~ *adapted from Alain de Botton in “The Art of Travel”*

Sublime places repeat in grand terms a lesson that ordinary life typically introduces viciously: that the universe is mightier than we are, that we are frail and temporary and have no alternative but to accept limitations on our will; that we must bow to necessities greater than ourselves... This is the lesson written into the stones of the desert and the ice fields of the poles. So grandly is it written there that we may come away from such places not crushed but inspired by what lies beyond us.

Third Reading

***Adapted from Alexandra Billings, Teacher, Professor, Singer, Actress,
and among the first transgender women to portray a transgender character on TV***

The hate and the anger. I never understood and I assumed it was me. It was shocking and it was constant and there was very little shelter. It was early in the revolution so what I was and how I moved through the world was awful and enraged most people. The battles forged were rarely won, but I learned early how to escape through dreaming and through the few allies I made along the way.

There is light in others, I believe. I would not have had the joyful and resilient life I have had if that were not true. And to this day I still cling a little too close, and worry about crowds, and sometimes flinch when a name is thrown at me. But the beauty is... now I am alive. Now I am present, and now I am clear and surrounded by Angels who's flight has cost generations before me to allow newness and change.

We are, all of us, brightly woven into the fabric of the human condition, and because that is true, we are responsible for one another.

It is our force for life that allows the Divine within each of us to flourish. I found it by accident, and now... I embrace it with gratitude. We must care for each other. We are here to guide and we are here to protect. One more lost life... one more lost spirit... is one too many.