

Journey to Easter - Thursday, March 25 (Day 37)

Psalm 31:9–16 NIV biblegateway.com

Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am in distress;
my eyes grow weak with sorrow,
my soul and body with grief.

My life is consumed by anguish
and my years by groaning;
my strength fails because of my affliction,
and my bones grow weak.

Because of all my enemies,
I am the utter contempt of my neighbors
and an object of dread to my closest friends—
those who see me on the street flee from me.

I am forgotten as though I were dead;
I have become like broken pottery.
For I hear many whispering,
“Terror on every side!”

They conspire against me
and plot to take my life.

But I trust in you, LORD;
I say, “You are my God.

My times are in your hands;
deliver me from the hands of my enemies,
from those who pursue me.”

Let your face shine on your servant;
save me in your unfailing love.

Discussion

We all struggle with loneliness. This has been evident during the pandemic, especially for many of our senior citizens. They often go days without meaningful human contact. The sense of isolation grows and they begin to feel life is without meaning or purpose. It has been heartening to see the way many families and congregations have found ways to reach out to those who are alone with meals, "safe" visits, and words of comfort.

Our reading from Psalm 31 foreshadows the loneliness of Jesus on the cross. He is scorned and rejected. The disciples abandon him. The religious and civil authorities condemn him. The soldiers taunt and torture him. Let's not forget that we are there, too. We cast him aside and leave him utterly alone. Our sin ultimately kills him. But loneliness and death do not get the final word. God's steadfast love does. Jesus is raised from the dead. In God's crazy logic, the empty tomb is not a lonely place but a scene of triumph.

Awesome Mystery

Today's Prayer

Merciful Lord, you know how we struggle with loneliness. Fill us with the power of the crucified and risen Christ that we might comfort others who feel forgotten and alone. Amen.

Source: Luther Seminary – St. Paul, MN 2021 Lenten Devotional “Awesome Mystery”

Image: Submitted by Pastor Carolyn, “Made by my mom.”

