

## FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017



### *THE LESSON* Exodus 14:19-31

<sup>19</sup>God's messenger, who had been in front of Israel's camp, moved and went behind them. The column of cloud moved from the front and took its place behind them. <sup>20</sup>It stood between Egypt's camp and Israel's camp. The cloud remained there, and when darkness fell it lit up the night. They didn't come near each other all night.

<sup>21</sup>Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD pushed the sea back by a strong east wind all night, turning the sea into dry land. The waters were split into two. <sup>22</sup>The Israelites walked into the sea on dry ground. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left. <sup>23</sup>The Egyptians chased them and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and cavalry. <sup>24</sup>As morning approached, the LORD looked down on the Egyptian camp from the column of lightning and cloud and threw the Egyptian camp into a panic. <sup>25</sup>The LORD jammed their chariot wheels so that they wouldn't turn easily. The Egyptians said, "Let's get

away from the Israelites, because the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!"

<sup>26</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the water comes back and covers the Egyptians, their chariots, and their cavalry." <sup>27</sup>So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. At daybreak, the sea returned to its normal depth. The Egyptians were driving toward it, and the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. <sup>28</sup>The waters returned and covered the chariots and the cavalry, Pharaoh's entire army that had followed them into the sea. Not one of them remained. <sup>29</sup>The Israelites, however, walked on dry ground through the sea. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left.

<sup>30</sup>The LORD rescued Israel from the Egyptians that day. Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup>Israel saw the amazing power of the LORD against the Egyptians. The people were in awe of the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

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### *THE RESPONSE* Exodus 15:1-11, 20-21

<sup>1</sup>Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

**I will sing to the LORD, for an overflowing victory! Horse and rider he threw into the sea!**

<sup>2</sup>The LORD is my strength and my power; he has become my salvation. This is my God, whom I will praise, the God of my ancestors, whom I will acclaim.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name.

<sup>4</sup>Pharaoh's chariots and his army he hurled into the sea; his elite captains were sunk in the Reed Sea.

<sup>5</sup>The deep sea covered them; they sank into the deep waters like a stone.

<sup>6</sup>Your strong hand, LORD, is dominant in power; your strong hand, LORD, shatters the enemy!

<sup>7</sup>With your great surge you overthrow your opponents; you send out your hot anger; it burns them up like straw.

<sup>8</sup>With the breath of your nostrils the waters swelled up, the floods surged up in a great wave; the deep waters foamed in the depths of the sea.

<sup>9</sup>The enemy said, "I'll pursue, I'll overtake, I'll divide the spoils of war. I'll be overfilled with them. I'll draw my sword; my hand will destroy them."

<sup>10</sup>You blew with your wind; the sea covered over them. They sank like lead in the towering waters.

<sup>11</sup>Who is like you among the gods, LORD? Who is like you, foremost in holiness, worthy of highest praise, doing awesome deeds? . . .

<sup>20</sup>Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand. All the women followed her playing tambourines and dancing.

<sup>21</sup>Miriam sang the refrain back to them: Sing to the LORD, for an overflowing victory! Horse and rider he threw into the sea!

#### THE EPISTLE Romans 14:1-12

<sup>1</sup>Welcome the person who is weak in faith—but not in order to argue about differences of opinion. <sup>2</sup>One person believes in eating everything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not look down on the ones who don't, and the ones who don't eat must not judge the ones who do, because God has accepted them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to judge someone else's servants? They stand or fall before their own Lord (and they will stand, because the Lord has the power to make them stand). <sup>5</sup>One person considers some days to be more sacred than others, while another person considers all

days to be the same. Each person must have their own convictions. <sup>6</sup>Someone who thinks that a day is sacred, thinks that way for the Lord. Those who eat, eat for the Lord, because they thank God. And those who don't eat, don't eat for the Lord, and they thank the Lord too. <sup>7</sup>We don't live for ourselves and we don't die for ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to God. <sup>9</sup>This is why Christ died and lived: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. <sup>10</sup>But why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you look down on

your brother or sister? We all will stand in front of the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>Because it is written, *As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me,*

*and every tongue will give praise to God.*

<sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

#### THE GOSPEL Matthew 18:21-35

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Should I forgive as many as seven times?"

<sup>22</sup>Jesus said, "Not just seven times, but rather as many as seventy-seven times. <sup>23</sup>Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

<sup>24</sup>When he began to settle accounts, they brought to him a servant who owed him ten thousand bags of gold. <sup>25</sup>Because the servant didn't have enough to pay it back, the master ordered that he should be sold, along with his wife and children and everything he had, and that the proceeds should be used as payment. <sup>26</sup>But the servant fell down, kneeled before him, and said, 'Please, be patient with me, and I'll pay you back.' <sup>27</sup>The master had compassion on that servant, released him, and forgave the loan.

<sup>28</sup>"When that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants

who owed him one hundred coins. He grabbed him around the throat and said, 'Pay me back what you owe me.'

<sup>29</sup>"Then his fellow servant fell down and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I'll pay you back.' <sup>30</sup>But he refused. Instead, he threw him into prison until he paid back his debt.

<sup>31</sup>"When his fellow servants saw what happened, they were deeply offended. They came and told their master all that happened. <sup>32</sup>His master called the first servant and said, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you appealed to me. <sup>33</sup>Shouldn't you also have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup>His master was furious and handed him over to the guard responsible for punishing prisoners, until he had paid the whole debt.

<sup>35</sup>"My heavenly Father will also do the same to you if you don't forgive your brother or sister from your heart."