

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 12, 2018



THE LESSON

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33

⁵The king gave orders to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "For my sake, protect my boy Absalom." All the troops heard what the king ordered regarding Absalom to all the commanders.

⁶So the troops marched into the field to meet the Israelites. The battle was fought in the Ephraim forest. ⁷The army of Israel was defeated there by David's soldiers. A great slaughter of twenty thousand men took place that day. ⁸The battle spread out over the entire countryside, and the forest devoured more soldiers than the sword that day.

⁹Absalom came upon some of David's men. Absalom was riding on a mule, and the mule went under the tangled branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's head got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in

midair while the mule under him kept on going. . . .

¹⁵Then ten young armor-bearers of Joab surrounded Absalom, struck him, and killed him. . . .

³¹Then the Cushite arrived and said, "My master the king: Listen to this good news! The LORD has vindicated you this day against the power of all who rose up against you."

³²The king said to the Cushite, "Is my boy Absalom okay?"

The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my master the king and all who rise up against you to hurt you end up like that young man."

³³The king trembled. He went up to the room over the gate and cried. As he went, he said, "Oh, my son Absalom! Oh, my son! My son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! Oh, Absalom, my son! My son!"

THE RESPONSE Psalm 130

I cry out to you from the depths, LORD—²my LORD, listen to my voice!

Let your ears pay close attention to my request for mercy!

³If you kept track of sins, LORD—my Lord, who would stand a chance?

⁴But forgiveness is with you—that's why you are honored.

⁵I hope, LORD. My whole being hopes, and I wait for God's promise.

⁶My whole being waits for my LORD—more than the night watch waits for morning; yes, more than the night watch waits for morning!

⁷Israel, wait for the LORD! Because faithful love is with the LORD; because great redemption is with our God!

⁸He is the one who will redeem Israel from all its sin.

THE EPISTLE

Ephesians 4:25-5:2

²⁵Therefore, after you have gotten rid of lying, *Each of you must tell the truth to your neighbor* because we are parts of each other in the same body. ²⁶*Be angry without sinning.* Don't let the sun set on your anger. ²⁷Don't provide an opportunity for the devil. ²⁸Thieves should no longer steal. Instead, they should go to work, using their hands to do good so that they will have something to share with whoever is in need.

²⁹Don't let any foul words come out of your mouth. Only say what is helpful when it is needed for

building up the community so that it benefits those who hear what you say. ³⁰Don't make the Holy Spirit of God unhappy—you were sealed by him for the day of redemption. ³¹Put aside all bitterness, losing your temper, anger, shouting, and slander, along with every other evil. ³²Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ.

⁵Therefore, imitate God like dearly loved children. ²Live your life with love, following the example of Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us. He was a sacrificial offering that smelled sweet to God.

THE GOSPEL John 6:35, 41-51

³⁵Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. . . ."

⁴¹The Jewish opposition grumbled about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

⁴²They asked, "Isn't this Jesus, Joseph's son, whose mother and father we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven?'"

⁴³Jesus responded, "Don't grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴No one can come to me unless they are drawn to me by the Father who sent me, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁵It

is written in the Prophets, And they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has listened to the Father and learned from him comes to me. ⁴⁶No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God. He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷I assure you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness and they died. ⁵⁰This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that whoever eats from it will never die. ⁵¹I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

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