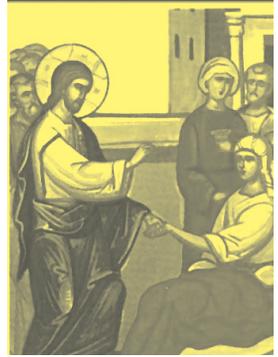


Signs of God's Reign



I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

FIRST READING (Job 7:1-4,6-7)

¹Is not man's life on earth a drudgery? Are not his days those of a **hireling**? ²He is a **slave** who longs for the shade, a hireling who waits for his wages. ³So I have been assigned months of misery, and **troubled nights** have been told off for me. ⁴If in bed I say, "When shall I arise?" then the night drags on; I am filled with restlessness until the dawn. ⁶My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; they come to an end without hope. ⁷Remember that **my life** is like the wind; I shall not see happiness again.

THE FOCUS: **Man's Life**

COMMENTARY

- The tone is pessimistic. It comes from somebody who is suffering from physical and psychological pain.
- Hireling / slave = living without freedom and consolation and respite.
- The author uses the following vocabularies to describe life: drudgery (*military fighting and forced labor*); months of misery (*prolonged sufferings*); troubled nights (*sleepless nights, matindi*); night drags on; restlessness until dawn (*can't enjoy sleep*); days swifter than a weaver. (*during the day, as if Job is not accomplishing anything*); days end without hope; life a wind (*so short that it can't be enjoyed*), no happiness. In other words, life is meaningless for Job.

REFLECTIONS

God affirms Job. You cannot attribute sufferings always to sin as Job's friends insisted.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6)
**PRAISE THE LORD, WHO HEALS THE
BROKEN HEARTED.**

SECOND READING (1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23)

¹⁶If I **preach** the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not **preach** it! ¹⁷If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. ¹⁸What then is my recompense? That, when I **preach**, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. ¹⁹Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself *a slave* to all so as to win over as many as possible. ²²To the weak I *became* weak, to win over the weak. I have become all *things* to all, to save at least some. ²³All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

THE FOCUS: **Preaching Entails Sacrifices**

COMMENTARY

- Observation: Take note of the "ifs".
- For Paul, preaching is an obligation.
- Preaching as free act demands legitimate recompense as a preacher.
- If ordered or forced to preach, he will be paid like a slave.

- Paul here preaches freely but he does not invoke his right to be paid. Instead, he even lowers himself down (to become slave, weak, all things) for a purpose to win over converts.
- At the end, Paul too might have his share (that is his recompense).

REFLECTIONS

In contrast to Paul, many of the modern preachers now demand money for their work.

GOSPEL READING (Mk 1:29-39)

²⁹On leaving the synagogue he entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. ³⁰Simon’s mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. ³¹He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

³²When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. ³³The whole town was gathered at the door. ³⁴He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him.

³⁵Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. ³⁶Simon and those who were with him pursued him ³⁷and on finding him said, “Everyone is looking for you.” ³⁸He told them, “Let us go on to the nearby villages that I **may preach** there also. For this purpose have I come.” ³⁹So he went into their synagogues, **preaching** and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

THE FOCUS: Jesus’ Preaching

COMMENTARY

- Healing of Peter’s mother-in-law - vv. 29-31
- Healings and Exorcisms - vv.32-34
- Leaving Capernaum for other place - vv.35-39

- The Reading reports a series of Jesus’ activity in one day:

—in the morning, Jesus preaches in the synagogue, after which he goes to the house to Peter where he cures his mother-in-law;

—In the afternoon, he cures the sick and cast out demons;

—Next day, he leaves Capernaum to preach other places in Galilee.

- The text gives an impression that we should talk about healings and exorcisms. It can be done.

• But, of course, the preacher must bear in mind that the healings, etc. are done in the context of preaching. Jesus first preaches and then heals and cast out demons.

• The preacher must be reminded that Jesus preaches the kingdom of God. The miracles performed by Jesus are concrete signs that the kingdom of God is come.

• When he leaves Capernaum, he has this purpose: “Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.” He also went into their synagogues and did the same thing as in Capernaum.

REFLECTIONS

Jesus is a powerful preacher who also has power over illnesses and evil.

II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR SHARING/HOMILY

The First Reading talks about Job’s preaching (sharing of pessimism) of man’s life as experience of hardship and hopelessness.

The Second Reading talks about the preaching of Paul (to win converts).

The Gospel talks about the preaching of Jesus (to proclaim the kingdom of God).

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