

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany - January 28, 2024

“Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.”

– Psalm 111:2 –

We all cringe when we watch those “man on the street” episodes where people can’t answer simple questions about important issues. They are usually much better at the trivia related to the entertainment industry than the facts about history. It is not really that surprising: celebrities are far more interesting than history. We cringe because we know that those who do not remember history are doomed to repeat it, but are we really any different?

Were we interested in learning history when our teachers were assigning lists of dates, names, and places for us to memorize? History does not seem relevant to us when we are young; it is old news that we memorize for a test and forget immediately. It is not until we get out in the world and we start to connect the stories of the past to what we see happening around us that we realize it is important and we begin to pay attention. History is not about memorizing names and dates; it is about the stories of the people who were there.

Sadly, many Christians have the same disinterest in the Old Testament. As children we learn bible stories in a way that holds our attention, with bright, colorful pictures and catchy little songs. Who among us hasn’t sung “Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones” sometime in our lives? As we grow older, however, we fail to move beyond that simple knowledge. We don’t pay attention to the details or see how God was working to move the world toward His Son. The Old Testament stories help us see how much we truly needed a Savior.

What is the point of the light if we never understand how we were lost in the darkness? We must have more than a Sunday school understanding of the scriptures. God is who He says He is, He can do what He says He will do, and He has done that and more. He is worthy to be praised; the works of His hands are extraordinary, life saving, eternal. In the stories of God’s works we see the power, mercy, and faithfulness on which we can trust. There is nothing trivial or irrelevant in that.

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