

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SUNDAY – NOVEMBER 19, 2023 @ CAPC OAKLAND

2 Timothy 3:10-4:8 NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

¹⁰ Now you [Timothy] have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions, and my sufferings, the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹² Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have known sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

4 ¹In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: ² proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage with the utmost patience in teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not put up with *sound teaching*, but, having their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. ⁵ AS FOR YOU, be sober in everything, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

⁶ AS FOR ME, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. ⁸ From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on *that day*, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his **appearing**.

Isaiah 55 NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

¹ Hear, everyone who thirsts;
come to the waters; and you who have no money,

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

2 Timothy is one of two pastoral letters attributed to Paul in which he writes to his disciples and co-worker Timothy to give pastoral and theological advice. It's most likely written in the 2nd generation of the Church, when less people lived that had "known" Jesus or his first apostles. Epistles, or "letters" were a common, established literary form in the Roman Empire dating back to the Greek philosophers.

sound teaching :: ὑγιαίνω pronounced /hugiainó/ :: meaning to be sound, healthy. hygiaínō (the root of the English term, "hygiene") – properly, in good working order – hence, "healthy," in sound condition (in-balance); it means to be free from debilitation (incapacity, handicap), functioning holistically with all parts working together ("sound"). It's the opposite to having a debilitating sickness.

appearing :: ἐπιφάνεια pronounced /epiphaneia/: meaning appearing, manifestation, glorious display. (epipháneia) is the root of the English term, "epiphany." This is the name we give to the Magi seeing the baby Jesus for who he truly was.

that day :: this language evokes the phrase "the day of the Lord" symbol and eschatological moment of God's judgement, or justice setting right the wrongs in the world. "Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—" Joel 2:1. See also Isaiah 10:20; Hosea 1:5; & Amos 9:11. It was used at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:21-23 ²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²² On *that day* many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you who behave lawlessly.'

come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your earnings for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ Now you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

⁷ let the wicked forsake their way and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹² For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

Isaiah is one of the most important books of the Hebrew Scriptures. While little is known of the personal life of the prophet, he is considered to be one of the greatest of them all. The name Isaiah means “*salvation of Yahweh*,” or “*Yah saves*.”

The book is a collection of oracles, prophecies, and reports; but the common theme is the message of salvation. There was, according to these writings, no hope in anything that was made by people. Roughly the first half of the collection of writings announcing doom and judgment for how the nation of Israel would be destroyed by Assyria and eventually taken captive to Babylon. The later half of the book look to the return of the people from exile and the distant future. The collection of Isaianic oracles fits the progression of Israel’s history over this time. Redacted from a text from bible.org.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in these texts?
- How does that word that engaged you – touch your life in this scriptures?
- What advice to you hear Paul giving to Timothy? How is it helpful, appropriate, or “sound” for us today?
- Isaiah is writing to people in exile, suffering because of their faith and past trust in God. How are the words of the prophet encouraging? Hopeful? Speaking truth to power?
- How do you struggle with scripture – the Hebrew Scriptures and the Second Testament as a trustworthy source of wisdom and/or encouragement? Or, how do you find it to be a deep well of wisdom and/or encouragement?
- What invitation do you hear the Spirit of God speaking to you – *or to us, as a church* – to act, speak, be, or change, through this word of scripture?