

## Psalm and Readings Tuesday 25th June 2024

### Psalm 87

On the holy mount stands the city he founded;  
the Lord loves the gates of Zion  
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.  
Glorious things are spoken of you,  
O city of God.

Among those who know me I mention Rahab and  
Babylon;  
Philistia too, and Tyre, with Ethiopia—  
'This one was born there,' they say.

And of Zion it shall be said,  
'This one and that one were born in it';  
for the Most High himself will establish it.  
The Lord records, as he registers the peoples,  
'This one was born there.'

Singers and dancers alike say,  
'All my springs are in you.'

### Judges 14

Once Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw a Philistine woman. Then he came up, and told his father and mother, 'I saw a Philistine woman at Timnah; now get her for me as my wife.' But his father and mother said to him, 'Is there not a woman among your kin, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?' But Samson said to his father, 'Get her for me, because she pleases me.' His father and mother did not know that this was from the Lord; for he was seeking a pretext to act against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah. When he came to the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion roared at him. The spirit of the Lord rushed on him, and he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as one might tear apart a kid. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson. After a while he returned to marry her, and he turned aside to

see the carcass of the lion, and there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. He scraped it out into his hands, and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.

His father went down to the woman, and Samson made a feast there as the young men were accustomed to do. When the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him. Samson said to them, 'Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments. But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments.' So they said to him, 'Ask your riddle; let us hear it.' He said to them,

'Out of the eater came something to eat.  
Out of the strong came something sweet.'

But for three days they could not explain the riddle.

On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, 'Coax your husband to explain the riddle to us, or we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?' So Samson's wife wept before him, saying, 'You hate me; you do not really love me. You have asked a riddle of my people, but you have not explained it to me.' He said to her, 'Look, I have not told my father or my mother. Why should I tell you?' She wept before him for the seven days that their feast lasted; and because she nagged him, on the seventh day he told her. Then she explained the riddle to her people. The men of the town said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

'What is sweeter than honey?  
What is stronger than a lion?'

And he said to them,

'If you had not ploughed with my heifer,  
you would not have found out my riddle.'

Then the spirit of the Lord rushed on him, and he went down to Ashkelon. He killed thirty men of the town, took their spoil, and gave the festal garments to those who had explained the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father's house. And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

#### **Luke 18:1-14**

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'

#### **A prayer for this time of transition**

Faithful and loving God  
we hold our Benefice before you in this time of uncertainty.  
Be with us in our waiting, in our expectation and in our preparation as we seek our new Incumbent.  
Be with our new incumbent as he or she also waits, expects and prepares.  
Bring us together in love for you and for this Benefice,  
and be our light for the way ahead.  
In Jesus' name,  
Amen

#### **The Collect of the Day**

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
Amen