

THE COLLECT: THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: SEPTEMBER 9, 2018

Grant us, O Lord, to trust in you with all our hearts; for, as you always resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so you never forsake those who make their boast of your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Isaiah 35: 4-7 (*Pew Bible page 734*)

Say to those with fearful hearts, Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.”⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

Psalms 146 (*Book of Common Prayer page 803*)

- 1 Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul! *
I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
- 2 Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, *
for there is no help in them.
- 3 When they breathe their last, they return to earth, *
and in that day their thoughts perish.
- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
and food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

- 9 The LORD shall reign for ever, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

James 2: 1-10, 14-17 (*Pew Bible page 1229*)

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in.³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,”⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?⁵ Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?⁶ But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court?⁷ Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right.⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food.¹⁶ If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

The Gospel: Mark 7: 24-37 (*Pew Bible page 1026*)

²⁴Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret.²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet.²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.²⁷ “First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, “for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”²⁸ “Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”²⁹ Then he told her, “For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.”³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.³¹ Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis.³² There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.³³ After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue.³⁴ He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, “Ephphatha!” (which means “Be opened!”).³⁵ At this, the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.³⁶ Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it.³⁷ People were overwhelmed with amazement. “He has done everything well,” they said. “He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”