

1 Lent B

My husband, Ron, and I will celebrate our 33rd wedding anniversary next month. We have been together almost 35 years and when you are together that long, you have a lot of shared memories. But the funny thing is the way he remembers events in our past is almost always NOT the way I recall them.

He has this uncanny ability to remember minute details about what people have done, even 30 years ago, but when it comes to him remembering what people say, especially immediately after he hangs up the phone with someone. I'll ask "well, what did they say" and he says "I don't know, I can't remember"! And I am the complete opposite. I can't remember events very well but, I can recall conversations. So, This difference in how we remember has led to , shall I say, some intense conversations between us

over the years that usually start with “How can you not remember that.” ?

It’s a good thing then that God’s memory is better than ours; clearer, more precise, and, most importantly, more to be trusted.

After all God has promised that “When I see the bow in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant.” And what is the covenant (or agreement)? That never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood.

Now most people, especially those of us who were raised in the church or synagogue, know the story of Noah and the flood and I bet most of us think about God’s promise, fleetingly when we see a rainbow. But how many of us remember that the bow was intended as a sign for God and not for us? How many remember that the bow is primarily intended to help God recall God’s promise, to not destroy all Flesh? I know I didn’t, even though I

have studied and heard the account many times., I remembered it differently.

We hear the word “Remember” twice in the Old Testament reading today and three times in the Psalm. The author of 1st Peter seems to be reminding people that God has not forgotten those who died in the flood. Because the flood worked as a kind of baptism for those who repented and believed in the Good News. And he or she says that Jesus even redeemed those who were in hell.

And there was something else I had forgotten when I read Mark’s account of Jesus’ baptism this week. The same Spirit that descended upon him immediately drove him, not “led him by the hand but drove him, into the wilderness. Mark’s account of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness is very concise and does not give us the details like Matthew and Luke. Indeed, perhaps it is

enough for us to remember, this first Sunday in Lent, the Spirit that drove Jesus into his time of trial and temptation was the same Spirit that was present through the whole ordeal.

It is a reminder that for all the terror a wilderness time for us can hold there is protection for us too, even as it was for Jesus. Can you remember this? Can you recall this when you are up against evil that threatens to overcome you, when you find yourself embattled too? If we are honest most of us certainly can remember those excruciating times when God was silent.

Let this first Sunday in Lent be a reminder that God is always present with us. In our wilderness times all the way through our mountain top experiences- God can always be trusted to be present.

After almost 35 years together, Ron and I do have trouble remembering the same details of our life together and remembering the same details the same way- but we always remember we love each other and want the best for each other. so it is with God and all of us.

We sometimes remember the story Of God's love differently, we forget details others think are important, we harp on things nobody else cares about. But underneath it all, we can be sure of one thing-The maker of all things will remember us in our wilderness and Our God and Our redeemer will always love us through. Amen.