

APRIL 9 1978 BROADCASTTHE HIRELING FLEETH

The Scripture lessons I read tonight are taken from an ancient lectionary, long in use. The selections for this second Sunday after Easter include:—

1. a portion of an epistle of Peter in which a distinction is made between the tough times that come over you because you earned them and the tough times that come over you when you didn't deserve them.

2. AND that part of John's Gospel where a distinction is made between a shepherd, whose sheep are his own, and a hired hand, whose own the sheep are not,

I find ^{that} these two passages, and the light they throw on each other, continue to address us as we wrestle with the easter THEME, and provide us with an content to the worship on the second Sunday after Easter.

EPISTLE LESSON

about.

SUFFERING — ECHOES THE LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT OF 53RD CHAPTER OF ISAIAH.

STRANGE ADDITION — PENETRATION.

Author goes beyond long steady insight of ancient IS.

Suffering comes upon the nation — rebellious

Blessing comes upon the nation — faithful.

Suffering can come to Israel — someone or other.

(mission) to others.

~~Suffering can be redemptive.~~

Language out of Isaiah — Reference to passion & Crucifixion of X

UNDESERVED / SUFFERING

Can be redemptive.

Author of Epistle →

Lets not make a big thing out of the kind
of suffering you have come to face.

Turn to the kind of suffering that is unjust, isn't it? ^{isn't it} ^{unjust}
he does a Revolutionary thing with it. ^{comes}

Indeed this is one way of Putting what is Revolutionary
about the Xn Faith it makes good news out
of unjust suffering
You ~~only~~ face ^{only} superficialities of the Xn Faith until you
face this.

It Makes good NEWS out of some of that
~~unjust~~ SUFFERING
UNDERSERVED

We've no way of knowing what moved these ancient
churchmen to place these two readings side by side
in the lectionary.

Perhaps the connection was made simply because ~~the~~
~~word Shepherd appears in both as they~~ Both passages
make use of the Shepherd Metaphor. However ~~because~~ the passages
together give us a clue as to how ~~underserved~~ suffering can be good
NEWS

It is clear from the New Testament itself, especially
in Matthew and Luke - that the reason Jesus uses the
Shepherd Metaphor is that it was well understood by his listeners.

The well known parable of the Shepherd with the
hundred sheeps makes that clear. "What man among,
having 100 sheeps - if one was missing - wouldn't leave the 99
and go looking all night. — The application is that -
every one of them would do it —"

It would appear that the same assumption is operating in the discourse recorded in the 4th Gospel. Everyone will know the difference between a Shepherd and a hireling.

I think we need to be careful not to hear this distinction as a put down of the wage earner, as if work & service was automatically degrading if ~~it~~ is paid for elsewhere in scripture - "The labourer is worthy of his hire" on which to Corinth, apostle quotes Deuter 25:4 - "you shall not yoke the ox when it is treading out the grain"

THE KEY STATEMENT THAT STOOD OUT FOR ME.

THE HIRELING FLEETH

THE KEY DISTINCTION - not that he gets paid.
- The sheep own not his OWN

STATEMENT STOOD OUT

I know all about Flight.
should say almost all
because I keep leaving men about it all the time
Constantly IN FLIGHT.
from life

pain, risk, rejection if ACCEPT LIFE
especially caring about others -

TAKE UP LIFE -

caring of others - any kind of pain & suffering

BOTH - kind you earn - destructive ways no undoable.

ANY kind you don't deserve

Reason you FLEE

HIRLING

WHOSE OWN THE SHEEP ARE NOT

IT SOUNDS LIKE

it makes that pain bearable, if the sheep are
your own!

What makes undesired pain good NEWS
is for the sheep to be your own

There is an assumption here that I think is perfectly
sound,

Life } good news if you are found of something you
Pain } can totally mean, - so that the
Suffering } worth of everything else } totally worth it.
cost of everything else }

Now then

is the MESSAGE - it's the EASTER MESSAGE

MEANING COMES - YOU ALLOW SHEEP TO BE YOUR OWN
STRANGE MESSAGE:

UNDESERVED SUFFERING GOOD NEWS

STRANGEST PART OF IT

assumption of the proclaiming of the Message.

all you people already know about it.

YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT IT IS TO HAVE SHEEP OF
YOUR OWN.