



# still waters

home church studies

## psalm 145.1-5, 17-21

[Worship]

1 I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. 2 Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever. 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. 4 One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

17 The LORD is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. 18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry, and saves them. 20 The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

### Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

Our holy scriptures abound in arguments concerning God's nature and purpose, arguments among themselves and over against us, their readers.

Today's psalm says, "The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy" (Psalm 145:20). Jesus, however, speaks of a less discriminating God who "makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust" (Matthew 5:45).

Calling on his Judean community in 520 B.C. to rebuild the temple, the prophet Haggai says on God's behalf, "I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts ['armies']" (Haggai 2:7). But the Jesus of next Sunday's gospel warns those awestruck by just such a rebuilt temple that "the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down" (Luke 21:6).

In our gospel from Luke, Jesus deals with the Sadducees' challenge concerning the resurrection. Or is that the only question?

The basis of the Sadducees' argument about the widow with seven husbands is Moses' commandment of "levirate marriage" (Deuteronomy 25:5-10), which in fact sustained the wealth and inheritance of the Sadducees' own patriarchal families.

In response to the question of which man the woman "belongs to," Jesus says that the patriarchal system of "this age" has no place whatever "in that age and in the resurrection from the dead." "That age" is a time when humanity will be transformed not by everyone's becoming asexual but by a realization of God's family—a family in which no one "belongs to" another.

Jesus invites the Sadducees and every one of us to believe not in a God of the dead—that dead God of destruction, grandeur, and power which has its own scriptural sources—but in the God of the living.

[The Scripture]

Luke 20 .27-38

27 Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him 28 and asked him a question, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. 29 Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; 30 then the second 31 and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. 32 Finally the woman also died. 33 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her." 34 Jesus said to them, "Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; 35 but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. 20:36 Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. 37 And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive."