

When we share our living quarters with someone (a spouse, children, roommates, or grandchildren), we quickly learn how quirky the habits and hang-ups of others can be. Whether we focus on individual practices ("Why does so and so always have to leave their towels on the floor of the bathroom) or general personality traits ("Why is my husband always so grumpy in the morning?"), we soon learn what to expect and how to read the signs of another person's presence. Know someone long enough and well enough, and you can predict their behavior with some degree of accuracy. We learn to expect, and accept, the typical actions and reactions from those closest to us, whether we like them or not.

You know what I'm talking about, right?.....Your spouse leaves the lid off the mayonnaise jar once again, turning the contents into a gloop of crustiness. Scraping off the top two inches, you mutter, "That's so Walter."-- Your teenager informs you at 7:15 p.m. that you both are expected to be on an important after school zoom meeting at 7:30 p.m. Grabbing your after-dinner coffee and turning on your computer you moan, "That's so Kelly." After driving you crazy all day, with noise and naughtiness, your youngest children suddenly throw themselves on you, seeing who can get in the most hugs and kisses the quickest. Repenting for wanting to lock them in their rooms until they were 18, you sigh and realize -- "That's so Emma and Alex."

Jeremiah, of course, knew God's heart, and God's intentions for Israel, as well as any human could. He had served as God's prophet from his youth. He had lived through some of the most devastating and disappointing moments in Israel's history. He had faced and outfaced the hardheartedness, foolishness, and false loyalties of his fellow Jews. And knowing God's purposes and God's people, Jeremiah's message, not surprisingly, was laced with warnings and woe!

But Jeremiah's ultimate understanding of God, provided him with the ability to see the big picture. The prophet could see past his warnings of a divinely

ordained punishment, to a time of divinely directed restoration, that is depicted in our first lesson for today. God was not vindictive or unloving. In fact, it is God's love and loyalty that motivated the seemingly harsh verbal warning the Lord's prophet was called to deliver.

Jeremiah's words today found in his "Book of Consolation" offers us the perfect example of a moment in time when all we can do is shake our heads in wonder and awe and exclaim: "That's so God!" In fact, the entire audacious notion of an involved, attentive deity that wants us to know him, and wants to get to know us, should cause us to examine each page of Scripture with our eyes open in amazement! -- The divine power that set everything into motion chooses an insignificant, run-of-the-mill planet, in an insignificant run-of-the-mill galaxy, in an insignificant run-of-the-mill universe, to conduct an experiment: making God known. All we can say is... "That's so God." [Why don't you go ahead and, say it with me, "That's so God!"]

God doesn't choose the power brokers of Egypt, or the technologically advanced Sumerians, but rather he chooses a ragtag tribe of nomadic shepherders, known for little but their stubbornness and willfulness, to invite into a covenant with Him to make Him known to all people in this World. All we can say is "That's so God!" – And not only that, God chooses an unremarkable, unknown, technologically stagnant, historically insignificant, run-of-the-mill small town in which to be born into human flesh. All we can say is, "That's so God." When Jesus feeds the hungry, as he did with 5,000 plus people, and there is enough left over to fill 12 baskets all we can say is... "That's so God! "

As Disciples of Christ, we can and we should offer up our own experiences with the Creator and redeemer of the universe, as we seek to share our faith stories with others! For example: when you are scheduled to go into surgery for a blocked artery, and before the procedure can begin you doctor discovers that miraculously

your arteries are clean, that there is no blockage, all you can say is, "That's so God!" When you are supposed to lead worship on Christmas Eve and have been struggling with an extremely bad cold that has led to a frog in your throat, but somehow you find the energy and your voice to preach the sermon you have been working on for over a week, all you can say is, "That's so God!" When the country you are living in is hit with a Pandemic; and all of a sudden you find yourself having to figure out new ways to lead worship, safe alternatives for teaching the Bible, different ways of connecting with members of a new congregation, and suddenly out nowhere people with gifts for technology and a love for sharing their faith step forward to offer some assistance, all you can say is, "That's so God!"

In our first lesson today the prophet Jeremiah talks of a new covenant with God based on his great mercy and unmerited grace, because he was trying to convey to us that we do not have a stingy and tightfisted God. The picture of the Garden of Eden we envision is not bare! When God told Adam and Eve to "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth," God was doing more than telling them to have babies. The Hebrew word for "fill the earth" conjures up the image of little children holding out their hands as someone fills their hands with good things. Psalm 145:16 says, "You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing." The "poor shall eat and be satisfied." God "has filled the hungry with good things."

In Scripture, Heaven is portrayed as a place of abundance, as a messianic banquet, not a messianic snack. According to the Prophet Malachi, God wants to open the windows of heaven, or what translates literally as the gutters of heaven, showering us with blessings. The Prophet Jeremiah reminds us, this morning, that one day everyone will know God, and that our Gracious Lord will pour out his forgiveness upon his people, and will completely forget their sins. This includes

our sins of disobedience, selfishness, hard heartedness, greediness, and so many others. That's so God!

"All things are yours," the apostle Paul proclaims in his 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Corinthians. Abundance is all about us reflecting God's abundant nature! Our God is a prodigal God, after all. Our God says to us what the father said to his "prodigal" son in one of the most incredible statements in the Bible: "All that is mine is yours." That's so God! In fact, Our God does "abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine!" Our God promises to meet our every need "according to his riches in glory, in Christ Jesus. This would include helping all people from the greatest, to the not so great, into an understanding that he wants an intimate and close relationship with us. "That's so God!"

St. Jerome contends that when we pray "Give us this day our daily bread," we are not praying for a prison diet of bread and water, but for an abundant supply of whatever it takes to make the body and soul faithful instruments for God. The word he uses, which we translate as "daily" actually conveys (according to Jerome) the meaning of life-sustaining abundance. We are given beyond what we deserve or need for sustenance. Seek first the kingdom of God, the Bible says, and what is added will be amazing. All we can say is what? "That's so God!"

One day, when the ancient rabbi Ben Jochai was teaching his students about the miracle of the manna in the wilderness, one of his students asked him why God did not furnish enough manna for Israel at one time to last the entire year. The rabbi answered him with this parable: Once there was a rich man who had a son to whom he promised an annual allowance. Every year on the same day, he would give his son the entire amount. After a while, it happened that the only time the father saw his son was on the day of the year when he was to receive his allowance.

So the father changed his plan and gave the son only enough for the day. Then the next day, the son had to return to receive the next day's allowance. From then on, the father saw his son every day. And as hard as it may be for us to grasp, God apparently wants to see us daily.

These are wonderful words for our Confirmation students to hear, especially today, when they will be affirming the promises that were made during their own baptisms. God will always be there for them, and will continually make himself known to them, in all kinds of expected and unexpected ways. He will always be there to provide for them with an abundant and overflowing life.

On this Reformation weekend as 2 students from our Congregation enter into a new covenant with God, I pray that we will all embrace this opportunity, and see it, as a new chapter, or a renewal of our own faith life! Never forget that our Heavenly Father is calling us by name, he wants to know us, wants us to know him, and he is always there offering up his abundant mercy, forgiveness, love, and unmerited grace! That's so God! And thanks be to God for that. Amen.