

1Samuel1:4-20;Hebrews10:11-25;Mark13:1-8

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

The church Year is coming to an end .. one Sunday left and then we enter the beginning of the next church year ...

The lessons towards the end of the church year are of apocalyptic nature. They are meant as a roadblock ... as a stumbling block .. as a huge stop sign! Their images of gloom and doom and destruction are signs intended to make us stop, to take stock in our lives, maybe even a life review, and to ask ourselves: Where are we in the great and small scheme of things? What do we want? Where do we go to? What is important in our lives? And what do we really want? Not that quick: I want this or that what so easily comes up ... no, more the: what do I really want! Once we take the time to sit quietly or walk quietly, once we get behind the rushing thoughts of the day to day chatter that clutters our minds ... we often find very surprising things! Things like: I really want to have joy in my life, or; I want to be loved, or; I lost hope and laughter, or; I want to do something that makes sense. There are many more things that can be found once we quiet our minds and listen to what is in our hearts and souls.

Soon the rushing Christmas season is coming and I don't know how it is for you, but I am missing the boat every year... it seems that the advent season gets fuller and faster every year.

Christmas is about Jesus being born for and in us and that is rather difficult with all the clutter and chatter in us, with all our busyness of running around and getting soo many things done ... but it is also a metaphor for the Inn in the Christmas story that is so full that there is no room for Jesus to be born.

So towards the end of the church year we have the apocalyptic Gospel story to make us halt, to make us stop and focus, focus on what is really important in life; and that is the birth of Jesus Christ for and in us.

So how do we make room for Jesus, how do we quiet our minds, how do we get to the important stuff, to what we really want?!

I do think that for most of us it starts with quietness, with silence and this is often hard work, because we find no time to be quiet. Quietness is so low on the list of things to do .. that we just don't seem to get there....!

But quietness and silence is also somewhat scary .. because then all the things we don't like to think about come rushing into our minds and then we have to deal with them ... so often its easier to stay busy than to be quiet, to stop, to be silent.

But only in quiet and silence we get to what is on the bottom of our hearts and souls ....to the real important stuff.

Once we are at the important stuff, that which ultimately concerns us, we can make room for God to do his work and that is the story of today's first lesson.

Hannah was deeply troubled, a woman in despair.

She made the time and focused on just the one thing she really wanted!

She went to great length and troubles...including being scolded by the priest.

And God remembered her. Hannah named him Samuel.... meaning I have asked him from the Lord.

But silence and quietness is not only good to find what we want .. it is also the place where we find what God wants:

It reads in the 2<sup>nd</sup> lesson: I will put my laws into their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.

God speaks in silence to us beyond the chatter and clutter.

So what I hope and wish for all of us is that we increase our time of quietness and silence to allow our hearts and souls to speak with us and to listen to God.

Lets be quiet/silent for 3/5 minutes. Lets see what there all is in us that speaks. If you wish feel also free to reread some of the lessons and see what speaks to you there.