

**Daily Office Devotional, Thursday, October 1, 2020**  
**Proper 21, the week of the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.**

Today we celebrate the Feast of Remeius of Rheims, bishop, apostle of the Franks.  
(See below.)

Daily Office Lectionary Readings

AM Psalm 105:1-22; PM Psalm 105:23-45  
Hosea 5:8-6:6; Acts 21:27-36; Luke 6:1-11

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, Book of Common Prayer  
Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, Book of Common Prayer  
Compline (Night Prayer), Page 127, Book of Common Prayer

Daily Office Old Testament Lesson, Hosea 5:8-6:6

8 Blow the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah. Sound the alarm at Beth-aven; look behind you, Benjamin! 9Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of punishment; among the tribes of Israel I declare what is sure. 10The princes of Judah have become like those who remove the landmark; on them I will pour out my wrath like water. 11Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after vanity. 12Therefore I am like maggots to Ephraim, and like rotteness to the house of Judah. 13When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria, and sent to the great king. But he is not able to cure you or heal your wound. 14For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I myself will tear and go away; I will carry off, and no one shall rescue. 15I will return again to my place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face. In their distress they will beg my favor:

6:"Come, let us return to the LORD; for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up. 2After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. 3Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD; his appearing is as sure as the dawn; he will come to us like the showers, like the spring rains that water the earth."

4 What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes away early. 5Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have killed them by the words of my mouth, and my

judgment goes forth as the light. 6For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

### David's Reflections

God gave birth to the people of Israel by delivering them from Egyptian slavery under Moses and loved them as a parent does a child. But, Israel proved a rebellious child, ungrateful, disloyal, and insensitive to the values of the one who had birthed and nurtured them. While engaging in the worship of a loving and just God, a God who always fights for the oppressed, their lives contradicted the nature of the God they were worshipping. They oppressed their own poor and collaborated with other, larger oppressive nations for the security of their borders.

God's question in verse four feels like the wonderings of a betrayed and abandoned parent, "What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah?" (That question gets repeated in chapter 11.) How does a loving parent uphold his or her own nature and values while remaining faithful to a child who lives in abject disdain of them?

The Israelites could not hide behind their worship, because that worship exerted no transforming spiritual or ethical power in their lives. Their lives did not reflect the nature of the God they worshipped. We could imagine Hosea standing outside a worship shrine as the worshippers departed, spreading his hands and voicing God's despair, "I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." (See verse 6 above.)

Hosea's bewildered expression of God's consternation certainly should get our attention. These words of his find their way into Jesus' ministry. Twice Matthew has Jesus quoting verse 6 in the face of the inconsistency of the religious practice of his nation's religious leaders. (See Matthew 9:13; 12:7.) Does our daily living increasingly reflect the loving and just nature of the God we worship?

Neither Hosea nor Jesus meant that worship and ethical living were mutually exclusive. Better to have both. Rather, if one were forced to choose between the two, a life of justice and mercy in relationships would be preferable to a life of worship without them. In a lifetime of ministry, I have known both types, those whose worship did not express itself in a life of mercy and service and those who practiced the latter without attending worship. I have consistently felt a closer bond with the nonworshipping who reflected more fully the nature of the God that I kept praying they would worship.

In what areas of my life might God be exclaiming, “What shall I do with you, O David?” Put your name in the blank and ask that question. Allow Hosea’s felt dilemma over people both treasured and grieved by God to expose and highlight the inconsistencies in your own life. Turn toward the God who loves you and seek the grace and strength of will available only there to turn your life more fully toward that God and toward the powerless about whom God is ultimately concerned.

*Collect of the Day, Proper 21, the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost*

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Grant us the fullness of your grace, that we, running to obtain your promises, may become partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 235)

Today we celebrate the Feast of Sergius of Rheims, bishop and apostle of the Franks (died 13 Jan 533 CE). <http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/Remigius.htm>

*Collect of the Feast of Sergius of Rheims*

Almighty God, who by your servant Remigius spread the truth of the gospel and the fullness of the catholic faith: Grant that we who glory in the name of Christian may show forth our faith in worthy deeds; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Guidance*

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people; Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP 100)

*For the Parish*

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 817)

*In the Order of Worship for Evening*

Almighty, everlasting God, let our prayer in your sight be as incense, the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. Give us grace to behold you, present in your Word and Sacraments, and to recognize you in the lives of those around us. Stir up in us the

flame of that love which burned in the heart of your Son as he bore his passion, and let it burn in us to eternal life and to the ages of ages. *Amen.* (BCP, 113)

*A Collect for Mission*

Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 816-817)