

Advent 2 – December 13, 2009 - God's Dream

Bruton Parish Church – The Rev. Ronald P. Jaynes, Interim Rector

Kids ask amazing questions. They ask us about things we have not thought about in years, if ever. They ask us questions that make us wish there were easy answers to give.

One little girl asked her mother one day on their way home from church: Mommy, does God ever sleep?

The mother thought it was great that her child was interested in asking a question about God, but on the other hand she did not want to give an answer that might ruin her religious thinking for life, so she answered: Let's ask the priest.

The priest had to think awhile too, and finally was reminded of a line from Psalm 121, the Psalm that begins: I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He who keeps watch over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

So he answered: "No, God does not sleep, but God does dream."

We could say that the whole of Sacred Scripture is human beings best efforts to tell the story of God's dream.

From the beginning, with God dreaming of light and a world ... of creation ... it was a good dream, the Bible says, and it came to be.

Then into that dream, the people God had created started messing it all up. They fought with each other and misused the earth. God tried once giving up on his dream completely, and he saved only a boatful of creatures, then decided to put a rainbow in the sky every once in awhile to remind himself that he when he got angry with the way humans acted, he had decided against using the destroy tactic every again.

The rest of the Bible is really about the ways God tries to let us in on the dream, and the way we humans move toward God's dream, then move away from the reality and glory of God's dream for God's world.

Today we have had glimpses of some of the characters in that story. How different they are.

We met Isaiah. He lived a long time ago ... 2500 years ago more or less. And do you know what was going on in his part of the world then? Well, pretty much the same thing that is going on in that part of the world today, struggles for land and power, that kind of thing.

Folks had forgotten to hang onto the hope that God's dream would ever come true. So he paints them a wonderful picture of that dream.

God feeding his flock like a shepherd; gathering people like lambs in his arms, and carrying them in his bosom. The whole book of Isaiah is one glorious part of the story of God's dream for us.

Then we meet a second fellow who lived 500 years after Isaiah.

Sometimes we might wonder if John the Baptist is really part of God's dream, or if he's a bit of a nightmare. And you know what was going on in his part of the world, 2000 years ago? Pretty much the same thing that is going on now, struggles for land and power, that kind of thing.

But instead of having a nice gentle way of presenting God's dream, as Isaiah did, he tells it like it is, reminding people, in his brashness, that they are very far away from God. He flat out calls them a brood of vipers. But through all of the ranting, he tells them of one whom he sees coming, whose sandals he is not worthy to carry. This one who is coming, will help us see God's dream even more clearly. And right there near him is the one of whom he speaks, his cousin Joshua, Jesus.

Isaiah, John and Jesus speak of turning our lives around so we can see the dream clearly. The word is repentance, and it means turn around. Turn around, your headed in the wrong direction. You're walking away from God's dream ... turn around.

The land of Isaiah, John and Jesus All of the middle east is still being torn apart. And we can see the results of walking in the wrong direction is so many aspects of our own lives.

Turn around, says Isaiah gently.

Turn around, says John loudly.

Turn around, says Jesus, with his stretched out arms .. and come, follow me. Surely the Christian knows, in following Jesus, we are following the way into the reality of God's dream.

Amen.