

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

1 Kings 8:1, 6-10, 22-23

Psalm 82

*Arise, O God, & rule the earth.* (v8)

Hebrews 11:29--12:2

Luke 12:49-56

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, judge eternal, you love justice & hate oppression, & you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed & greed, and, following your servants & prophets, to look to the pioneer & perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Hebrews 11:29--12:2

<sup>29</sup>By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. <sup>30</sup>By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup>By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace. <sup>32</sup>And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David & Samuel & the prophets—<sup>33</sup>who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup>quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup>Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. <sup>36</sup>Others suffered mocking & flogging, & even chains & imprisonment. <sup>37</sup>They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep & goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented—<sup>38</sup>of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts & mountains, & in caves & holes in the ground. <sup>39</sup>Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, <sup>40</sup>since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect. <sup>12:1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight & the sin that clings so closely, & let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus the pioneer & perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, & has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

## LISTENING TO . . .

**GOD-** *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. Familiarize yourself with this great cloud of witnesses recounted above. Use your study Bible notes to find the Old Testament stories. (vv33-34 seems to reference Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, & Meshach Shadrach, & Abednego; vv36-38 seems to reference the Maccabees from the Apocrypha. Yes, Lutherans have & can read the Apocrypha, too.) Also see #5 below.
2. Hebrews extensively uses by analogy the Old Testament sacrificial/Tabernacle/Temple system. (The Old Testament lesson was changed for us today.) What makes 1 Kings 8 (see also vv34- 30, 41-43) a good fit? See *Exodus 19:9, 24:15-18; 33:9-10, 34:5-7, 40:34-38; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 12:12, 27; 2 Corinthians 8:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:5, 4:14*

**EACH OTHER-** *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Who is in your personal great cloud of witnesses? Who has taken time to build you up in the one, true faith (*cf. Jude 3*) in specific ways. Who kept you going when it was tough or helped you come back afterward? Contact them this week & tell them thank you.
4. Consider *Matthew 10:22, 24:13; Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:8; Hebrews 11:27; James 1:25*; which speak of persevering or enduring; also *Matthew 28:20; John 13:1*. What does the parable of the Sower (*Matthew 13:1-8, 18-23*) add? How (or not) does the church have a perseverance problem?

**NEIGHBORS-** *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Our preaching series “Cloudy Skies” is about finding encouragement for the struggles of everyday life. What is encouraging to you in this passage about those witnesses? Who needs to hear this encouragement from you? Name at least 10 things & 5 people.
6. Considering #4, where & how will your local neighbors find a local persevering cloud today?

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10th Sunday after Pentecost

08.14.22

Series: Cloudy Skies

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Joy Over Shame

*Divine joy & glory cloud out shame & disgrace.*

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: looking to Jesus the pioneer & perfecter of our faith,  
who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross,  
disregarding its shame, & has taken his seat at the right hand  
of the throne of God. (v12:2)

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-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

My sheep hear my voice. I know them, & they follow me. (*John 10:27*)

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