

Third Sunday in Lent, March 12, 2023

Scripture Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain, and most do. —Dale Carnegie

The last verse of today's reading says, "They tempted the LORD, saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'" "They" refers to the Israelites, and "tempted" means "tested," "irritated" or "annoyed" — the way children might push a parent to his or her limit.

This sentence made me think about the complainers of the world. And then I realized that since about 2019, social media has given a name to those complainers who are obnoxious, feel entitled and try to use their position and privilege to get their own way. These people are called "Karens" by internet hounds, and videos abound of these complainers trying to throw their weight around.

Complaining, negative people are not fun to be around, are they? God certainly was not happy with the constant carping of the Hebrews after they left Egypt, a land where they had been slaves for more than 400 years. You'd think they would be happy to be free in the desert, rather than slaves in the city; that "a crust eaten in peace is better than a banquet partaken in anxiety." Instead, they started to complain to Moses and Aaron, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt!" (16:3). The most damning complaint was their doubt that the Lord was even with them!

This is a common complaint and one that is easy to make when we take our eyes away from the Lord and look instead at all the difficulties that lie around us.

When we doubt God's presence, it is not long before we begin to criticize our human friends and leaders, just as the Hebrews ganged up on Moses.

Let's be grateful instead of grumbling. Let's remember the advice of Corrie ten Boom, who survived the Nazis during World War 2:

*We mutter, we sputter; we fume and we spurt,
We mumble and grumble; our feelings get hurt.
We can't understand things — our vision gets dim,
When all that we need is a moment with Him.*

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to remember that you are always with me. Amen.

*Blessings,
Jihad Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Mark 14-16
- Monday:** Numbers 1-3
- Tuesday:** Numbers 4-6
- Wednesday:** Numbers 7-10
- Thursday:** Numbers 11-14
- Friday:** Numbers 15-17
- Saturday:** Psalms 29-30

FORTY Days OF LENT

WORD SEARCH

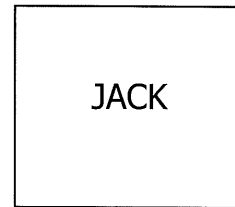
Find the words below that are all associated with the Lenten journey toward the cross.

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|---------|-------------|------------|---------|--------|--------|
| crown | donkey | hosanna | penance | Pilate | sins |
| colt | crucifixion | forsaken | kiss | prayer | suffer |
| confess | death | Gethsemane | lots | repent | thorns |
| cross | denial | Golgotha | palms | silver | vigil |

E	N	A	M	E	S	H	T	E	G	R	L	W	Y
C	L	E	U	X	B	M	T	H	B	U	C	W	B
N	R	I	K	Y	P	A	T	E	T	I	Y	X	Y
A	V	J	G	A	L	B	R	E	Y	A	R	P	B
N	G	N	L	I	S	N	L	A	I	N	E	D	X
E	W	M	P	R	V	R	D	H	B	N	R	D	F
P	S	O	G	O	L	G	O	T	H	A	B	S	C
D	L	N	R	O	C	O	N	F	E	S	S	I	K
O	T	H	T	C	P	E	K	W	U	O	U	N	D
M	N	S	H	N	P	W	E	D	R	H	F	S	K
U	N	F	O	E	T	K	Y	C	S	G	F	O	E
H	E	C	R	E	V	L	I	S	W	Q	E	C	M
H	V	H	N	C	X	S	O	C	C	J	R	L	O
F	Q	E	S	U	D	S	H	C	A	A	Y	M	C
C	R	U	C	I	F	I	X	I	O	N	S	R	V

Word Picture

What expression comes to
mind when you
study this drawing?
Write your answer below.



Word Picture: Jack in the box.