

9th Sunday After Pentecost

[Genesis 29.15-28](#)

[Psalms 105.1-11](#)

[Romans 8.26-39](#)

[Matthew 13.44-58](#)

Rev'd Lauren Martin

Not Finished Yet

I think a good many of us know what it is to wake up and realise we're in a place we never would have chosen.

That's where Jacob is in this morning's reading. He's worked seven long years for Rachel — seven years in the dust and heat, holding onto the future he thought was coming. And then morning breaks, and it's Leah beside him.

Not what he expected. Not what he hoped for. Not the life he thought he was stepping into.

And that's why this story still speaks. Because most of us know something of that feeling. Life shifts. Plans unravel. News comes that we never wanted. Grief arrives. Health changes. Relationships strain. The future we thought we were moving towards suddenly looks very different.

And the Scriptures, thankfully, don't pretend otherwise. Genesis leaves the story rough-edged and unresolved. It's messy, like real life. There's love here, and trickery, and hurt, and longing. But underneath it all, God has not gone anywhere. God is still present. God is still at work. Mercy is still moving, quietly and steadily, like water under dry ground.

That is why the psalm says to us: remember. Remember what God has done. Remember that God keeps covenant. Remember that the faithfulness of God does not depend on our lives being tidy or clear. God is faithful because God is faithful.

And that matters, because many of us come to a service like this carrying all sorts of things, often quietly. Concern for family and friends. Worry for the world. Weariness of heart. Tiredness in the body. Grief that sits close to the surface. And sometimes prayer itself can feel thin — just a few words, or hardly even that.

And then Paul gives us this great comfort: *the Spirit helps us in our weakness.*

HOLY HERMITS ONLINE

Not after weakness.

Not once we've got ourselves together.

In the weakness itself.

When prayer comes easily, yes. But also when all we have is silence. Or a sigh. Or just, "Lord, have mercy." The Spirit is there, praying in us, carrying what we cannot fully say.

And then Jesus gives us these small, earthy pictures of the kingdom: treasure hidden in a field, a pearl of great value, a net dragged in from the sea. Ordinary things. Paddock, water, work, surprise.

And he says: this is what the kingdom is like.

Not always obvious.

Not always dramatic.

Often hidden.

Often very near.

Which means the kingdom is not only in the life we thought we'd have. It's in the life we've got now. Not only in strength, but in weakness. Not only in certainty, but in trust. Not only in the grand and dramatic, but in the ordinary and easily missed.

So perhaps the question for us this morning is simply this: where is the treasure now?

Where is God at work now?

In the neighbour we've overlooked?

In a quiet kindness?

In someone lonely or tired or frightened?

In a Church learning again what it means to depend on grace?

And maybe, especially in a service like this, where we gather in prayer and longing, there is treasure too in desire itself — in the heart turning again towards Christ, in hunger for his presence, in the quiet trust that he comes to us even when we cannot come to the table in the usual way.

Because before this becomes one more thing for us to do, Paul gives us the promise we need to hear: *nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.*

Nothing.

Not grief.

Not weakness.

Not disappointment.

Not confusion.

Not distance.

Not the prayers we cannot find words for.

Nothing.

HOLY HERMITS ONLINE

So perhaps today the invitation is a simple one.

Remember.

Look again.

And listen.

Remember the God who has been faithful this far.

Look again for the treasure hidden in the ordinary places of your life.

Listen for the Spirit praying within you, steady as breath, gentle as rain on dry country, close as the Christ who meets us wherever we are.

For the kingdom is near, even when hidden.

The Spirit is at work, even when we are quiet.

And Christ is with us, even now, drawing near to us in word, in prayer, and in love.

And if God can work through Jacob's tangled family, through Leah's overlooked life, through Paul's weakness, and through the tired and hopeful hearts we bring today, then surely God is not finished with us yet.

And perhaps that is enough for today: to know that God is near, that God's kingdom is among us, and that God is not finished with us yet.

So, in all that is hidden, broken, and still unfinished in us, may we keep near to the Lord, trusting in God's mercy.

In the name of Christ. Amen