

March 17

Face Set Like Flint for Jerusalem

I gave my back to the strikers...For the Lord Yahweh will help me...therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be disappointed. He is near who justifies me – Isaiah 50:6-8

[John 7:2-10, Galilee] Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths*, was at hand. His brothers therefore said to him, “Depart from here, and go into Judea, that your disciples also may see your works which you do. For no one does anything in secret, and himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, reveal yourself to the world.” For even his brothers didn’t believe in him. [*early October]

Jesus therefore said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world can’t hate you, but it hates me, because I testify about it, that its works are evil. You go up to the feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, because my time is not yet fulfilled.”

Having said these things to them, he stayed in Galilee. But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly, but as it were in secret.

[Luke 9:51-62, Samaria] It came to pass, when the days were near that he should be taken up, he intently set his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before his face. They went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, so as to prepare for him. They didn’t receive him, because he was

traveling with his face set towards Jerusalem. When his disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from the sky, and destroy them, just as Elijah did?”

But he turned and rebuked them, “You don’t know of what kind of spirit you are. For the Son of Man didn’t come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”

They went to another village. As they went on the way, a certain man, a scribe, said to him, “I want to follow you wherever you go, Lord.”

Jesus said to him, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

He said to another, “Follow me!”

But he, another of his disciples, said, “Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father.”

But Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead, but you go and announce the Kingdom of God.”

Another also said, “I want to follow you, Lord, but first allow me to say good-bye to those who are at my house.”

But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.” [Matthew 8:19-22]

1. Jesus’ persecutions are starting, how does he respond? How do you respond to “strikers”?
2. In persecution, it’s harder to follow Jesus; what barriers prevent you from following him?
3. Jesus, your last winter on earth was hard for you and your followers; please help me...

