

Theresa Lungu:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Theresa Lungu:

Welcome to Morning Prayers. Our speaker today is Charles Anderson, the director of Finance and Operations here at MEM Church. Please rise as you're able and join me in the responsive reading number 119 from the black Psalter.

Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.

Congregation:

Happy are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole hearts.

Theresa Lungu:

Who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways.

Congregation:

You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.

Theresa Lungu:

O that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes.

Congregation:

Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.

Theresa Lungu:

Let my cry come before you. Oh Lord, give me understanding according to your word.

Congregation:

Let my supplication come before you; deliver me according to your promise.

Theresa Lungu:

My lips will pour forth praise, because you teach me your statutes.

Congregation:

My tongue will sing of your promise, for all your commandments are right.

Theresa Lungu:

Let your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.

Congregation:

I long for your salvation, O Lord, and your law is my delight.

Theresa Lungu:

Let me live that I may praise you, and let your ordinances help me.

Congregation:

I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek out your servant, for I do not forget your commandments.

Choir:

(singing)

Charles Anderson:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Charles Anderson:

It is a privilege and pleasure joining you in Appleton Chapel today. A sense of unbridled inspiration came to me, resonating in an undulating wave of joy and comfort from listening to a 1978 song, Every Kind of People. The words of which I believe epitomize attributes I have been considering rigorously lately on the topic of inclusion, and honoring the importance of connecting inclusion through active engagement in a dimensionally meaningful way to our daily endeavors here at the university. It takes every kind of people to make the world go round and make what life's about comprise a sample of these connective lyrics created by Robert Palmer.

The combination of erudition and resonance of Palmer's lyrics are a catalyst for thought, considering the current concept of messaging, leading first in a primary connection to mosaic law, and then relevance in engaging inclusion institutionally and individually today. This morning's reading is from the third book of the Torah, Leviticus, chapter 24, verse 22. I will read two versions of the passage, the first from the Masoretic Text, think authentic. And the second derived from an online search, think canned. "Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for the home born, for I am the Lord your God." "And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, one law shall be exacted for you, convert and resident alike, for I am the Lord your God."

This ends the lesson. The Masoretic Text from the Hebrew Nazareth defined as tradition demonstrates every word and letter was scrutinized with great care. For instance, since texts traditionally omitted vowels in written form, the Masoretes introduced vowel signs to guarantee correct pronunciation. The translation of the Torah by Jewish scholars was an attempt to bring sacred writings in English closer to their Hebrew original. The sacred task of translating the word of God as revealed to Israel through lawgiver, prophet, psalmist and sage began at an early date. According to an ancient rabbinic interpretation, Joshua had the Torah engraved upon the stones of the altar, Joshua chapter eight, verse 32. Not only in the original Hebrew alone, but also in all the languages of mankind, which were held to be 70.

In teaching comparative literature for the Harvard Extension School, professor Theo Harris, Constantine Theo Harris, extols importance of a close read. In this examination of etymology, defined as the study of

the origins of words, it A, frames intent, and B, is a clarion call to our attention that every word matters. The principle theme between the two passages is the nascent introduction of one law, a hallmark of the concept of inclusion. Both passages form the elemental idea of all for one and one for all. Beyond the elemental concept however, descriptors and distinction matter. The definition of manner from the Masoretic Text is a way in which a thing is done or happens. The definition of exacted, notably in the past tense, is to demand and obtain something, especially a payment from someone. Within the paradigm of law, invocation of the word manner seems so much more inviting, welcoming, inclusive, and authentic.

In this regard, the genesis of inclusion is embodied in Leviticus. By comparison, an online search yields an impersonal, formulaic, automated, and synthesized response. Through mechanically incorporating the term exacted, this has potential to be disconnected from the human element and antithetical to integration of inclusive aspects of the law. In an examination of the principle of inclusion, inclusion being the fulcrum of our individual and collective goals in context for engagement in our life and work, inclusion I submit for your pondering today, is both a societal and personal responsibility in as much as it being a law bestowed from God. No matter whether it is a way forward or a demand. Clearly the principle of the law of inclusion ensures everybody gets a fair shake.

The definition of inclusion is the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure and the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized. In this regard, it is incumbent upon us to tap on our awareness of being human and extend ourselves to each other, to reach out and really connect with each other. It is particularly critical in this age of uncertainty to harness a unifying spirit of inclusive common goals, to respect where someone may be coming from, to listen to their arguments, engage in boisterous debate, be curious about lessons learned from accretive experience and compassionate for the path others are navigating.

The Masoretic Text invites inclusion through introducing law as a rule and opportunities to embrace it. The term exacted, like the search engine itself, is amorphous and distant from its origins. In the spirit of authenticity, a primary component of inclusion, it is critical to A, conduct your own research, B, factor in origins and meanings of terms, and C, apply principles. Finally, a key component of inclusion is action. Please join me in taking action this morning and extending an inclusive greeting to your neighbor. I venture a guess, a friendly nod and smile will resonate and may very well make all the difference in the world to a friend or colleague.

Theresa Lungu:

Please rise as you're able and let us pray. In this season of Lent, we are reminded of our own difficulties and struggles. Lord, rise up within us. Let your spirit shine out of every broken place we've walked through. We pray that you trade the ashes of our lives for the beauty of your presence. Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.

Theresa Lungu:

And together let us recite the Lord's prayer saying, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into

temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Congregation:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Theresa Lungu:

And let us sing the hymn The Lord is My Shepherd. Number 198 in the crimson Harvard hymnal.

Congregation:

(singing)

Theresa Lungu:

As we go forth unto this day, indeed may the Lord be our shepherd and our guide in all our decisions throughout the day and always, Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.