

peace be with you

weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

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THE TRUNK

For years the old trunk sat at the top
Of the stairs of my folks' home
housing treasures rarely beheld.

Back in the day, this sturdy trunk made
a voyage across the sandhills in
a horse-drawn carriage before being
transferred onto a train pulled
by a steam locomotive.

Full of dreams and aspirations
Ella put only what was needed for
new academic adventures at the
modern Wayne State Teacher's College.

You've likely seen a vintage trunk
like this one that is bonded with
fine sheets of blue steel pressed into
pretty patterns, and made rugged
with pine trim and thin bands of metal.

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Luke 4:1-13

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted^[a] by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'^[b]"

⁵ The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.⁷ If you worship me, it will all be yours."

⁸ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'^[c]"

⁹ The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of *Continued*

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THE TRUNK

Long before Ella knew the incalculable pain of burying five of her babies, prior to knowing the immense joys life would one day hold, before she dreamt that she would live to see one hundred descendants, she packed this sturdy trunk to the brim and got on with life.

Wandering to Wilderness

When Jesus was led into the desert by the angel, he had no trunk packed with belongings that would bring him more comfort and even increase his chances of survival. Traveling light continued for the rest of his life as he wandered throughout the region of Galilee without being burdened down with a bunch of stuff.

Under terrible circumstances, the images of the Ukrainian refugees carrying tiny children and pets while pulling suitcases into Poland are striking. We pray that God will provide the strength they need through these horrific days.

This weekend I'll be traveling to Ecuador and then the Galapagos with my daughter, who is a high school science educator in a Nashville. My purple carry-on bag is packed with only the necessities, because we will be staying in a different hotel nearly every night and hauling a big suitcase would be a burden. I have no preconceived notions of the region; the

Luke 4:1-13

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temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here.

¹⁰ For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully;

¹¹ they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'^[d]"

¹² Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'^[e]"

¹³ When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

only expectation is that I'll often be met with surprise!

We are called to wander through the wilderness during the season of Lent. For us, wandering has a certain freedom. In these next few weeks, we don't know exactly where we will go or what will happen when we contemplate the last few weeks of Jesus' life. Perhaps he asked no more of the disciples when he said, "Follow me," than when he left everything for the wilderness in preparation for his ministry.

What is it in your life that needs to be set aside for now? What in your faith do you wish to share with others that they may have gain in understanding and wisdom?

God's love and peace to each of you,

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler