

# Palimpsest\* (pa • limp • sest)

Week of **October 31, 2021**  
23th Sunday After Pentecost

**Sermon:** A Future With Hope  
**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29:10-14

## Your Notes

## Sermon Supplemental Reading

Eight people died  
on my block in Brooklyn  
last week  
and I didn't know  
what it meant  
to be living  
at one remove  
from each other,  
wary,  
isolated,  
locked up  
with the relentless  
bad news  
while ambulances  
cruised the neighborhood  
which was otherwise  
so calm and quiet  
that I wondered  
if God, too,  
had gone into hiding  
and sheltered in place.

– Hirsch, E. (2020) *Eight People*

Along with the sense of loss...and the acknowledgment of guilt..., the most remarkable fact about “exile” is that the season of dislocation came to be for Israel a primary time of theological generativity. From the bottom of loss and guilt arose in Israel a series of new, imaginative poetic voices

\* A Palimpsest is: 1: writing material (as a parchment or tablet) used one or more times, 2: something having unusually diverse layers or aspects apparent beneath the surface

**Your Notes**

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who took the loss with deep seriousness but who shrewdly reinterpreted old faith traditions to turn exilic Israel in hope toward the future. Through this interpretation, exilic Israel is portrayed as a buoyant community of hope that believed and trusted that the God who willed Israel's deportation is the God who will faithfully enact Israel's restoration to the safety and well-being of its own proper place in Jerusalem and Judah.

- Brueggemann, W. (2002) *Reverberations of Faith: A Theological Handbook of Old Testament Themes*

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees  
for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.

You only have to let the soft animal of your body  
love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.  
Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain  
are moving across the landscapes,  
over the prairies and the deep trees,  
the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,  
are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting –  
over and over announcing your place  
in the family of things.

- Mary Oliver, *Wild Geese*