

Friday, June 12, 2020

Dear Members, Friends, and Guests of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

Early this morning I drove to Jim Click in Tucson because my Jeep's air conditioning went out two days ago. At about 7:30 am one of the very helpful service department members took the temperature of the car and said, "Yes, it has a fever." He stepped out and lifted the hood. I was standing next to him. We stared at the rat building and refuse under the hood. Rats. He said, "Oh my." Other service people came over. "Wow." I turned to Tony and said, "If the rats chewed the wiring, then I'm not covered by my warranty, am I?" He looked down and shook his head no. "You could check with your auto insurance," he said hopefully. I did later. No luck.

Even as I am writing this update, I'm still getting communications from the service department. I'm only up to about \$300 so far. Julie and I save for emergency car stuff, so we are fine. Now the question is, can I make this spiritual in any way? I looked up rats in my Bible Study Tools Online and found that in the New International Version rats appear five times in the entire Bible. Four of those references come in 1 Samuel 6: 4,5,11, 18 when the Philistines are trying to return the Ark of the Covenant they won in war, but it makes them sick. They have to return it with a peace offering: five golden rats and five golden tumors. In the King James Version tumors are called emerods or hemorrhoids. This just keeps getting better and better. In Isaiah 66:17 rats are put with eating pigs. Rats don't make out very well in Scripture.

Perhaps God doesn't like Jeeps and sent a plague? Perhaps God is angry with me and sent a plague of pack rats? Perhaps quail and pack rats are just part of life in Arizona. (You didn't think I could work quail in an e update again did you?)

This is, of course, a first-world problem. I'm thankful I even have a working car. I'm thankful Julie is careful about saving for little repairs. I'm thankful for the very nice people I met at Jim Click. I'm thankful that I drove up early this morning in the cool air and had a loaner with air conditioning for the trip later this afternoon to pick the car up. I'm thankful for living in a part of the United States that is relatively calm. Perhaps that is the spiritual part, always being grateful. Please don't ask Julie if I'm always grateful and sanguine when bad things happen. I'm not, but when there is such uncertainty and violence in the land, it is better to be thankful for all our blessings. Have a good weekend. I'll return for a Sunday e update.

Blessings

Pastor Martin