

FAMILY HOME DEVOTIONS

May 11-17, 2026



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Monday

Psalm 73

Book Three

God Is My Strength and Portion Forever

A Psalm of Asaph.

73 Truly God is good to Israel,
to those who are pure in heart.
2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.
3 For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
4 For they have no pangs until death;
their bodies are fat and sleek.
5 They are not in trouble as others are;
they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.
6 Therefore pride is their necklace;
violence covers them as a garment.
7 Their eyes swell out through fatness;
their hearts overflow with follies.
8 They scoff and speak with malice;
loftily they threaten oppression.
9 They set their mouths against the heavens,
and their tongue struts through the earth.
10 Therefore his people turn back to them,
and find no fault in them.
11 And they say, "How can God know?
Is there knowledge in the Most High?"
12 Behold, these are the wicked;
always at ease, they increase in riches.
13 All in vain have I kept my heart clean
and washed my hands in innocence.

14 For all the day long I have been stricken
and rebuked every morning.
15 If I had said, "I will speak thus,"
I would have betrayed the generation of your children.
16 But when I thought how to understand this,
it seemed to me a wearisome task,
17 until I went into the sanctuary of God;
then I discerned their end.
18 Truly you set them in slippery places;
you make them fall to ruin.
19 How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
20 Like a dream when one awakes,
O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.
21 When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
22 I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.
23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
27 For behold, those who are far from you shall perish;
you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you.
28 But for me it is good to be near God;
I have made the Lord God my refuge,
that I may tell of all your works.

Numbers 8:5-26

Cleansing of the Levites

5 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 "Take the Levites from among the people of Israel and cleanse them. 7 Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification upon them, and let them go with a razor over all their body, and wash their clothes and cleanse themselves. 8 Then let them take a bull from the herd and its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another bull from the herd for a sin offering. 9 And you shall bring the Levites before the tent of meeting and assemble the whole congregation of the people of Israel. 10 When you bring the Levites before the Lord, the people of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites, 11 and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord as a wave offering from the people of Israel, that they may do the service of the Lord. 12 Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and you shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the Lord to make atonement for the Levites. 13 And you shall set the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and shall offer them as a wave offering to the Lord.
14 "Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the people of Israel, and the Levites shall be mine. 15 And after that the Levites shall go in to serve at the tent of meeting, when you have cleansed them and offered them as a wave offering. 16 For they are wholly given to me from among the people of Israel. Instead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the people of Israel, I have taken them for myself. 17 For all the firstborn among the people of Israel are mine, both of man and of beast. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I consecrated them for myself, 18 and I have taken the Levites instead of all the

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firstborn among the people of Israel. 19 And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the people of Israel, to do the service for the people of Israel at the tent of meeting and to make atonement for the people of Israel, that there may be no plague among the people of Israel when the people of Israel come near the sanctuary.”

20 Thus did Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the people of Israel to the Levites. According to all that the Lord commanded Moses concerning the Levites, the people of Israel did to them. 21 And the Levites purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes, and Aaron offered them as a wave offering before the Lord, and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. 22 And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron and his sons; as the Lord had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

Retirement of the Levites

23 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24 “This applies to the Levites: from twenty-five years old and upward they shall come to do duty in the service of the tent of meeting. 25 And from the age of fifty years they shall withdraw from the duty of the service and serve no more. 26 They minister to their brothers in the tent of meeting by keeping guard, but they shall do no service. Thus shall you do to the Levites in assigning their duties.”

Luke 15:11-32

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

11 And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’” 20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22 But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

25 “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ 28 But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, 29 but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ 31 And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

Baptism - 4th Part

What does such baptizing with water signify?

Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts. And also it shows that a new man should daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

Answer: St. Paul writes in Romans chapter 6, “We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” [v. 4].

Tuesday

Psalm 74

Arise, O God, Defend Your Cause

A Maskil of Asaph.

74 O God, why do you cast us off forever?

Why does your anger smoke against the sheep of your pasture?

2 Remember your congregation, which you have purchased of old,

which you have redeemed to be the tribe of your heritage!

Remember Mount Zion, where you have dwelt.

3 Direct your steps to the perpetual ruins;

the enemy has destroyed everything in the sanctuary!

4 Your foes have roared in the midst of your meeting place;

they set up their own signs for signs.

5 They were like those who swing axes

in a forest of trees.

6 And all its carved wood

they broke down with hatchets and hammers.

7 They set your sanctuary on fire;

they profaned the dwelling place of your name,

bringing it down to the ground.

8 They said to themselves, "We will utterly subdue them";

they burned all the meeting places of God in the land.

9 We do not see our signs;

there is no longer any prophet,

and there is none among us who knows how long.

10 How long, O God, is the foe to scoff?

Is the enemy to revile your name forever?

11 Why do you hold back your hand, your right hand?

Take it from the fold of your garment and destroy them!

12 Yet God my King is from of old,

working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13 You divided the sea by your might;

you broke the heads of the sea monsters on the waters.

14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan;

you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

15 You split open springs and brooks;

you dried up ever-flowing streams.

16 Yours is the day, yours also the night;

you have established the heavenly lights and the sun.

17 You have fixed all the boundaries of the earth;

you have made summer and winter.

18 Remember this, O Lord, how the enemy scoffs,

and a foolish people reviles your name.

19 Do not deliver the soul of your dove to the wild beasts;

do not forget the life of your poor forever.

20 Have regard for the covenant,

for the dark places of the land are full of the habitations of violence.

21 Let not the downtrodden turn back in shame;

let the poor and needy praise your name.

22 Arise, O God, defend your cause;

remember how the foolish scoff at you all the day!

23 Do not forget the clamor of your foes,

the uproar of those who rise against you, which goes up continually!

Numbers 9:1-23

The Passover Celebrated

9 And the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, 2 "Let the people of Israel keep the Passover at its appointed time. 3 On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time; according to all its statutes and all its rules you shall keep it." 4 So Moses told the people of Israel that they should keep the Passover. 5 And they kept the Passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the people of Israel did. 6 And there were certain men who were unclean through touching a dead body, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day, and they came before Moses and Aaron on that day. 7 And those men said to him, "We are unclean through touching a dead body. Why are we kept from bringing the Lord's offering at its appointed time among the people of Israel?" 8 And Moses said to them, "Wait, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you."

9 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If any one of you or of your descendants is unclean through touching a dead body, or is on a long journey, he shall still keep the Passover to the Lord. 11 In the second month on the fourteenth day at twilight they shall keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 12 They shall leave none of it until the morning, nor break any of its bones; according to all the statute for the Passover they shall keep it. 13 But if anyone who is clean and is not on a journey fails to keep the Passover, that person shall be cut off from his people because he did not bring the Lord's offering at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin. 14 And if a stranger sojourns among you and would keep the Passover to the Lord, according to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule, so shall he do. You shall have one statute, both for the sojourner and for the native."

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The Cloud Covering the Tabernacle

15 On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. And at evening it was over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning. 16 So it was always: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night. 17 And whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, after that the people of Israel set out, and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the people of Israel camped. 18 At the command of the Lord the people of Israel set out, and at the command of the Lord they camped. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. 19 Even when the cloud continued over the tabernacle many days, the people of Israel kept the charge of the Lord and did not set out. 20 Sometimes the cloud was a few days over the tabernacle, and according to the command of the Lord they remained in camp; then according to the command of the Lord they set out. 21 And sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning. And when the cloud lifted in the morning, they set out, or if it continued for a day and a night, when the cloud lifted they set out. 22 Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, abiding there, the people of Israel remained in camp and did not set out, but when it lifted they set out. 23 At the command of the Lord they camped, and at the command of the Lord they set out. They kept the charge of the Lord, at the command of the Lord by Moses.

Luke 16:1-18

The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

16 He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. 2 And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' 3 And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4 I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.' 5 So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7 Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. 9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. 10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. 11 If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? 13 No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

The Law and the Kingdom of God

14 The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. 15 And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God. 16 "The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it. 17 But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.

Divorce and Remarriage

18 "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

What is Confession?

Answer: Confession has two parts: the one is that we confess our sins; the other is that we receive Absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor, as from God Himself, and in no way doubt, but firmly believe that our sins are forgiven before God in heaven by this.

Wednesday

Psalm 75

God Will Judge with Equity

To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

75 We give thanks to you, O God;

we give thanks, for your name is near.

We recount your wondrous deeds.

2 "At the set time that I appoint

I will judge with equity.

3 When the earth totters, and all its inhabitants,

it is I who keep steady its pillars. Selah

4 I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast,'

and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your horn;

5 do not lift up your horn on high,

or speak with haughty neck."

6 For not from the east or from the west

and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,

7 but it is God who executes judgment,

putting down one and lifting up another.

8 For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup

with foaming wine, well mixed,

and he pours out from it,

and all the wicked of the earth

shall drain it down to the dregs.

9 But I will declare it forever;

I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 All the horns of the wicked I will cut off,

but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up.

Numbers 10:11-36

Israel Leaves Sinai

11 In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony, 12 and the people of Israel set out by stages from the wilderness of Sinai. And the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. 13 They set out for the first time at the command of the Lord by Moses. 14 The standard of the camp of the people of Judah set out first by their companies, and over their company was Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 15 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar. 16 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon.

17 And when the tabernacle was taken down, the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari, who carried the tabernacle, set out. 18 And the standard of the camp of Reuben set out by their companies, and over their company was Elizur the son of Shedeur. 19 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 20 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

21 Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy things, and the tabernacle was set up before their arrival. 22 And the standard of the camp of the people of Ephraim set out by their companies, and over their company was Elishama the son of Ammihud. 23 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 24 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideon.

25 Then the standard of the camp of the people of Dan, acting as the rear guard of all the camps, set out by their companies, and over their company was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 26 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Asher was Pagiel the son of Ocran. 27 And over the company of the tribe of the people of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan. 28 This was the order of march of the people of Israel by their companies, when they set out.

29 And Moses said to Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will do good to you, for the Lord has promised good to Israel." 30 But he said to him, "I will not go. I will depart to my own land and to my kindred." 31 And he said, "Please do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us. 32 And if you do go with us, whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same will we do to you."

33 So they set out from the mount of the Lord three days' journey. And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place for them. 34 And the cloud of the Lord was over them by day, whenever they set out from the camp.

35 And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, "Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you." 36 And when it rested, he said, "Return, O Lord, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel."

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Luke 16:19-31

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19 “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ 27 And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— 28 for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ 29 But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ 30 And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ 31 He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

What sins should we confess?

Answer:› Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those that we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the confessor we should confess only those sins that we know and feel in our hearts.

Thursday

Psalm 76

Who Can Stand Before You?

To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

76 In Judah God is known;

his name is great in Israel.

2 His abode has been established in Salem,
his dwelling place in Zion.

3 There he broke the flashing arrows,
the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war. Selah

4 Glorious are you, more majestic
than the mountains full of prey.

5 The stouthearted were stripped of their spoil;
they sank into sleep;

all the men of war
were unable to use their hands.

6 At your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both rider and horse lay stunned.

7 But you, you are to be feared!
Who can stand before you
when once your anger is roused?

8 From the heavens you uttered judgment;
the earth feared and was still,

9 when God arose to establish judgment,
to save all the humble of the earth. Selah

10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise you;
the remnant of wrath you will put on like a belt.

11 Make your vows to the Lord your God and perform them;
let all around him bring gifts

to him who is to be feared,
12 who cuts off the spirit of princes,
who is to be feared by the kings of the earth.

Numbers 11:1-23, 31-35

The People Complain

11 And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes, and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. 2 Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire died down. 3 So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them.

4 Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, "Oh that we had meat to eat! 5 We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. 6 But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."

7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium. 8 The people went about and gathered it and ground it in handmills or beat it in mortars and boiled it in pots and made cakes of it. And the taste of it was like the taste of cakes baked with oil. 9 When the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell with it.

10 Moses heard the people weeping throughout their clans, everyone at the door of his tent. And the anger of the Lord blazed hotly, and Moses was displeased. 11 Moses said to the Lord, "Why have you dealt ill with your servant? And why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me? 12 Did I conceive all this people? Did I give them birth, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a nursing child,' to the land that you swore to give their fathers? 13 Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me and say, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' 14 I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. 15 If you will treat me like this, kill me at once, if I find favor in your sight, that I may not see my wretchedness."

Elders Appointed to Aid Moses

16 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. 17 And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone. 18 And say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat, for you have wept in the hearing of the Lord, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was better for us in Egypt." Therefore the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat. 19 You shall not eat just one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, 20 but a whole month, until it comes out at your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before him, saying, "Why did we come out of Egypt?"' 21 But Moses said, "The people among whom I am number six hundred thousand on foot, and you have said, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat a whole month!' 22 Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, and be enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gath-

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ered together for them, and be enough for them?" 23 And the Lord said to Moses, "Is the Lord's hand shortened? Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not."

Quail and a Plague

31 Then a wind from the Lord sprang up, and it brought quail from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, around the camp, and about two cubits above the ground. 32 And the people rose all that day and all night and all the next day, and gathered the quail. Those who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. 33 While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck down the people with a very great plague. 34 Therefore the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving. 35 From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazereth, and they remained at Hazereth.

Luke 17:1-19

Temptations to Sin

17 And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! 2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin. 3 Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, 4 and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

Increase Our Faith

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" 6 And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

Unworthy Servants

7 "Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and recline at table'? 8 Will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink'? 9 Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? 10 So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"

Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers

11 On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. 12 And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance 13 and lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." 14 When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; 16 and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus answered, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? 18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

Which are these?

Answer: > Here consider your calling according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, a manservant or maidservant. Consider whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, or slothful. Consider whether you have grieved anyone by words or deeds, whether you have stolen, neglected, wasted, or done other harm.

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Friday

Psalm 77

In the Day of Trouble I Seek the Lord

To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

77 I cry aloud to God,

aloud to God, and he will hear me.

2 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;

in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying;
my soul refuses to be comforted.

3 When I remember God, I moan;

when I meditate, my spirit faints. Selah

4 You hold my eyelids open;

I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I consider the days of old,

the years long ago.

6 I said, "Let me remember my song in the night;

let me meditate in my heart."

Then my spirit made a diligent search:

7 "Will the Lord spurn forever,

and never again be favorable?

8 Has his steadfast love forever ceased?

Are his promises at an end for all time?

9 Has God forgotten to be gracious?

Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" Selah

10 Then I said, "I will appeal to this,

to the years of the right hand of the Most High."

11 I will remember the deeds of the Lord;

yes, I will remember your wonders of old.

12 I will ponder all your work,

and meditate on your mighty deeds.

13 Your way, O God, is holy.

What god is great like our God?

14 You are the God who works wonders;

you have made known your might among the peoples.

15 You with your arm redeemed your people,

the children of Jacob and Joseph. Selah

16 When the waters saw you, O God,

when the waters saw you, they were afraid;

indeed, the deep trembled.

17 The clouds poured out water;

the skies gave forth thunder;

your arrows flashed on every side.

18 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind;

your lightnings lighted up the world;

the earth trembled and shook.

19 Your way was through the sea,

your path through the great waters;

yet your footprints were unseen.

20 You led your people like a flock

by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 11:24-29; 12:1-16

24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord. And he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tent. 25 Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it.

26 Now two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the Spirit rested on them. They were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. 27 And a young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." 28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the assistant of Moses from his youth, said, "My lord Moses, stop them." 29 But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!"

Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

12 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. 2 And they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?"

And the Lord heard it. 3 Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. 4 And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." And the three of them came out. 5 And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. 6 And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. 7 Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. 8 With him I speak mouth to

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mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" 9 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed.

10 When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, like snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. 11 And Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord, do not punish us because we have done foolishly and have sinned. 12 Let her not be as one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes out of his mother's womb." 13 And Moses cried to the Lord, "O God, please heal her—please." 14 But the Lord said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut outside the camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again." 15 So Miriam was shut outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out on the march till Miriam was brought in again. 16 After that the people set out from Hazeroth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

Luke 17:20-37

The Coming of the Kingdom

20 Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, 21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." 22 And he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23 And they will say to you, 'Look, there!' or 'Look, here!' Do not go out or follow them. 24 For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. 25 But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, 29 but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all— 30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. 34 I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left. 35 There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left." 37 And they said to him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the corpse is, there the vultures] will gather."

What is the Office of the Keys?

The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.

Saturday

Psalm 78:1-36

Tell the Coming Generation

A Maskil of Asaph.

78 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth!
2 I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,
3 things that we have heard and known,
that our fathers have told us.
4 We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.
5 He established a testimony in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,
6 that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
7 so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;
8 and that they should not be like their fathers,
a stubborn and rebellious generation,
a generation whose heart was not steadfast,
whose spirit was not faithful to God.
9 The Ephraimites, armed with the bow,
turned back on the day of battle.
10 They did not keep God's covenant,
but refused to walk according to his law.
11 They forgot his works
and the wonders that he had shown them.
12 In the sight of their fathers he performed wonders
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.
13 He divided the sea and let them pass through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap.
14 In the daytime he led them with a cloud,
and all the night with a fiery light.
15 He split rocks in the wilderness
and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.
16 He made streams come out of the rock
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.
17 Yet they sinned still more against him,
rebellious against the Most High in the desert.

18 They tested God in their heart
by demanding the food they craved.
19 They spoke against God, saying,
"Can God spread a table in the wilderness?"
20 He struck the rock so that water gushed out
and streams overflowed.
Can he also give bread
or provide meat for his people?"
21 Therefore, when the Lord heard, he was full of wrath;
a fire was kindled against Jacob;
his anger rose against Israel,
22 because they did not believe in God
and did not trust his saving power.
23 Yet he commanded the skies above
and opened the doors of heaven,
24 and he rained down on them manna to eat
and gave them the grain of heaven.
25 Man ate of the bread of the angels;
he sent them food in abundance.
26 He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens,
and by his power he led out the south wind;
27 he rained meat on them like dust,
winged birds like the sand of the seas;
28 he let them fall in the midst of their camp,
all around their dwellings.
29 And they ate and were well filled,
for he gave them what they craved.
30 But before they had satisfied their craving,
while the food was still in their mouths,
31 the anger of God rose against them,
and he killed the strongest of them
and laid low the young men of Israel.
32 In spite of all this, they still sinned;
despite his wonders, they did not believe.
33 So he made their days vanish like a breath,
and their years in terror.
34 When he killed them, they sought him;
they repented and sought God earnestly.
35 They remembered that God was their rock,
the Most High God their redeemer.
36 But they flattered him with their mouths;
they lied to him with their tongues.

Numbers 13:1-3, 17-33

Spies Sent into Canaan

13 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them." 3 So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according to the command of the Lord, all of them men who were heads of the people of Israel.
17 Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, "Go up into the Negeb and go up into the hill country, 18 and see what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, 19 and whether

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the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, 20 and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be of good courage and bring some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

21 So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. 22 They went up into the Negeb and came to Hebron. Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 And they came to the Valley of Eshcol and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them; they also brought some pomegranates and figs. 24 That place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster that the people of Israel cut down from there.

Report of the Spies

25 At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. 26 And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 And they told him, “We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan.”

30 But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.” 31 Then the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.” 32 So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, “The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. 33 And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.”

Luke 18:1-17

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

18 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. 2 He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. 3 And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ 4 For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’” 6 And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. 7 And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? 8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Let the Children Come to Me

15 Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. 16 But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 17 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”

Where is this written?

This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” (John 20:22–23)

Sunday

Psalm 68:1–10

God Shall Scatter His Enemies

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. A Song.

68 God shall arise, his enemies shall be scattered;
and those who hate him shall flee before him!

2 As smoke is driven away, so you shall drive them away;
as wax melts before fire,
so the wicked shall perish before God!

3 But the righteous shall be glad;
they shall exult before God;
they shall be jubilant with joy!

4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts;
his name is the Lord;
exult before him!

5 Father of the fatherless and protector of widows
is God in his holy habitation.

6 God settles the solitary in a home;
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

7 O God, when you went out before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness, Selah

8 the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain,
before God, the One of Sinai,
before God, the God of Israel.

9 Rain in abundance, O God, you shed abroad;
you restored your inheritance as it languished;

10 your flock found a dwelling in it;
in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.

Acts 1:12–26

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. 14 All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

15 In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, 16 "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. 17 For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." 18 (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. 19 And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

"May his camp become desolate,
and let there be no one to dwell in it';
and

"Let another take his office.'

21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." 23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

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John 17:1–11

The High Priestly Prayer

17 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

6 “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

Christian Questions with Their Answers

Prepared by Dr. Martin Luther for those who intend to go to the Sacrament

Christians may ask themselves these questions:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner?

Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this?

From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

3. Are you sorry for your sins?

Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?

His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation. See Rom. 6:21, 23.

5. Do you hope to be saved?

Yes, that is my hope.

6. In whom then do you trust?

In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ?

The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there?

Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you?

He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this?

From the holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. What are the words of institution?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Christian Questions with Their Answers continued

13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament?

Yes, I believe it.

14. What convinces you to believe this?

The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.

15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?

We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?

First, so that we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and man, could do that. Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious. Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.

17. What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?

His great love for His Father and for me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Romans 5; Galatians 2; and Ephesians 5.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?

That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.

19. What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?

First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.

20. But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?

To such a person no better advice can be given than this: first, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Then he should believe what the Scriptures say of it in Galatians 5 and Romans 7. Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in John 15–16 and in 1 John 2 and 5.

Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in John 8 and 16; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 6; and 2 Timothy 2.

Note: These questions and answers are no child's play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and devout Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one pay attention and consider it a serious matter; for St. Paul writes to the Galatians in chapter six: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked."

