

20TH Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 22 October 2, 2016

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings
become a part of the rhythms of your life.

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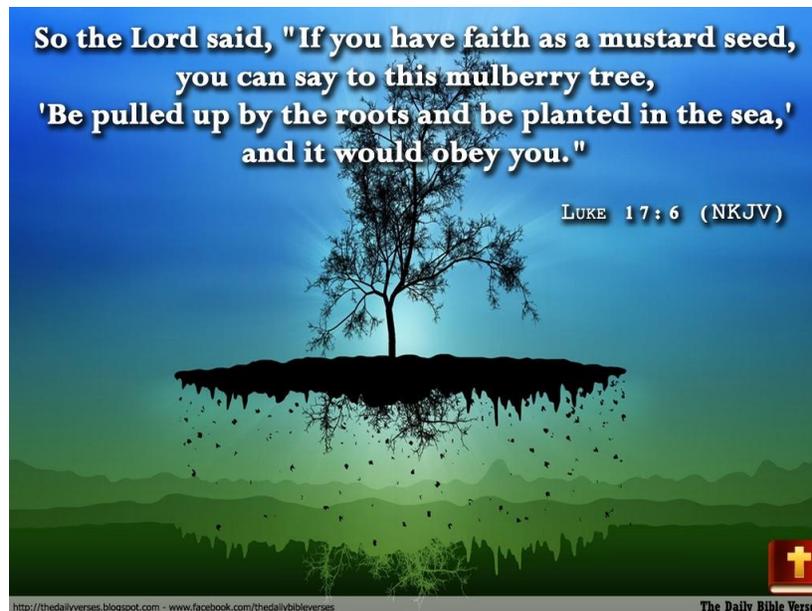
or

**through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

September 29, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) at the home of Robert Russo, a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details.)



Read about Jacob Cherians at <http://jacobcherians.blogspot.com/2014/02/luke-171-10.html>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 587 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 381

"I know my faith is founded"

Six hymnals, and except for the Cyber Hymnal they are all?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Hb78m-SMBw> Chorale prelude on Nun lob, mein Seel by Mark Sedio. One LSB Hymn a Week [An unusual prelude.](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h39jl0o2GtQ> A sing along version from Concordia Publishing House.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; RCL, Lamentations 1:1-6 or 3:19-26 (Next Week: Ruth 1:1-19a; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 or Psalm 66:1-12)

...Habakkuk probably served as a prophet sometime after the death of the good King Josiah in 609 B.C. and prior to the sack of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. His prophecy is directed at Judah (the southern kingdom), because Israel (the northern kingdom) had been crushed by Assyria and had long since ceased to exist as an autonomous nation... <https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/habakkuk-11-4-21-4-exegesis/>

This link will take you to an extensive look at Habakkuk – worth the trip.

1 The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

Habakkuk's Complaint

² O LORD, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not hear?

Or cry to you “Violence!”
and you will not save?

³ Why do you make me see iniquity,
and why do you idly look at wrong?
Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.

⁴ So the law is paralyzed,
and justice never goes forth.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
so justice goes forth perverted.

2 I will take my stand at my watchpost
and station myself on the tower,
and look out to see what he will say to me,
and what I will answer concerning my complaint.

The Righteous Shall Live by His Faith

² And the LORD answered me:

“Write the vision;
 make it plain on tablets,
 so he may run who reads it.
³ For still the vision awaits its appointed time;
 it hastens to the end—it will not lie.
 If it seems slow, wait for it;
 it will surely come; it will not delay.

⁴ “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him,
 but the righteous shall live by his faith.

““I resolved to expound this prophet Habakkuk so that he, too, may finally come to light and that his contents may be learned...”

So wrote Martin Luther in his preface to the book of Habakkuk in 1526¹, and it would be a grand thing if preachers followed Luther’s example and preached this minor prophet this week. The selected readings from Habakkuk 1 and 2 for this week contain not only the first biblical sounding of the central theological declaration of the Reformation, “the righteous live by their faith,” (2:4; see also Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11), but is an important sense these two pieces from Habakkuk form a sort of bracket between which the believer (and the unbeliever alike) live in this world.

Habakkuk 1:1-4 contains, as the heading in the New Revised Standard Version has it, “The Prophet’s Complaint.” In classical complaint language, the prophet asks God “How long?” (1:2), and “Why?” (1:3). Habakkuk is begging for God to listen, to save; to do something about the destruction and violence that he constantly sees. The crux of the prophet’s complaint comes in 1:4:

**“So the law becomes slack
 and justice never prevails.
 The wicked surround the righteous --
 therefore judgment comes forth perverted.”**

Two critical things are addressed here, one that is obscured a bit in translation, while the other may slip by unnoticed. First, the translation issue. I want to offer a more simplistic translation of this verse, in which we stick to using the same English word when translating out of the Hebrew; as a philosophy of translation this makes, sometimes, for awkward English, but in this case may be necessary to see the interconnectedness of the two parts of this one verse. In Hebrew two words are used twice, in 1:4a and 1:4b, *mishpat* and *yatsa*. In the NRSV, these two words are translated differently each time. This translation is not wrong; in fact it is quite good. The problem is that the interplay between the cola of the poem is obscured. Thus,

**“So the law becomes slack
 and judgment (*mishpat*) never comes forth (*yatsa*).
 The wicked surround the righteous --
 therefore judgment (*mishpat*) comes forth (*yatsa*) perverted.”**

Mishpat really means something more like “judgment,” than it does “justice,” although it should not be assumed that justice and judgment are not intimately connected -- one would hope and pray. Whichever way one would choose to go (judgment or justice) the key is that it is the same word used. Habakkuk laments first that judgment/justice does not come about, and then in classical Hebrew parallelism that judgment/justice does come forth, but it is perverted and twisted, a mockery of justice.

The second critical piece of this verse, then, has to do with how judgment/justice goes forth. Notice that the Law, the Torah, has been misappropriated by the wicked. That “judgment” or “justice” is not merely prevented, it is perverted. Habakkuk’s complaint is that when God does not listen, when God

does not save us from our times of trial, it is not simply the lack of the Law that hurts, but that in God's apparent absence the Law is twisted, applied with perverted force: perhaps brutally, perhaps relentlessly, perhaps gracelessly, perhaps only to others. This is the problem, and a present reality not only for Habakkuk but in any time and place -- perhaps our times and places, as well.

Having made his complaint, the prophet then declares that he will stand watch and wait, to see how God "will answer concerning my complaint." And then, perhaps shockingly, Habakkuk 2:2 says, "Then the Lord answered me...." Habakkuk may have been as shocked as Job when God answered, he may have wondered if it was wise to press so searchingly, so seriously for God's response. But God answers.

(There is, perhaps, a sermon in just those words, "Then God answered me...." What would that be like, look like, feel like, mean?)...

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1874 Dr. Karl Jacobson (M.Div., Luther Seminary; Th.D., Providence) serves as Teaching Pastor at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Minneapolis, Minn. Prior to that, he was Assistant Professor of Religion at Augsburg College.

Psalm 62; RCL, Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 or Psalm 37:1-9 (Psalm 111; RCL2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c or Psalm 111)

My Soul Waits for God Alone

To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. TITLE.

"To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun. This is the second Psalm which is dedicated to Jeduthun, or Ethan, the former one being the thirty-ninth, a Psalm which is almost a twin with this in many respects, containing in the original the word translated only four times as this does six. We shall meet with two other Psalms similarly appointed for Jeduthun: namely, Psalms 77, and 89. The sons of Jeduthun were porters or doorkeepers, according to 1Ch 16:42. Those who serve well make the best of singers, and those who occupy the highest posts in the choir must not be ashamed to wait at the posts of the doors of the Lord's house. A PSALM OF DAVID. Even had not the signature of the royal poet been here placed, we should have been sure from internal evidence that he alone penned these stanzas; they are truly Davidic. From the sixfold use of the word ac or only, we have been wont to call it THE ONLY PSALM..."

<http://www.spurgeon.org/treasury/ps062.php>

62 For God alone my soul waits in silence;
from him comes my salvation.

² He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

³ How long will all of you attack a man
to batter him,
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

⁴ They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.
They take pleasure in falsehood.

They bless with their mouths,
but inwardly they curse. **Selah**

⁵ For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,
for my hope is from him.

⁶ He only is my rock and my salvation,
 my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
⁷ On God rests my salvation and my glory;
 my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

⁸ Trust in him at all times, O people;
 pour out your heart before him;
 God is a refuge for us. **Selah**

⁹ Those of low estate are but a breath;
 those of high estate are a delusion;
 in the balances they go up;
 they are together lighter than a breath.

¹⁰ Put no trust in extortion;
 set no vain hopes on robbery;
 if riches increase, set not your heart on them.

¹¹ Once God has spoken;
 twice have I heard this:
 that power belongs to God,
¹² and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.
 For you will render to a man
 according to his work.

"Retain the Refrain!"

The psalm selection for the third Sunday after Epiphany is 62:5-12. As is often the case, the worship leader is faced with the choice of reading the entire psalm or of going with only the selected verses. In favor of reading the entire psalm is the repetition in verses 1 and 5 of the refrain.

Notice the refrain (and notice that there is a slight variation in the second clause of the refrain):

¹For God alone my soul waits in silence;
 from him comes my salvation.

²He alone is my rock and my salvation,
 my fortress; I shall never be shaken.

⁵ For God alone my soul waits in silence,¹
 for my hope is from him.

⁶ He alone is my rock and my salvation,
 my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

If one opts to read only the selected verses, one misses the repetition -- and thus the emphasis -
 - of the refrain. So the suggestion here is to retain the refrain. However, the worship leader who goes
 with only the second half of the psalm can still focus on the trust expressed in these verses.

So what is this psalm? It is one part trust and one part instruction. As for the part that is "trust," this
 keynote is evident in the refrain (noted above, verses 1, 5) as well as in the closing expression of
 confidence, which confesses "that power belongs to God, and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord." ...

Learning a Lot from a Little Particle -- 'ak

That great master of the malapropism, Yogi Berra, is reputed once to have quipped, "You can
 observe a lot, just by watching." When it comes to Psalm 62, the careful reader might observe a very

small Hebrew word -- which seems to occur quite a lot in this short poem. Such a reader might notice that the Hebrew word 'ak occurs six times in this short poem.

For comparison sake, the term occurs only 24 times in the entire Psalter -- *and in each case, the term begins a sentence* -- which means that 25 percent of the occurrences of the word occur in this short poem. The term carries both a *restrictive* meaning -- "only" or "alone" -- as well as an *asserterative* meaning -- "truly" or "indeed."² The poem plays on the dual meaning of term to make a theological point. ...

If you preach on this psalm, remember that it is this promise that really matters."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1215 [Rolf Jacobson](#)
Professor of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn. **(Keep your Jacobsons straight!)**
Read the <http://www.easyenglish.info/psalms/psalm062-taw.htm> translation of this Psalm from some insights into word choices.

2 Timothy 1:1-14; RCL, Same (2 Timothy 2:1-13; RCL verses 8-15) Readings from Timothy will continue each week until Reformation Day, October 30/31.

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus, ² To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Guard the Deposit Entrusted to You

³ I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us to^[a] a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,^[b] ¹⁰ and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹ for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, ¹² which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.^[c] ¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound^[d] words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

- a. [2 Timothy 1:9](#) Or *with*
- b. [2 Timothy 1:9](#) Greek *before times eternal*
- c. [2 Timothy 1:12](#) Or *what I have entrusted to him*; Greek *my deposit*
- d. [2 Timothy 1:13](#) Or *healthy*

Overview of Second Timothy

“...The lectionary devotes this and the next three Sundays to Second Timothy, which presents itself as Paul’s farewell (see 2 Timothy 4:6-8). Like other testamental literature, this letter carries a revered deceased figure’s legacy into considerations of new, emerging circumstances. Specific theological insights or doctrinal battles do not rise to the surface as much as Paul’s reputation as a model of faithful endurance. The letter encourages its addressee, Timothy, who was (when he too was still alive) probably the best known of Paul’s associates, to nurture those same qualities in his ministry. The letter assumes a setting in which Timothy confronts challenges created by rival teachers. It worries about their teachings’ potential to hamper and discredit the church.

The stylistic, theological, and historical evidence convinces me that Second Timothy was written in Paul’s name probably within a decade of the year 100 CE, long after the apostle’s death. (Any reputable commentary or Bible dictionary can review this evidence.) I don’t think sermons on Second Timothy should belabor the authorship question; they can legitimately dwell within the literary fiction the letter stages, as a suffering “Paul” gives his last lecture to his beloved pupil. At the same time, I see little value in keeping the debate over the letter’s authorship entirely hidden from congregations. They can handle learning about it and, moreover, it will help many understand why this book places such value on preserving and passing along a heritage Timothy himself has received. Beyond the sermon, preachers can host educational forums or otherwise direct people to helpful literature, so they know what you know...”
https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1834 [Matt Skinner](#)
 Professor of New Testament, *Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.*

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 17th Chapter”

Luke 17:1-10; Luke 17: 5-10 (*Luke 17:11-19; RCL, the same again!*)

Temptations to Sin

17 And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin^[a] 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.^[b] 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

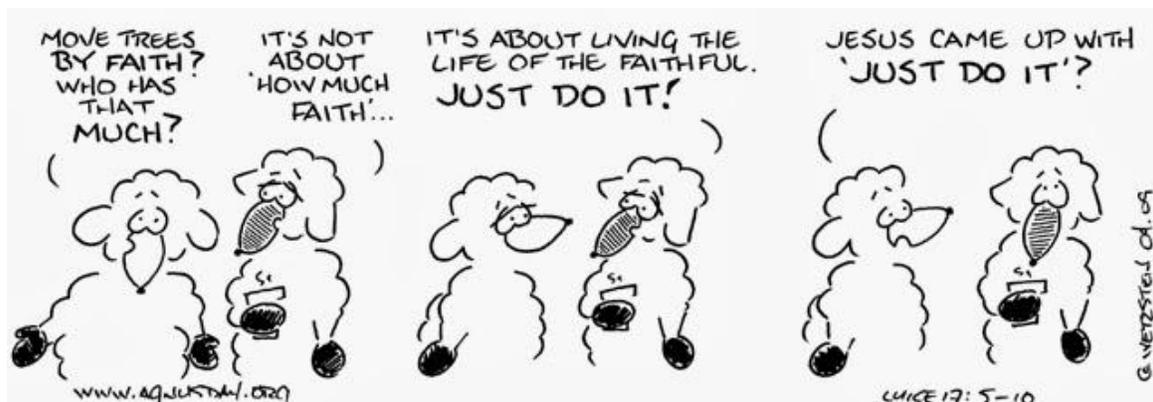
⁷ “Will any one of you who has a servant^[c] plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’? ⁸ Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly,^[d] and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and 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;^[e] we have only done what was our duty.’”

- [Luke 17:1](#) Greek *Stumbling blocks*
- [Luke 17:2](#) Greek *stumble*
- [Luke 17:7](#) Or *bondservant*; also verse [9](#)
- [Luke 17:8](#) Greek *gird yourself*
- [Luke 17:10](#) Or *bondservants*

“Glory to You, O Lord”

Have faith. This is the answer to all our worries about the future. Not faith in yourself. Not faith in some unseen, mysterious power above. Not faith in military might. Have faith in Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven to save you. Have faith in him, and live as someone who has faith. And God will bless you richly. Amen.

Interested in how Pastor Wright drew all the thoughts of the Gospel into this conclusion?
Read his sermon at <http://lcmssermons.com/?sn=175>



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