

23rd Sunday after Pentecost, November 12, 2017

22nd Sunday after Trinity, Proper 27(32)

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the
rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

November 9, 2017 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44130

Presented as a part of the bible study/worship at a weekday service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting, bi-weekly at an assisted living site, St. Philip Lutheran Church, Cleveland (First Sunday of the month at 11:00am) and used by Lutherans in Africa.



<http://www.tellthelordthankyou.com/blog/2015/1/13/matthew-25-13-will-you-be-ready>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 516 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 609

“Wake, awake, for night is flying”

Philipp Nicolai wrote the hymn in 1598, a time when the [plague](#) had hit [Unna](#)^[6] where he lived as a preacher after studies in theology at the [University of Wittenberg](#), for six months.^[7] The text is based on the [Parable of the Ten Virgins](#) ([Matthew 25:1–13](#)). Nicolai refers to other biblical ideas, such as from the [Revelation](#) the mentioning of marriage ([Revelation 19:6–9](#)) and the twelve gates, every one of pearl ([Revelation 21:21](#)), and from the [First Letter to the Corinthians](#) the phrase "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard" ([1 Corinthians 2:9](#)).^[8] Portions of the melody are similar to the older hymn tune [In dulci jubilo](#) ("In sweet rejoicing") and to *Silberweise* ("Silver Air") by [Hans Sachs](#).^{[9][10]}

In the first publication in *FrewdenSpiegel deß ewigen Lebens* ("Mirror of Joy of the Life Everlasting"), the text was introduced: "Ein anders von der Stimm zu Mitternacht / vnd von den klugen Jungfrauen / die jhrem himmlischen Bräutigam begegnen / Matth. 25. / D. Philippus Nicolai." (Another [call] of the voice at midnight and of the wise maidens who meet their celestial Bridegroom / Matthew 25 / [D. Philippus Nicolai](#)). The author wrote in his preface, dated 10 August 1598:

"Day by day I wrote out my meditations, found myself, thank God, wonderfully well, comforted in heart, joyful in spirit, and truly content; gave to my manuscript the name and title of a Mirror of Joy... to leave behind me (if God should call me from this world) as a token of my peaceful, joyful, Christian departure, or (if God should spare me in health) to comfort other sufferers whom He should also visit with the pestilence."^[10]

Nicolai's former student, Wilhelm Ernst, Count of Waldeck, had died of the plague at the age of fifteen, and Nicolai used the initials of "Graf zu Waldeck" in reverse order as an [acrostic](#) to begin the three stanzas: "Wachet auf", "Zion hört die Wächter singen", "Gloria sei dir gesungen".^[6]

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wachet_auf,_ruft_uns_die_Stimme

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQaG4oWp0zA> "Wake Awake For Night Is Flying Traditional Catholic Advent Hymn" [BrotherAlphonsusMary](#)

"[John Owen](#) 2 years ago Lutheran, actually. (Philipp Nicolai wrote the words.) Not that it matters! Yes, praise our Lord for his coming."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iolwhfwLfQQ> "Wake Awake For Night is Flying" Setting J.S. Bach performed by The Seminary Kantorei Brass Ensemble of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN Directed by Kantor Richard C. Resch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVYdfCaY-do> Not quite the hymnal version – "The Concordia Choir, René Clausen, Conductor performs F. Melius Christiansen's arrangement of Wake Awake. Homecoming '10."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9X3LGT0L-l> Wachet Auf/Sleepers Awake BWV 645 - Diane Bish

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

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

Amos 5:18-24; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Joshua 24:1-3s, 14-25 or Amos 5:18-24 or Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16 or 6:17-20 (Next Week: Zephaniah 1:7-16; RCL, Judges 4:1-7 or Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18)

"It doesn't go well for the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Unlike Judah her neighbor to the South, Israel never had a king who did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. Jeroboam II, son of Joash, occupied Israel's throne in Samaria (788-748 B.C.). During the early years of his reign, the nation was in a period of economic growth and expansion. Israel's borders once encroached upon, were establish to their original dimensions (2 Kings 14:23-29). The lean years had turned fat again.

The second half of Jeroboam's reign was not as fruitful. Decline and recession were the order of the day. Israel was threatened on every side. The leaders of Israel illustrated the atrocities of the political elite in the face of their people's suffering. After the reign of Jeroboam, Israel slid quickly and irretrievably to her demise in 722 B.C.

This is the context of Amos's (and Hosea's) prophetic ministry. He was a shepherd, not a professional prophet or priest like Jeremiah. "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the LORD took me from following the flock, and LORD said to me, 'Go, prophecy to my people Israel'" (Amos 7:14). Amos was not even from the Northern Kingdom. He was from the town Tekoa which is in the Judean hill country south of Jerusalem..."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1030 **Mark S. Gignilliat**
Associate Professor of Divinity Old Testament, Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, AL

Let Justice Roll Down

¹⁸ Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD!

Why would you have the day of the LORD?

It is darkness, and not light,

¹⁹ as if a man fled from a lion,
and a bear met him,

or went into the house and leaned his hand
against the wall,

and a serpent bit him.

²⁰ Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and
not light,

and gloom with no brightness in it?

²¹ "I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn
assemblies.

²² Even though you offer me your burnt
offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them;
and the peace offerings of your fattened
animals,

I will not look upon them.

²³ Take away from me the noise of your
songs;

to the melody of your harps I will not
listen.

²⁴ But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing
stream.

"Israel was expecting/desiring "the day of the Lord," a phrase commonly used to refer to a glorious future in which Israel's enemies would be vanquished. But the prophet cuts into this

hope with a sharp question: why would “you” (direct address) desire the day of the Lord?! That “day” will not be the kind of day for which you hoped (cf. Joel 1:15; 2:1-2, 11).

It will not be a day of deliverance, but disaster, not a day of light and brightness, but darkness and gloom. In other words, you are the enemies that God will vanquish. These words are a remarkable reversal of expectation, and they would certainly place the prophet at odds with his audience! The prophet uses an everyday image to drive the point home and disabuse the people of their sense of security: they will flee from one wild animal only to meet another; they will seek refuge in their homes -- usually the safest of places -- only to be bitten by poisonous snakes -- a fatal event. Darkness and gloom is the only shape of their future. There is no escape!

In 5:21-24, God states the reason they face such a future, voicing indictments and announcements of judgment. God returns to the themes of 4:4-5, where it is made clear that the people “love” to worship. They do all the right things in their worship: festivals, solemn assemblies, offerings of various sorts, hymn-singing with musical accompaniment.

God’s response to these worship practices, delivered in the first person, is remarkably sharp: I hate; I despise; I take no delight in (literally, smell); I do not accept; I do not look upon them with favor; I do not listen to the “noise” of your hymnody. To “hate” is to stand fully over against something; to “despise” is to reject as repulsive. Every dimension of Israel’s worship life is condemned (see Isaiah 1:10-17, adding prayer; 58:1-9; Matthew 7:21; 23:23).

The depth and breadth of God’s rejection of Israel’s worship is conveyed in ways that are emotional (hate, despise), volitional (no acceptance), and sensory (smell, touch, sight, hearing). God holds his nose, shuts his eyes, and plugs his ears! Interestingly, the text does not state that God’s rejection relates to idolatry or insincerity (see 4:4-5). As 5:24 makes clear, the issue is the disjunction between worship and life. The people do all of the right things in worship, but their daily lives are not characterized by justice and righteousness. The lack of the latter results in God’s rejection of the former!...

The prophets manage to indict every form of worship imaginable. Recall that Israel’s worship in these texts is not condemned because it is idolatrous or insincere (at other times and places, certainly). The problem was a disjunction between their worship and their treatment of the less fortunate...” **Terence E. Fretheim** **Elva B. Lovell Professor Emeritus of Old Testament**, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn

“...Amos 5 offers the preacher a wonderful opportunity to articulate the relationship between worship and justice. How do we connect our hope for the eschatological future in Christ, our worship practices, and our ministry with the poor? Perhaps your congregation has a strong tradition of outreach but doesn't relate that outreach to Eucharistic fellowship. Perhaps your parishioners enjoy transcendent worship on Sunday, but their ministry in the wider community is only sporadic and peripheral to the identity of the church. Your lay leader who mutters, "The church is not a social service agency," your overly officious head acolyte, and your outreach volunteer who skips Sunday worship all need help integrating holiness and justice. Amos invites us to offer our lives and ministries as radical incarnational testimony both at the altar and in the public square. Dare your congregation to take that invitation seriously!”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=179 **Carolyn J. Sharp**
Professor of Hebrew Scriptures, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Conn.



Listen to a musical interpretation of this Psalm at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSOP1_emQOs

Psalm 70; RCL, Psalm 78:1-7 or Psalm 70 (*Psalm 90:1-12; RCL, Psalm 123 or Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11),12*)

*“This Psalm is titled, **To the Chief Musician. A Psalm Of David. To Bring to Remembrance.** This Psalm certainly has the sense of **remembrance**, in that it is almost the same as [Psalm 40:13-17](#).*

“This prayer is the shield, spear, thunderbolt and defense against every attack of rear, presumption [and] lukewarmness.... which are especially dominant today.” (Martin Luther, cited in Boice)... <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/psalm-70/>

O LORD, Do Not Delay

To the choirmaster. Of David, for the memorial offering.

70 Make haste, O God, to deliver me!

O LORD, make haste to help me!

² Let them be put to shame and confusion
 who seek my life!

Let them be turned back and brought to
 dishonor

who delight in my hurt!

³ Let them turn back because of their shame
 who say, “Aha, Aha!”

⁴ May all who seek you
 rejoice and be glad in you!

May those who love your salvation
 say evermore, “God is great!”

⁵ But I am poor and needy;
 hasten to me, O God!

You are my help and my deliverer;
 O LORD, do not delay!

“...Psalm 70 is a brief paradigm of an individual lament. God initiated a covenant relationship with ancient Israel, and the community nourishes the historical memory of God as the covenant God who comes to deliver. The petitioner in Psalm 70 is not enjoying the covenant blessings because of oppressive opponents. So the psalm’s language constitutes a covenant

interchange; the petitioner prays that God will come to deliver and do so before it is too late and the enemies destroy the righteous.

The petition is that God will bring the covenant to reality for this petitioner who is both faithful and needy. The plea is for God to act as the covenant God of the faith tradition. The prayer is a covenant interaction with pastoral implications, and the context is trust that God will come and hear and respond, will embrace the petitioner's pain and deliver.

The psalm is a brief but powerful plea as the offering of all the speaker has -- a prayer. The speaker is in need and cannot bring salvation by way of self-help, but the covenant God can bring newness of life. The offering of an honest prayer in great need is a powerful thing. The psalm reminds hearers and readers that the living God who hear prayers for help still listens today."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2198 **W. H. Bellinger, Jr.** W. Marshall and Lulie Craig Chairholder in Bible, Baylor University, Waco, Texas

"In a letter dated May 15, 1943, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote to his parents from prison: "I read the Psalms every day, as I have done for years; I know them and love them more than any other book."¹

...In his letter to his parents, Bonhoeffer briefly invokes Psalm 70, noting that "I cannot now read Psalms 3, 47, 70 and others without hearing them in the settings by Heinrich Schütz."³ (Schütz's "[Eile mich, Gott, zu erretten](#)" [["Make haste, O God, to save me"](#)] draws from Psalm 40:13-17, which is repeated almost verbatim in Psalm 70). Edwin Robertson reminds us that "If our image of Bonhoeffer does not fit an anxious prayer" like that found in Psalm 70, "it is because we are among those who observe him from the outside."⁴ Yet the reality was that Bonhoeffer was also asking "How long, O Lord?", struggling with both the necessities of daily life (in the same letter, he asks for ink and stain remover, and also sends birthday wishes to someone he knows) and with his imprisonment. In one of his poems, as Robertson notes, Bonhoeffer compares how others see him ("composed, contented, and sure") with how Bonhoeffer himself feels ("troubled, homesick, ill like a bird in a cage").⁵

...But when we hear this psalm in the moments when our own lives are going along pleasantly enough, such a lament can serve another purpose. Psalm 70 also calls listeners to stop and listen: Who around us is living in a moment where the words of this psalm are their own? Who might be experiencing anxiety and turmoil even if we cannot see it in their day to day actions? And how might we help and deliver those who are so urgently crying out?"

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3488 **Kelly J. Murphy** Assistant Professor, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Mich.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18; RCL, the same reading (*I Thessalonians 5:1-11; RCL, the same reading*)

"Writing to a congregation of Gentile converts not long after he introduced them to the faith, Paul clarifies his teachings on a few points where the Thessalonians still remained cloudy.

These include issues of eschatology, or what happens at the end of life and at the end of time. It seems that, since Paul's departure, some among their community of believers had died.*

He hadn't covered that particular situation since he believed that Jesus' return was rather imminent. Now he has to assure them that their friends and loved ones haven't missed out on the great event they are all anticipating, the return of the Lord (1:3, 10; 2:19; 3:13)..."
(continued after the reading)

* "The concept of eschatology was created by the Lutheran theologian Abraham Calov (1612–1686) and became popular through the works of the Prussian Reformed theologian F. D. E. Schleiermacher (1768–1834). It is derived from a sentence in Jesus Sirach: "In whatever you do, remember your last days [Greek: ta eschata], and you will never sin" (Sir. 7:36). Calov's concept is nothing but a new name for the traditional genre of Christian dogmatic treatises about "the last things" (Latin: De novissimis or De extremis). Generally, it can be said that eschatology deals with death and the things that, according to Christian doctrine, happen after death: the resurrection, the last judgment, and the eternal life in the Beyond..."

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/philosophy-and-religion/bible/bible-general/eschatology>

The Coming of the Lord

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord,^[a] that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

a. [1 Thessalonians 4:15](#) Or by the word of the Lord

"...The biblical text is not crystal clear on all the details, but it offers the bold hope that *all* those in Christ -- living and dead -- will be there on the day when he will come again in glory and then dwell with him forever."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2108 [Amy L.B. Peeler](#)
Associate Professor of New Testament, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.

"The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 25th Chapter"

Matthew 25:1-13; RCL, the same reading (Matthew 25:14-30; RCL, the same reading)

“...The kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. Why virgins? Because the Church is the Bride of Christ. The coming of the end of this world is the day of the consummation of the wedding, and we are all like ladies in waiting, waiting for the bridegroom to come, and the main event to begin. Bridesmaids in those days were virgins, and this was a picture, painted in the words of Jesus, that everyone could understand in that day and age.

Five of them were foolish, and five of them were prudent. Most of grew up with the words, "five of them were wise." The foolish did not prepare for the wait, they brought no extra oil. The wise bridesmaids brought extra oil, just in case the wait was longer than they had expected. And the wait was long...

The rest of the details are storytelling. They are not all significant. In fact only a couple are meaningful, and the rest are just to fill in the fabric of the parable. The meaning of the parable is just what Jesus said it was, **Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour...** “<http://lcmssermons.com/?sn=580> Pastor Robin Fish “I am a life-long Lutheran, Pastor for over 27 years, father of two son, one of whom is also a pastor. I have been deeply involved in what has come to be known as the Confessional Lutheran movement for longer than I have been a parish pastor... Sharing the Gospel is my passion. My wife is the love of my life. Sound doctrine, accessible to laymen is my avocation.”

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps^[a] and went to meet the bridegroom.^[b] 2 Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5 As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. 6 But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ 7 Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ 10 And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. 11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ 12 But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13 Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

- a. [Matthew 25:1](#) Or *torches*
- b. [Matthew 25:1](#) Some manuscripts add *and the bride*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“...Making the center of interpretation the issue of foolish or wise would miss the point of the parable. The so-called foolish young women also knew the bridegroom, calling out to him "Lord, Lord, open to us!" (v.11).

That they remain unrecognized by the bridegroom raises the question of knowledge in the parable. What is it to know the bridegroom? What is it to recognize the one called "Lord?"

The cry "Lord, Lord," takes us back to the earlier chapters of Matthew's Gospel. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven" (7:21). And, of course, the lamps (or torches) recall other words in the Sermon on the Mount: "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (5:16).

Living or waiting (maybe even sleeping) with enough oil in our lamps, when set in the context of these earlier chapters, suggests that it is the spirit of the beatitudes that, above all else, characterizes those who recognize the bridegroom, the Lord. This spirit is the spirit of the cross that disrupts all of our categories, all of our judgmental predispositions. The life into which the beatitudes invite us is a life not centered on our works, not on our faith, but on the cross and how God is glorified through our lives.

The holy possession of the cross (as Luther calls the seventh mark of the church) is not really a possession (as if we "owned" the cross or some special access to God). It is a life that is characterized by choices that make it clear God is the actor and the giver of life. In Luther's words, a community that is characterized by the holy possession of the cross is a community that knows suffering: "They must endure every misfortune and persecution, all kinds of trials and evil from the devil, the world, and the flesh (as the Lord's Prayer indicates) by inward sadness, timidity, fear, outward poverty, contempt, illness, and weakness, in order to become like their head, Christ." This description hardly fits what we would imagine under the nomenclature "wise young women," yet in the context of Matthew's Gospel, this is precisely the suggestion.

Those who are enduring misfortune, even poverty, for Christ's sake are not the one who will be quick to judge others. Judgment is now purely reserved for God who alone knows or recognizes each individual. Grace is in the cross that lets shine forth a light, a light so unique that people do not praise our good works but rather praise God who is acting and giving life in the midst of suffering, life in the midst of death, opening the door to those who have engaged the way of the cross, who have engaged the way of death. The world cannot understand this way. It does not recognize the Lord though it continually cries out, "Lord, Lord!"

The parousia becomes not a one-time event at some "end point" but rather a continuous event that involves us, the community of Christ, in our baptismal vocation: living in the light of the cross, in mercy not judgment. The feast to which we are invited is, in the words of Philipp Nicolai (who used this parable as a primary metaphor in the hymn "Wake, Awake"), the "Abendmahl" -- the Lord's Supper. The parousia is now not about a far-off event but Christ's continual presence with us through all of our waiting."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=171 **Dirk G. Lange**

Associate Dean; Fredrik A. Schiötz Chair of Missions and Professor of Worship, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

<http://www.godwithuslc.org/luther-sermon-for-trinity-27/> is a link to a sermon by Martin Luther on this text. It ends like this:

“...Therefore, let each one see to it that he has these two together: the oil, which is true faith and trust in Christ; and the lamps, the vessel, which is the outward service toward your neighbor. The whole Christian life consists in these two things: Believe God. Help your neighbor. The whole Gospel teaches this. Parents should tell it to their children at home and everywhere. Children, too, should constantly foster this Word among themselves.

This link was provided through <https://crossings.org/about/> . The Crossings Community, Inc. is an open worldwide network of Christians dedicated to connecting the Word of God and daily life under the motto, “Crossing Life with the Promise of Christ.” What makes our approach distinctive is our commitment to a theological outlook called the proper distinction of law and gospel.

I should really say something about the sleep of the virgins and about the setting out of the Bridegroom for the wedding. But the hour is late. Another time. May God be gracious to us! Amen.” Martin Luther



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“Artisanal”=“produced in limited quantities by an **artisan** through the use of traditional methods” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/artisanal>