

24th Sunday after Pentecost, November 19, 2017

23rd Sunday after Trinity, Proper 28(33)

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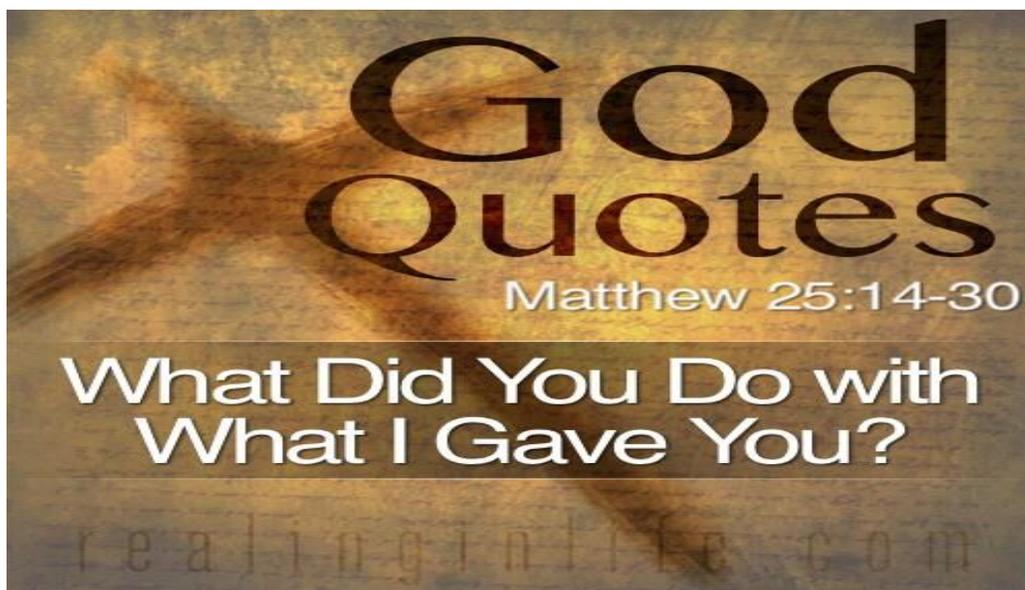
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**through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

November 16, 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://realinginlife.com/god-quotes-what-did-you-do-with-what-i-gave-you/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 508 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 611

“The day is surely drawing near”

“Bartholomew Ringwaldt was born at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, in 1530, and was a Lutheran pastor at Langfield, in Prussia, where he died, 1598. His hymns resemble Luther's in their simplicity and power. Several of them were written to comfort himself and others in the sufferings they endured from famine, pestilence, fire and floods. In 1581, he published "Hymns for the Sundays and Festivals of the whole Year.--Annotations of the Hymnal, Charles Hutchins, M.A. 1872...

Ringwaldt exercised a considerable influence on his contemporaries as a poet of the people, as well as by his hymns properly so called. He was a true German patriot, a staunch Lutheran, and a man who was quite ready to face the consequences of his plain speaking. His style is as a rule clear and good, though his rhymes are often enough halting; and he possessed considerable powers of observation and description...

As a hymnwriter Ringwaldt was also of considerable importance. He was one of the most prolific hymn-writers of the 16th century. *Wackernagel*, iv. pp. 906-1065, gives 208 pieces under his name, about 165 of which may be called hymns..."

https://hymnary.org/person/Ringwaldt_B

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MPrJJre-Zw> Sing along to the piano

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.](#)

Zephaniah 1:7-16; RCL, Judges 4:1-7 or Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 (*Next Week: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Revised Common Lectionary, RCL, Judges 4:1-7 or Zephaniah 1:7-16*)

...Zephaniah 1:7 begins the second of a series of nine oracles in the book of Zephaniah. This passage introduces the day of the Lord as a day of sacrifice. Here, Zephaniah portrays God as the priest who will offer the sacrifice, and this is accompanied by two important implications: that Judah is the sacrifice and the guests are armies of destruction (verse 7).¹ The sole rubric for this ritual is named at the beginning of the oracle: to be silent in the presence of God.

The implications present in verse seven are more pronounced as chapter one progresses, particularly in verses 12-18. These verses, poetic in nature, emphasize emphatically that God cares about justice. God cares about justice so much that God is willing to search out Jerusalem with lamps for those complacent, indifferent city dwellers who view God as the same (verse 12)..." (continued after the reading)

The Day of the LORD Is Near

⁷ Be silent before the Lord GOD!

For the day of the LORD is near;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice
and consecrated his guests.

⁸ And on the day of the LORD's sacrifice—

“I will punish the officials and the king's sons
and all who array themselves in foreign attire.

⁹ On that day I will punish

everyone who leaps over the threshold,
and those who fill their master's^[a] house
with violence and fraud.

¹⁰ “On that day,” declares the LORD,

“a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate,*
a wail from the Second Quarter,
a loud crash from the hills.

¹¹ Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar!

For all the traders^[b] are no more;
all who weigh out silver are cut off.

¹² At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,

and I will punish the men
who are complacent,^[c]

those who say in their hearts,
‘The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do ill.’

¹³ Their goods shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.

Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.”

¹⁴ The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;

the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter;
the mighty man cries aloud there.

¹⁵ A day of wrath is that day,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,

a day of clouds and thick darkness,

¹⁶ a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

1. [Zephaniah 1:9](#) Or their Lord's
2. [Zephaniah 1:11](#) Or all the people of Canaan
3. [Zephaniah 1:12](#) Hebrew are thickening on the dregs [of their wine]

*"Ancient cities were often enclosed by defensive walls. Entry into the city was through one or more gates. Jerusalem had numerous gates (see the Fact Finder question below) that were sometimes named either according to the destination of the road that adjoined them (e.g. the Damascus Gate, the Jaffa Gate) or according to the purpose of them (e.g. the Sheep Gate, the Horse Gate). The Fish Gate was where a city fish market was located.

"there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate"

Almost every Biblical mention (by name) of the Fish Gate of Jerusalem involved either corruption of the people of Israel, or the aftermath of it. The reason for that may be because when a society becomes corrupt, the two most public manifestations of that degeneracy involve places of religion e.g. "they set their abominations in the House, which is called by My Name, to defile it" (Jeremiah 32:34 KJV) and business e.g. "which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?" (Nehemiah 13:16-17 KJV; see also [The Blasphemy Calendar](#))."

<http://www.keyway.ca/htm2006/20060327.htm> This web site has a "Bible Quiz" Link. Give it a try at <http://www.keyway.ca/quiz/index.htm>

"...While the clarion call against indifference might be most readily apparent, it must not go unnoticed that as the liturgical year comes to an end this passage -- like many others now -- points to "the end." However, to stop at the end is to read the passage at a surface-level. It is critical for readers and preachers to understand that the end to which Zephaniah points is not a fateful day of doom and gloom. Rather, "the end" is the day of the Lord, and the day of the Lord is that day when God's rule will be extended over the nations such as Judah and Israel.

The day of the Lord is the day when indifference will no longer be tolerated. The day of the Lord is the day when, out of blood and ashes and flesh and dung, will, in fact, come something good: the promise of a future where God reigns over all people and all things. At the end of the liturgical year, it is important to sound this clarion call: "to know God as God is, one must experience the future revolution."⁴ The day of the Lord brings not wrath and judgment, but a future in which all things are made new by the God who cares about the good of all things and all people."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2184 [Eric Mathis](#)

Assistant Professor of Music and Worship, Samford University, Birmingham, AL

Psalm 90:1-12; RCL, Psalm 123 or Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11),12 (Psalm 95:1-7a; RCL, Psalm 123 or Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12)

“In ancient Israel, crisis brought a response of gathering at the holy place under the leadership of priests and other worship leaders.

There the community articulated the crisis in ardent prayer to God to seek God’s help and deliverance. Psalm 90 is such a lament from the community; most commentators place the crisis portrayed in this psalm in the post-exilic community...

The superscription to Psalm 90 takes readers back to a time before the Davidic monarchy and before the temple to the time of Moses when there was no monarchy or temple and the people were not even in the land promised to them. Still, it was possible in that time to relate to God in prayer. In its literary setting in the book of Psalms, then, Psalm 90 is a kind of response to the problem of exile articulated at the end of Psalm 89...” (continued after the reading)

Book Four

From Everlasting to Everlasting

A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

90 Lord, you have been our dwelling place^[a]
in all generations.

² Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

³ You return man to dust
and say, “Return, O children of man!”^[b]

⁴ For a thousand years in your sight
are but as yesterday when it is past,
or as a watch in the night.

⁵ You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning:

⁶ in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

⁷ For we are brought to an end by your anger;
by your wrath we are dismayed.

⁸ You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your presence.

⁹ For all our days pass away under your wrath;
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

¹⁰ The years of our life are seventy,
or even by reason of strength eighty;
yet their span^[c] is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

¹¹ Who considers the power of your anger,
and your wrath according to the fear of you?

¹² So teach us to number our days
that we may get a heart of wisdom.

¹³ *Return, O LORD! How long?
Have pity on your servants!*

¹⁴ *Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*

¹⁵ *Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,
and for as many years as we have seen evil.*

¹⁶ *Let your work be shown to your servants,
and your glorious power to their children.*

¹⁷ *Let the favor^[d] of the Lord our God be upon us,
and establish the work of our hands upon us;
yes, establish the work of our hands!*

- a. [Psalm 90:1](#) Some Hebrew manuscripts (compare Septuagint) *our refuge*
- b. [Psalm 90:3](#) Or *of Adam*
- c. [Psalm 90:10](#) Or *pride*
- d. [Psalm 90:17](#) Or *beauty*

“...In addition to the life setting of crisis, it is important to consider the place of the text in the book of Psalms. It is the only psalm tied to Moses in its superscription and falls at a pivot point in the movement of the whole book. The tie to Moses and texts associated with him recall an earlier time in ancient Israel’s history and this formative character in the community’s story. The psalm begins Book IV of the Hebrew Psalter (Psalms 90-106). Prayers lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem are evident in Book III (Psalms 73-89), and Psalm 89 concludes that section with a powerful plea in the face of God’s rejection of the Davidic covenant and Jerusalem as its seat...

The lectionary text is the first part of the psalm (verses 1-12) that contrasts God’s permanence with the brevity of human life. The section moves toward lament, giving way to petition in the remainder of the psalm (verses 13-17)...

Isaac Watts’ 1719 hymn paraphrases Psalm 90:

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast
and our eternal home...”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2199 [W. H. Bellinger, Jr.](#) W. Marshall and Lulie Craig Chairholder in Bible , Baylor University, Waco, Texas

Additional commentary can be found at

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1393 by [J. Clinton McCann](#) Evangelical Professor of Biblical Interpretation, Eden Seminary, Saint Louis, MO. Professor McCann uses James Limburg, a frequent commentator we have used for the Psalms, as a source.

I Thessalonians 5:1-11; RCL, the same reading (I Corinthians 15:20-28; RCL, Ephesians 1:15-23)

"Mr. Harold Camping, president of California's Family Radio, predicted that three million people would be saved, the rest perish, on May 21, 2011.

When that did not happen (though a "spiritual salvation" was subsequently alleged on that date), the End of the World was recalculated for October 21, 2011.

A website, judgementday2011.com, offers the "Top 10 Reasons You Won't Be Saved in the Rapture," which includes "stealing candy from the store." The website's advice for being "Rapture-Ready" is predictably sparse, since for most of us it's already too late: "God needs a full commitment, much like that needy prom date from way back in your high school days." You can't make this stuff up. No, strike that. Somebody already has.

May we now pause for a word from Christian Scripture? Here, if I read them alright, here are Paul's ten counsels in 1 Thessalonians 4:13--5:11 about the return of Jesus Christ...

The preacher who opts for 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 as this Sunday's text can adopt the very strategy of the preacher who wrote it. Paul was confronted by Thessalonian despair: believers grieved by the death of sisters and brothers in Christ who died before his return (4:13). Were they forever lost? No. Christ will never forsake any of those who belong to him (4:14-18).

Paul's reply is an excellent specimen of pastoral theology: Take the problem -- in this case, apocalyptic anxiety -- reframe it, and help the church see the picture more fully and with sharper clarity. Whether it's last October's Judgment Day that never came, or last Tuesday's funeral, or next month's observance of Advent, Christians need help in thinking straight about eschatology. This Sunday Paul offers splendid resources to help Mr. Camping, his listeners, yourself, and those seated in a pew near you." [Read all ten counsels at https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1055](#) [C. Clifton Black](#) Otto A. Piper Professor of Biblical Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ

The Day of the Lord

5 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers,^[a] you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children^[b] of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let

us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸ But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

- a. [1 Thessalonians 5:1](#) Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses [4](#), [12](#), [14](#), [25](#), [26](#), [27](#)
- b. [1 Thessalonians 5:5](#) Or *sons*; twice in this verse

“...In many respects, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 is one unit as Paul unpacks the life of the believer who has hope in the coming of Jesus Christ. There are several important connections between last week's reading (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) and this week's reading from chapter five before Paul moves into his final exhortations, greetings, and benediction (5:12-28). Chapter five begins with a similar claim to what is known, much like Paul's words in 4:13. It is not the case that the Thessalonians are in need of new information regarding their faith. Rather, Paul reminds them of what they already know. In doing so, Paul provides further encouragement and consolation in the fact that the Thessalonians can rely on their knowledge in the faith. This is a central theme of the letter, set out already in 1:1-10 and repeated throughout (cf., 2:1, 2, 5, 11; 3:3, 4; 4:2). Not only is knowledge that which ensures a secure faith, it is also that which unites Paul and his co-workers with the Thessalonian community (1:4-5). The image in this pericope builds on the coming of the Lord. While the day of the Lord is not known, the Thessalonians do know that it will come when least expected and vigilance is required.

This section of chapter five ends with three claims that tie the unit back to 4:13-18. First, Paul reasserts that the Lord Jesus Christ died for us (5:9-10). The restatement of the confessional claim stated in 4:14 adds the assurance "for us" (*hyper hēmōn*). Once again, Paul is able to communicate the union between the Lord, the Thessalonians (those who have died and those who remain), and himself with a direct claim about unity. As a result, the union between believers and Paul and the Lord is constantly present in the letter. Second, "we may live with him," which closes 5:10, echoes 4:17, "together with them." The ending of 5:10 is better translated "together with him we might live." The grammatical construction is identical to 4:17 (*hama syn*) with the exception of the pronoun switch from "them" to "him"...

Finally, Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to encourage one another (*parakaleite allēlous*) just as he did in 4:18. The verb *parakaleō* is used eight times in the letter (2:12; 3:2, 7; 4:1, 10, 18, 5:11, 14) as the encouragement that Paul and Timothy offer to the Thessalonians and therefore and that the Thessalonians can give to one another. The links between last week's text and this week's pericope underscore the fact that the coming of the Lord is for all believers—for the ones who have died and the ones who remain. Those left behind await the parousia, however, not with fear and trepidation but with hope."

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=210 [Karoline Lewis](#)
Associate Professor of Preaching and the Marbury E. Anderson Chair in Biblical Preaching,
Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

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

Matthew 25:14-30; RCL, the same reading (Matthew 25:31-46; RCL, the same reading)

Commentary on this parable takes a wide range of perspectives. The excerpts following the reading will give you some examples, and hopefully lead you to investigate them further.

The Parable of the Talents

¹⁴“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants^[a] and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents,^[b] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.^[c] You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

- a. [Matthew 25:14](#) Or *bondservants*; also verse [19](#)
- b. [Matthew 25:15](#) A *talent* was a monetary unit worth about twenty years' wages for a laborer
- c. [Matthew 25:21](#) Or *bondservant*; also verses [23](#), [26](#), [30](#)

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

“So you know the saying, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” I wondered, after reading this week's gospel on the Parable of the Talents, if we might also say that anger and fear, as well as, perhaps, wonder and joy, are in the eye of the beholder as well.

There are two ways to read this parable, you see, and while I'm familiar with the dominant one -- that our waiting for the master's return should be purposeful, not idle -- I was struck this time through by the reaction of the third servant. And not just his reaction, but also his motivation...” <https://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=1604> [David Lose](#) *Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.*

“This parable is a preacher’s dream. There is the delightful ambiguity of the word “talent”—simply a word for money in Greek, but a word whose English translation also refers to innate abilities. The preacher can point out the original meaning of the term and still know that people inevitably hear it as part of the all inclusive trilogy of “time, talents, and treasure.” There is the edgy last verse, echoed in many of Matthew’s parables, which the nice preacher need never mention again, since the image of hell has already been applied in the reading of the Scripture and the proclamation that it is “the Word of the Lord.” There is the incredible increase of ten talents and three talents doubling in their value due to the commitment and industry of the faithful servants. And there is the impulse that many readers of Scripture have absorbed over the years to assume that any parable with a king, a landowner, or a man on a journey leaving slaves behind is automatically a parable about Jesus/God that addresses what to do until the second coming. Even before the preacher utters a single word, everyone in the room knows that Jesus has come before us and is berated us for not doing enough with what we’ve been given.

At the expense of ruining an excellent Stewardship Sunday sermon, this parable deserves a hard reassessment...

Likewise, the assumed moral of the story is also problematic: (verse 29 This moral directly contradicts Amos’ warning against those who add field to field and—instead of leaving behind the edges and dropped sheaves for the landless—sell the sweepings of the field. It is contrary to the warnings Jesus issued against greed and his “good news to the poor...” <http://www.politicaltheology.com/blog/the-politics-of-the-talents-matthew-2514-30/> *Political Theology* is devoted to studying the intersection between religion, politics and culture.



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Thanksgiving Day Readings: Deuteronomy 8:1-10, Psalm 67, Philemon 4:6-20
or 1Timothy 2:1-4, Luke 17:11-19