

8th Sunday after Pentecost July 26, 2020

7th Sunday after Trinity Proper 12 (17)
Lectionary Year A – the Gospel of Matthew

Living the Lutheran Lectionary

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.

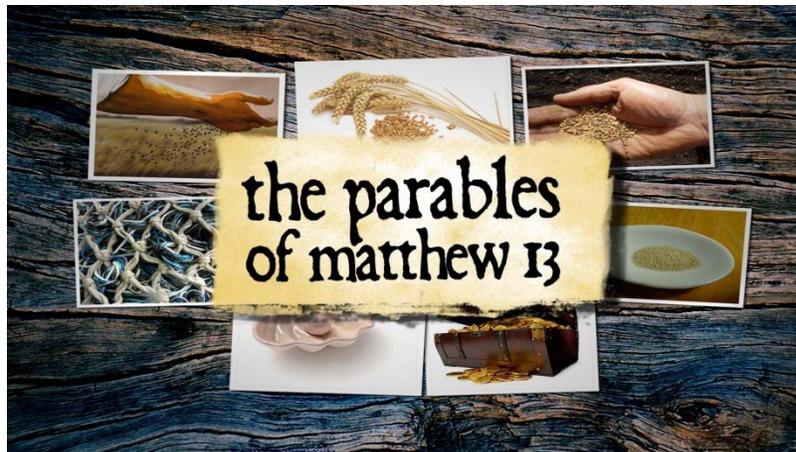
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.

Available on line at:

- ✦ www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies
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Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM (5pm Kenya/Uganda):** At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134 and on line through <https://zoom.us/j/815200301>
- ✦ **Wednesdays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at puritaspastor@hotmail.com
- ✦ **Tuesdays at 1:00 PM (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya (Suspended due to Covid 19 restrictions in Kenya)
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.



<https://kingdomnewtestament.wordpress.com/2012/04/23/matthew-13-the-kingdom-of-heaven-is-like/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 713 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 393

“From God can nothing move me”

This hymn was written during the plague that struck Erfurt in 1563. Ludwig Helmbold wrote this hymn for the rector of the university and his wife, Pancratius and Regina Helbich. They fled the city to escape the deadly spreading disease. It was intended by Helmbold to give them strength on their journey. (Read Psalm 73 the basis for this hymn and ... on the well-known and often-cited passage from Rom. 8:38–39.)

The stanzas of this hymn unfold the wonderful assurance of God’s abiding presence in our lives at all times. **Stanza 1** begins with the surety that God will never leave us. It then speaks of what God does in our lives...**Stanza 2** speaks about losing those in life who were regarded as “trustworthy and sure.” This can mean those whom we love that are left behind when life takes a different course. It can also refer to those who betray us...**Stanza 3** speaks of the providence of God. We don’t plan our lives — He does...**Stanza 4** assures us that God’s will is done each day in our lives...**Stanza 5** speaks about our worship of God — our response to His grace, love and mercy...**Stanza 6** speaks of suffering and assures us that our deliverance is in Jesus. **Stanza 7** is a doxological stanza, that is, it gives glory to the Holy Trinity. It also sums up the hymn...”

- <https://www.lcms.org/worship/hymn-of-the-day-studies> study by John G. Fleischmann
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGNZ3UgOtHk> Heirs of the Reformation: Treasures of the Singing Church © 2008 Concordia Publishing House
- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1290657637786163> Organ
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VRknqelZec> Instrumental, Christian Hymn Series Hymns of Trust © 2015 Preus Music LLC

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® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

O. T. - “The LORD your God has chosen you”

Psalms – “Those who trust in the LORD ”

Epistle – “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Gospel – “*The kingdom of heaven is like... The kingdom of heaven is like... The kingdom of heaven is like... The kingdom of heaven is like...*”

Deuteronomy 7:6-9; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Genesis 29:15-28 or 1 Kings 3:5-12 (Next week: Isaiah 55:1-5; RCL, Genesis 32:22-31 or Isaiah 55:1-5)

“The Bible doesn’t try to persuade you to choose God. But it does assure you that God has chosen you, even as Jesus said, “You did not choose me, but I chose you” (John 15:16). And neither is Scripture all about you making promises to God but, instead, trusting in His promises for you.

In today's Old-Testament reading, Moses told the Israelites, who were ready to enter the Promised Land: "You are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 7:6). God's Old-Covenant people gathered to hear Moses for the last time, for Moses wouldn't be entering the Promised Land. Joshua would lead God's people into the Promised Land after Moses died.

But, before they went in, Moses would preach God's Word into their ears one more time. So, Moses proclaimed who God was and who the Israelites were because of God. The Lord led them out of Egypt. They were His people. He redeemed and rescued them. He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God had chosen them to be His special people, and they were His treasured possession. And at Mt. Sinai, God had given them the Old Covenant, and so they were blessed..." (continued after reading)

⁶ "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. ⁷ It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, ¹⁰ *and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face.*

"To understand grace, Moses revealed who we are by nature. Moses preached, "It is not because you outnumbered all the other peoples that the Lord favored and chose you" (Deuteronomy 7:7). The Lord doesn't choose based on someone's worthiness. He didn't choose you because you are greater, smarter, or better than others. He chooses you solely by grace, not because you deserve it, but because He is merciful.

Later in Deuteronomy, Moses told the Israelites that being in God's Covenant had nothing to do with their own righteousness. He said: "It's not because of your righteousness, or even the virtue in your heart that you are going in to take possession of their land" (Deuteronomy 9:5). God didn't choose the Israelites because of their own righteousness. Blessings come from the Lord by grace. The Lord was showing His faithfulness to the promise He had given to Eve, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

And what Moses said about God choosing someone still applies to us today. For what Moses said about God's grace stemmed from who God is in His nature. And who God is doesn't change whether one is in the Old Covenant or the New..."

- <https://kimberlinglutheran.com/2014/08/04/deuteronomy-76-9-god-chooses-you/> Pastor Rich, Shepherd of the Hills, Kimberling City, MO

Psalm 125, Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128 or Psalm 119:129-136 (Psalm 136:1-9 (23-26); RCL, Psalm 17:1-7, 15 or Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21)

“A Song of Degrees. Another step is taken in the ascent, another station in the pilgrimage is reached: certainly a rise in the sense is here perceptible, since full assurance concerning years to come is a higher form of faith than the ascription of farther escapes to the Lord. Faith has praised Jehovah for past deliverances, and t, ere she rises to a confident jury in the present and future safety of believers. She asserts that they shall forever secure who trust themselves with the Lord. We can imagine the pilgrims chanting this song when perambulating the city walls.

We do not assert that David wrote this Psalm, but we have as much ground for doing so as others have for declaring that it was written after the captivity. It would seem provable that all the Pilgrim Psalms were composed, or, at least, compiled by the same writer, and as some of them are certainly by David, there is too conclusive reason for taking away the rest from him.

First we have a song of holy confidence (Ps 125:1-2); then a promise, Ps 125:3; followed by a prayer, Ps 125:4; and a note of warning...”

➤ <https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary.php?com=spur&b=19&c=125> Charles Spurgeon

The LORD Surrounds His People A Song of Ascents.

125 Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

² As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the LORD surrounds his people,
from this time forth and forevermore.

³ For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest
on the land allotted to the righteous,
lest the righteous stretch out
their hands to do wrong.

⁴ Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,
and to those who are upright in their hearts!

⁵ But those who turn aside to their crooked ways
the LORD will lead away with evildoers!
Peace be upon Israel!

“At the beginning of these pilgrimage psalms were the words of one setting out for Jerusalem: “I lift my eyes to the hills” (Psalm 121:1). This act of looking toward the mountains was the first step on the way to Jerusalem.

The writer of Psalm 125, once again, has an eye on the mountains. As the psalmist looks at the mighty hills surrounding Jerusalem, a parallel comes to mind. Just as the mountains surround, protect, watches over Jerusalem, so the lord surrounds, protects, watches over the

Lord's people! The Lord as mountain range: a fresh picture of understanding God! And an appropriate one for pilgrims on their way to the holy city...

Psalms 125 begin with a pair of *comparisons*, illustrating the protection given those who trust in the Lord (vv 1-2). It continues with a *promise* of the Lord's protection (v. 3) and concludes with a *prayer* for the people (v. 4) and an *announcement* about the fate of evildoers. (v. 5a). The psalm ends with a *word of blessing* for Israel (see also Psalm 128:6).

Especially dominant in this psalm is the element of *trust* sounded in verses 1 and 2..."

- Westminster Bible Companion, Psalms, pages 433-4, by James Limburg. Westminster John Knox Press, 2000

Romans 8:28-39; RCL, Romans 8:26-39 (Romans 9:1-5 (6-13); RCL, Romans 9:1-5)

"Paul brings the first eight chapters of Romans to a resounding *conclusion in these verses before going on in 9:1-11:36 to that which weighs so heavily on his heart, rejection of Christ by his own people, the Jews...*

Placed as the climactic words within the first eight chapters of Romans, these verses assure and announce one of the finest and most profound expressions of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are magnificent words in their assurance and proclamation of the sovereignty of God who has made known salvation for all in Jesus Christ. Through these verses the work of the Holy Spirit speaks these words through our words: "We are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (8:37)..."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=108
Paul S. Berge Emeritus Professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

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Today's Epistle reading from Romans comes out of the second half of section from Romans Chapter 8 that I often read to those who are sick, who are hospitalized, or even to people in other kinds of distress. To put it into context for you a good place to start is back in verse 18 of Romans 8 where Saint Paul speaks of your future glory as Christians, here Paul says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."..."

- <https://lutheran-church-regina.com/blogs/post/sermon-pr-ted-giese-season-of-pentecost-proper-12-sunday-july-30th-2017-romans-828-39-present-sufferings-and-future-glories-in-christ> Pr. Ted A. Giese Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Regina, Canada

Future Glory Verses 18-30 (Proper 11, verses 18-27)

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good,^[a] for those who are called according to his purpose. **29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **30** And those whom he predestined

he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

God's Everlasting Love

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be^[b] against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.^[c] ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- a. **Romans 8:28** Some manuscripts *God works all things together for good, or God works in all things for the good*
- b. **Romans 8:31** Or *who is*
- c. **Romans 8:34** Or *Is it Christ Jesus who died... for us?*

“My observations help me to see that this passage is talking about the salvation of sinners, particularly how God brings about salvation in the life of each sinner. While western, American, evangelical Christians view salvation as a personal and individualistic experience, this passage (and many others like it) remind us that sinners are brought into God’s story and not the other way around...”

- <https://marcminter.com/2018/01/24/an-inductive-study-of-romans-828-39/#:~:text=28%20And%20we%20know%20that,called%20according%20to%20his%20purpose.&text=Christ%20Jesus%20is%20the%20one,indeed%20is%20interceding%20for%20us.>

Marc Minter is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Diana, TX.

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“What is God's vision? To form us into the people we are meant to be; to conform us to the image of Christ; and to transform the world through us. God surely is an optimist. He knows better than any of us how hard is the work of redemption. But our text says He looks at us and knows what might be, then rolls up His sleeves and goes to work. It reads: We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son (Romans 8:28-29).

The word "predestined" troubles some people, and has been the source of theological debate. Some protest that it makes us merely puppets, God pulls all the strings, controls all events, and that we are victims of divine fate. Some use it to blame God that some are not saved, but predestined to hell. That is not what Paul says. He is simply stating that salvation is God's work from start to finish.

In our salvation, there is a golden chain of activity: Those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified (Romans 8:30). And since it is God-initiated and God-completed, we know that it will be done right.”

- <https://www.lutheranhour.org/sermon.asp?articleid=9723> Presented on The Lutheran Hour on July 27, 2008 By Rev. Ralph Blumenburg, Guest Speaker

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"He hath not published the page whereon the actual *names* of the redeemed are written; but that page of the sacred decree whereon their *character* is recorded is published in his Word, and shall be proclaimed to thee this day." Spurgeon

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“The people Paul is writing to—the Romans, the Christians in Rome in the mid-first century—they would need to know that God’s love for them was inseparable. Because very soon, troubles would be raining down upon their head. Persecution was brewing, and within not many years, it would break out big-time. The Roman emperor Nero would use the Christians as his scapegoat, as his whipping boy to blame for things. Nero enjoyed tying Christians to posts in his garden and lighting them up at night for human torches. St. Paul himself would be imprisoned and executed for the faith.

When the early Christians were facing this kind of hostility and violence and persecution, you can see how they might think that they’ve fallen for a big hoax. That there is no God who loves them like they were told. That this fellow Jesus, whom they had never seen—was he worth dying for? On the other hand, though, when you are convinced that God’s love is utterly inseparable from you, that Christ Jesus really did die and rise for you and forgives your sins and now is watching out for you, so that nothing can take your eternal salvation from you—well, that changes things, doesn’t it? I’ll say!

And so Paul says, here in our text from Romans 8. What is it that convinces us that God’s love is inseparable? It’s the gospel, the good news of what God has done for us in Christ. The gospel word has the power within itself to convince us of its truth. This word gives certainty to our heart...”

- <https://steadfastlutherans.org/2017/07/inseparable-sermon-on-romans-828-39-by-pr-charles-henrickson/> Pr. Charles Henrickson

Matthew 13: 44-52; RCL, Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 (Matthew 14:13-21; RCL, the same reading)

“There are seven parables in Matthew 13. After Jesus spoke the first, The Sower, the disciples asked: “Why do you speak to them in parables?” He explained in detail (verses 11-17) and then explained this first parable. Then He spoke three more parables. After dismissing the crowds, in the house the disciples asked for an explanation of the Parable of the Tares. Then He spoke the three parables in today's pericope. From verses 51-52 we see that, under the tutelage of Jesus, the disciples had made progress in understanding. Jesus adds a word concerning the substance of the teaching of a true teacher of the Kingdom. Verse 52 contains a little parable, a simile...”

- http://pericope.org/buls-notes/matthew/matthew_13_44_52.htm Adapted from *Exegetical Notes, Series A Matthew – John Sundays after Pentecost Gospel Texts* by Harold H. Buls
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“The Holy Gospel beginning in the 13th Chapter of St. Matthew”

The Parable of the Sower Verses 1-9 (Proper 10)

The Purpose of the Parables Verses 10-17

The Parable of the Sower Explained Verses 18-23 (Proper 10)

The Parable of the Weeds Verses 24-30 (Proper 11)

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast Verses 31-33

Prophecy and Parables Verses 34-35

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure Verse 44 (Proper 12)

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Value Verses 45-46 (Proper 12)

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, 46 who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

The Parable of the Net Verses 47-50 (Proper 12)

47 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. 48 When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery

furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

New and Old Treasures Verses 51-52 (Proper 12)

⁵¹ “Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth Verses 53-58

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

“Talk about treasure in a field!

Some weeks it can seem that the appointed Gospel yields slim pickings, but this week, we have five rich parables with which to work. *(RCL includes verses 31-33)* For those of you who have preached the previous two Sundays, you are aware that we have already dealt with the first two parables, but that the texts were split.

If you scan chapter 13, you can see how Matthew has interwoven some of these parables with commentary on parables in general and then explanations of the first two parables resulting in another split lesson for this Sunday. Narrative speaking, these delayed explanations serve to heighten interest in the parable, especially given the stakes for those who do not understand them.

Overall, this collection of parables drives to the conclusion provided in today's text in verses 51-52: "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." The emphasis is on the newness of what Jesus is teaching, but it is based on his announcement of "what has been hidden from the foundation of the world." (Jesus cites this text from Psalm 78:2 in verse 35. The idea is also similar to the string of "You have heard..., but I say" statements Jesus makes in Matthew 5.)

And what is this ancient message Jesus is now proclaiming anew? Its clearest expression is provided in the three parables for which allegorical explanations are given, and it's a theme that runs through Matthew, namely: The dominion of God may not always appear to be succeeding in the world, and even the Church itself is a mixed bag of good and evil, but in the end, God will sort things out. The evil will perish, and the righteous will be part of God's bountiful and glorious harvest..."

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=983 [Mark G. Vitalis Hoffman](#)

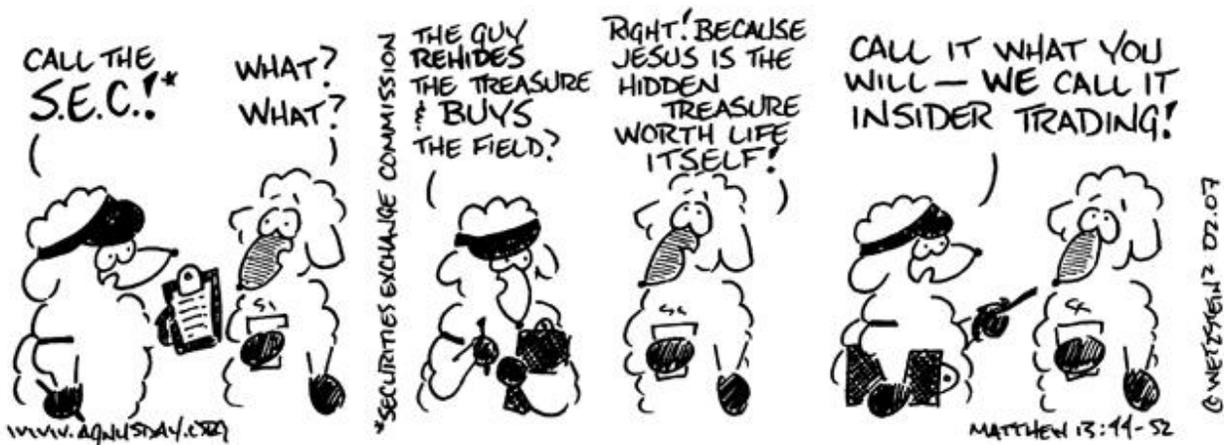
Glatfelter Professor of Biblical Studies, United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg, Penn.

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“These five parables have taught us more about the kingdom of heaven. While the parables about the sower and seeds and the weeds may have appealed to the farmers in the crowd, these parables would have been meaningful to fishermen, bakers, and merchants. Their wide appeal would have helped the crowd to have a better understanding of the kingdom of heaven. We must seek the kingdom of heaven in order to find it and when we find it, we have found a treasure. This treasure will bring joy that empowers us to rise above life’s difficult circumstances. We experience the kingdom of God in community -- all are welcome at the table. The more we are taught, by the trained scribes, the more we will grow and become witnesses of God’s kingdom here on earth...”

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3351

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The Matthew Challenge?

What will be your challenge this week?

Weekly review thoughts

