

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 27:7-9, 1, 11-12

Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice! Alle- | luia.*
 Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide Your face from me. Alle- |
 luia.
 The Lord is my light and my sal- | vation;*
 whom | shall I fear?
 The Lord is the strength | of my life;*
 of whom shall I | be afraid?
 Teach me Your | way, O Lord,*
 do not deliver me to the will of my adver- | saries;
 for false witnesses have risen a- | gainst me,*
 and such as breathe out | violence.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK Psalm 68:18 KJV

“Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.”

7 READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty, everlasting God, cause us always to have a devout will toward You and to serve Your majesty with a pure heart; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK

We Thank Thee, Jesus, Dearest Friend

TLH 223

Unknown



1. We thank Thee, Jesus, dearest Friend,
 That Thou didst into heaven ascend.
 O blessed Savior, bid us live
 And strength to soul and body give.
 Hallelujah!

2. Ascended to His throne on high,
 Hid from our sight, yet always nigh;
 He rules and reigns at God's right hand
 And has all power at His command.
 Hallelujah!

4. We therefore heartily rejoice
 And sing His praise with cheerful voice;
 He captive led captivity,
 From bitter death He set us free.
 Hallelujah!

5. Through Him we heirs of heaven are
 made;
 O Brother, Christ, extend Thine aid
 That we may firmly trust in Thee
 And through Thee live eternally.
 Hallelujah!



“He Ascended to Bless His People”

1 BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
 In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2 SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED
 I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 Maker of heaven and earth.
 And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
 Lord, who was conceived by the Holy
 Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered
 under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died
 and was buried. He descended into hell.
 The third day He rose again from the
 dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at
 the right hand of God, the Father
 Almighty. From thence He will come to
 judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
 Christian church, the communion of
 saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
 resurrection of the body, and the life
 everlasting. Amen.

3 PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER
 Our Father, who art in
 heaven,
 hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth as it
 is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily
 bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those who
 trespass against us;
 and lead us not into
 temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom and
 the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.

4 PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. I thank You, my
 heavenly Father, through Jesus
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You
 have kept me this night from all
 harm and danger; and I pray that
 You would keep me this day also
 from sin and every evil, that all my
 doings and life may please You.
 For into Your hands I commend
 myself, my body and soul, and all
 things. Let Your holy angel be with
 me, that the evil foe may have no
 power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my
 heavenly Father, through Jesus
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You
 have graciously kept me this day;
 and I pray that You would forgive
 me all my sins where I have done
 wrong, and graciously keep me this
 night. For into Your hands, I
 commend myself, my body and
 soul, and all things. Let Your holy
 angel be with me, that the evil foe
 may have no power over me. Amen.

THEME OF THE WEEK: He Ascended to Bless His People

Exaudi (“Hear, O Lord, when I cry”) Sunday occurs with Ascension hymns fresh in our ears, including the following description of Jesus’ blessings: “Thou hast raised our human nature on the clouds to God’s right hand” (TLH 218.5). This week we rejoice in the good news that, far from being a distant Lord of a spiritual “Space Force,” the ascended Christ is mysteriously and sacramentally present to bless His people. This week’s readings are best heard with Jesus’ Ascension in the background and the Day of Pentecost in the foreground. As the hymn puts it, “There we sit in heavenly places, There with [Christ] in glory stand” (TLH 218.5).

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 15:26-16:4 On the Sending and Strength of the Spirit

The Father sent the Son into the world to redeem the world. The Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son,” as the Creed puts it. He is the Spirit of Truth, but His face is Christ. To see Him by faith is to behold the countenance of Christ, for whoever has seen Jesus has seen the Father. Along with the sending of the Spirit comes the strength of the Spirit for His Apostles and their successors, who are sent into the world to baptize, preach, and feed in His stead. So whether you die in bed or in prison or even as a martyr in the public square, the Comforter dwells with you to the end of days. *Teach us to know the Father, Son, And You, from both, as Three in One / That we Your name may ever bless / And in our lives the truth confess (LSB 498.6). Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 93 ‘The Lord Reigns; He is Robed in Majesty’

The crown used for last year’s coronation of King Charles weighs five pounds, is made of solid gold, and is bedecked with some 400 gemstones. All earthly pomp and circumstance, however, are but rubbish compared to Jesus’ coronation in His Ascension. As one hymn puts it: “The head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now” (LSB 532.1). See how His robe is majesty, His belt is strength, and His throne is eternal. This King is mightier than all the floods and oceans of this planet. And the decrees from His royal throne are trustworthy, especially His royal pardon for all of your sins. *Mighty Victor, reign forever, wear the crown so dearly won; never shall Thy people . . . cease to sing what Thou hast done (TLH 209.4). Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:1-13 With Tongues of Fire

Three theological themes converge in this, the traditional Epistle reading for the Day of Pentecost. Pentecost in the Old Testament was the harvest festival, a thanksgiving to the Lord of the harvest for daily bread (Ex 23:16). In later Judaism it was also celebrated as the day of the giving of the Law on Sinai. And here in Acts 2 Pentecost becomes the day that the Holy Spirit descended in fullest measure, with tongues of fire to preach the Gospel to all nations. So you, O Christian, are part of God’s harvest by faith, a recipient of the Word of God from above, and the object of the Spirit’s fire every time you behold the mighty works of Christ. *Come, holy Fire, comfort true, Grant us the will Your work to do / And in Your service to abide (LSB 497.3). Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 36:25-27 Living Water, Sealing Spirit

This reading from Ezekiel, just one chapter before “dem dry bones” came to life, is a compendium of baptismal living and the work of the Spirit. See the vivid contrast between a heart of stone and a heart of flesh! Stone was associated with idols in Ezekiel’s day, especially Babylonian idols made of earthly fodder (gold, silver, iron, etc.). Stone cannot die and therefore it cannot be raised to new life with human flesh. But your heart of flesh, O Sinner—yes, the human heart under the Law—is dying to live. Baptized into Jesus’ name and sealed with the Spirit, you daily die to sin through repentance and rise like those dry bones to new life in Christ. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me (Ps. 51:10). Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: John 17:20-26 ‘That They May be One’

At the threshold of Holy Week, as some Greeks came to seek Jesus, a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified [My name], and I will glorify it again” (Jn 12:28). See how every voice from heaven in the Gospels (including the Transfiguration) is a window for you to see (Jn 12:30) the ongoing conversation among the persons of the Trinity, revealing Christ as the true glory of the Father. And you join the conversation when you worship Him in Spirit and in truth. *Grant then, O God, where’er men roam, That, when the church-bells are ringing, Many in saving faith may come / Where Christ His message is bringing: ‘I know Mine own, Mine own know Me; Ye, not the world, My face shall see. My peace I leave with you.’ Amen. (TLH 467.7)*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:29-39 ‘If God be for Us’

Question: If you were stranded on a desert island with just one chapter of the Bible, which chapter would you choose? Answer: Why not pick Romans chapter 8? As the verses you just read demonstrate, Romans 8 contains the full strength of the law and the full consolation of the gospel. Evil forces (tribulation, distress, persecution, etc.) assail you in this lifetime and reckon you as a sheep to be slaughtered. But Christ has won the victory for you, led captivity captive, and shared His victory with you in the means of grace. Safe in the cleft of His riven side, nothing can separate you from Christ Jesus, your Lord. *Our hands and feet, Lord, strengthen; With joy our spirits bless / Until we see the ending / Of all our life’s distress (LSB 754.6). Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: INTRODUCTION to Psalm 97 ‘The Lord Reigns . . . Let the Earth be Glad’

Monday’s Psalm (93) focused on the reign of your King and God. Today’s Psalm, at the cusp of the Day of Pentecost, is similar in its thematic progression, but the text focuses more on the King’s subjects. Here you acknowledge various theophanies (fire, lightnings, clouds, etc.) that proclaim His reign (vss. 1–5); cast down all false gods as you take refuge in the one true God (vss. 6–7); rejoice in His righteous judgments of law and gospel (vss. 8–9); and give thanks to His holy name (vss. 10–12). And so we pray: *We believe that You will come to be our judge. We therefore pray You to help Your servants, whom You have redeemed with Your precious blood. Make them to be numbered with Your saints in glory everlasting (from the Te Deum). Amen.*

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