

The Congregation at Prayer
The Whole Story

2025

**A Daily Devotional
St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA**



Week #28-The Whole Story
5th Week after Trinity
July 20-July 27, 2025

Start Every Day

*"In the Name of the Father, and + of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit. Amen"*

recite **APOSTLE'S CREED**

Read **Catechism—The Athanasian Creed: Part 3**



But it is also necessary for everlasting salvation that one faithfully believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is the right faith that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the same time both God and man.

He is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages;

And He is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age:

Perfect God and perfect man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father with respect to His divinity, less than the Father with respect to His humanity.

Although He is God and man, He is not two, but one Christ:

One, however, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ,

Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead,

Our Savior saw our helplessness
And came with peace to cheer us.
For this we thank and praise the Lord,
Who is by one and all adored:
To God all praise and glory!

- 4 He never shall forsake His flock,
His chosen generation;
He is their refuge and their rock,
Their peace and their salvation.
As with a mother's tender hand,
He leads His own, His chosen band:
To God all praise and glory!
- 5 All who confess Christ's holy name,
Give God the praise and glory.
Let all who know His pow'r proclaim
Aloud the wondrous story.
Cast ev'ry idol from its throne,
For God is God, and He alone:
To God all praise and glory!

Text: Johann Jacob Schütz, 1640–90; (sts. 1–3, 5): tr. Frances E. Cox, 1812–97, adapt.; (st. 4): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, adapt.
Text: Public domain

Ascended into heaven, and is seated at the
right hand of the Father, God Almighty,
from whence He will come to judge the
living and the dead.

At His coming all people will rise again with
their bodies and give an account
concerning their own deeds.

And those who have done good will enter
into eternal life, and those who have done
evil into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith; whoever does
not believe it faithfully and firmly cannot
be saved.

VERSE: Romans 10:17 ***“So faith comes from
hearing, and hearing through the word of
Christ.”***

VERSE: (National Youth Gathering—Endure):
Hebrews 12:1-3, ***“Therefore, since we are
surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses let
us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings
so closely, and let us run with endurance the
race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the
founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the
joy that was set before him endured the cross,
despising the shame, and is seated at the right
hand of the throne of God. Consider him who
endured from sinners such hostility against
himself, so that you may not grow weary or
fainthearted.***

PRAYER of the WORD

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, without Your help our labor is useless, and without Your light our search is in vain. Invigorate our study of Your holy Word that, by due diligence and right discernment, we may establish ourselves and others in Your holy faith; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, July 20

- Read **Proverbs 18**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 10-12**

THEODORET OF CYR: (Hebrews 12:1) The models of godliness are set before us on all sides, he is saying, in such vast numbers as to resemble a cloud in density and testify to the power of faith.

Accordingly, let us keep our eyes on them, be light on our feet and rid ourselves of the burden of unnecessary worries, in this way being able also to avoid sin that is easy to contract. Before everything else we need perseverance to succeed in the course ahead of us. He said sin “clings” because it is easily contracted and committed: the eye is fascinated, the ear charmed, touch titillated, tongue easily loosened and thought quickly directed to the worst. INTERPRETATION OF HEBREWS 12.¹

¹ Heen, Erik M., and Philip D. W. Krey, eds. 2005. [*Hebrews*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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.

Luther’s Evening Prayer

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.

819 Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good

- 1 Sing praise to God, the highest good,
The author of creation,
The God of love who understood
Our need for His salvation.
With healing balm our souls He fills
And ev’ry faithless murmur stills:
To God all praise and glory!
- 2 What God’s almighty pow’r has made,
In mercy He is keeping.
By morning glow or evening shade
His eye is never sleeping.
Within the kingdom of His might
All things are just and good and right:
To God all praise and glory!
- 3 We sought the Lord in our distress;
O God, in mercy hear us.

our hearts. Thus we may draw not only relish for our lips from the great sweetness of this mystery but also complete satisfaction for our senses and minds. SERMON 57.⁷

Sunday, July 27

- Read **Proverbs 25**
- Read **Major Prophet: Isaiah 7-9**

End Every Day

Pray the *Collect for 5th Sunday after Trinity*

O God, You have prepared for those who love You good things that surpass all understanding. Pour into our hearts such love toward You that we, loving You above all things, may obtain Your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Personal Prayers

pray **LORD'S PRAYER**

Luther's Morning Prayer

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

⁷ McKinion, Steven A., ed. 2004. [*Isaiah 1-39*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Monday, July 21

- Read **Proverbs 19**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 13-15**

CHRYSOSTOM: (Hebrews 12:2) "Who," he says, "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." That is, it was in his power not to suffer at all, if he so willed. For "he committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips"; as he also says in the Gospels, "the ruler of this world is coming, and he has no power over me."²⁰ It lay then in his power, if so he willed, not to come to the cross. For "I have power," he says, "to lay down my life; and I have power to take it again." If then he who was under no necessity of being crucified was crucified for our sake, how much more is it right that we should endure all things nobly! "Who for the joy that was set before him," he says, "endured the cross, despising the shame." But what is "despising the shame"? He chose, he means, that ignominious death. For suppose that he died. Some wonder why he should die so ignominiously. For no other reason than to teach us to make no account of glory from the human sphere. Therefore, though under no obligation, he chose death, teaching us to be bold against it and to make it as nothing. Why did the apostle say not "pain" but "shame"? Because it was not with pain

that he bore these things. ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS 28.4.²

Tuesday, July 22

- Read **Proverbs 20**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 16-18**

JOHN KLEINIG: (Hebrews 12:3) After the congregation had been urged to keep running the race of faith with endurance together with all other faithful people (12:1–2), the teacher now begins to instruct them on how they are to accomplish that. This expands on the earlier claim in 10:36 that they need perseverance in order to receive what God has promised. It also recalls the invitation to keep looking up to Jesus in 12:2 as the author and finisher of faith, the faith that perseveres and remains subordinate to God. The congregation is instructed to “consider” Jesus as the example of the greatest endurance against the worst odds. He “endured” the worst kind of “verbal abuse against himself” in his trial and at his crucifixion from those who irrationally hated him, falsely accused him, unjustly condemned him, and wrongly ridiculed him. All that was in blatant contradiction of who he was and is and what he had taught. Those who abused him were “sinners” par excellence because they rejected God by rejecting his Son (cf. 1:2–3).

² Heen, Erik M., and Philip D. W. Krey, eds. 2005. [Hebrews](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

words, in order to show that he did not receive it through the faculty of hearing but is proclaiming the meaning of the word that has been impressed on his mind. For we need voice to indicate our thoughts, but God, affecting directly the very ruling aspect of the soul in those who are worthy, impresses on them the knowledge of his own will. COMMENTARY ON ISAIAH 1.8.⁶

Saturday, July 26

- Read **Proverbs 24**
- Read **Major Prophet: Isaiah 4-6**

PETER CHRYSOLOGUS: (Isaiah 6:7) But let us at this time feel remorse with all the affection of our hearts. Let us admit that we are wretched in this misery of the flesh. Let us weep with holy groans because we, too, have unclean lips. Let us do all this to make that one of the seraphim bring down to us, by means of the tongs of the law of grace, a flaming sacrament of faith taken for us from the heavenly altar. Let us do this to make him touch the tip of our lips with such delicate touch as to take away our iniquities, purge away our sins and so enkindle our mouths to the full flame of complete praise that the burning will be one that results in salvation, not pain. Let us beg, too, that the heat of that coal may penetrate all the way to

⁶ McKinion, Steven A., ed. 2004. [Isaiah 1-39](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

What then? If God granted pardon and a kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar after such terrible crimes, when he had made confession, will he not grant you the remission of your sins if you repent and the kingdom of heaven if you live worthily? God is merciful and quick to forgiveness but slow to vengeance. Therefore let no one despair of salvation. Peter, the chief and foremost of the apostles, denied the Lord thrice before a little serving maid; but, moved to repentance, he wept bitterly. His weeping revealed his heartfelt repentance, and for that reason not only did he receive pardon for his denial but also retained his apostolic prerogative. CATECHETICAL LECTURES 2.17–19.⁵

Friday, July 25

- Read **Proverbs 23**
- Read **Major Prophet: Isaiah 1-3**

BASIL THE GREAT: (Isaiah 1:1) It is our task to pay diligent attention to the mind, so that it becomes clear-sighted, becoming perfect through appropriate exercises, while it is God's gift that the Spirit should illuminate us for the comprehension of his mysteries. The prophet puts "vision" first in his account and then introduces his report of the

⁵ Conti, Marco, and Gianluca Pilara, eds. 2008. [1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

He, however, did not just endure those attacks on him passively by putting up with them, like a patient dying of cancer, but he endured the cross actively by accepting God's will (5:7–9) that he should bear the sins of the world (9:28). He did not let that abuse get the better of him and divert him from the joy that was set before him. It did not demoralize him, nor did it turn him into a hapless, helpless victim. So the congregation too learns endurance from "him who endured such verbal abuse from sinners against himself" (12:3), for they too are called to bear the reproach that he endured (13:13). They too, when unjustly abused, must "not grow weary ... and thus become slack" (12:3) as powerless victims, for they have him as their model for endurance and receive help from him as the author and finisher of faith (12:2).³

Wednesday, July 23

- Read **Proverbs 21**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 19-22**

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: (2 Kings 19:32-34) The Lord's goodness is immense, and frequently he finds his way to grant the salvation of the majority on account of a few just people. Why do I say on account of a few just people? Frequently, when a just person cannot be found in the present life, he

³ Kleinig, John W. 2017. [Hebrews](#). Edited by Curtis P. Giese. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

takes pity on the living on account of the virtue of the departed and cries aloud in the words, “I will protect this city for my own sake and the sake of my servant David.” Even if they do not deserve to be saved, he is saying, and have no claim on salvation, yet since showing love is habitual with me and I am prompt to have pity and rescue them from disaster, for my own sake and the sake of my servant David I will act as a shield; he who passed on from this life many years before will prove the salvation of those who have fallen victim to their own indifference. HOMILIES ON GENESIS 42.24.⁴

Thursday, July 24

- Read **Proverbs 22**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 23-25**

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM: (2 Kings 25:1-11) What think you of Nebuchadnezzar? Have you not heard from Scripture that he was bloodthirsty, fierce, with the disposition of a lion? Have you not heard that he disinterred the kings? Have you not heard that he brought the people away into captivity? Have you not heard that he put the king’s sons to the sword before Zedekiah’s eyes and then blinded him? Have you not heard that he shattered the cherubim? I do

⁴ Conti, Marco, and Gianluca Pilara, eds. 2008. [1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther](#).

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture.
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

not mean the invisible cherubim—it is blasphemy to think it—but the sculptured images and the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, from the midst of which God was apt to speak with his voice. He trampled on the veil of sanctification, he took the censer and carried it away to a temple of idols; he seized all the offerings; he burned the temple to its foundations. What punishment did he not deserve for slaying kings, for burning the holy object, for reducing the people to captivity, for putting the sacred vessels in the temples of the idols? Did he not deserve ten thousand deaths?

You have seen the enormity of his crimes. Turn now to the loving-kindness of God. Nebuchadnezzar was turned into a wild beast; he dwelled in the wilderness; God scourged him to save him. He had claws like a lion’s, for he had preyed on the saints. He had a lion’s mane, for he had been a ravening, roaring lion. He ate grass like an ox, for he had behaved like a brute beast, not knowing him who had given him his kingdom. His body was drenched with dew, because, after seeing the fire quenched by the dew, he had not believed. And what happened? Afterwards he says, “I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes to heaven ... and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and glorified him who lives forever.” When therefore he acknowledged the Most High, and uttered words of thanksgiving to God, and repented of his past wickedness and recognized his own weakness, in that hour God restored to him his royal dignity.