

**Congregation at Prayer
2021
A Daily Devotional for St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA**



Eighth Week after Pentecost
Summer Week #9-Year 2
July 18-July 24, 2021

Start Every Day

Speak or chant: Psalm 119:113-128

recite APOSTLE'S CREED

VERSE: Matthew 5:37 **"Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil."**

Sunday, July 18

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Ephesians Jeremiah 23:1-6 (Sermon Text, 8th Sunday after Pentecost)

ENRICHED BY HIS POVERTY

- **Read Jeremiah 23:1-6**

By "shepherds," Jeremiah refers to the kings in Jerusalem, the kings discussed in chapter 22. A righteous shepherd-king was supposed to unite the people to follow the God of Israel. But their wicked policies had the effect of causing the Babylonian exile and scattering God's flock.

God speaks in first person. He makes clear in literal language that the "flock" is "my people." Verse 2 expresses the punishment against the wicked leaders in terms of a reversal with a wordplay: "You have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you" Whereas the kings did not "attend" to the flock, God will "attend-in-punishment" their wicked deeds against them.

In contrast to Israel's wicked shepherd-kings who in effect scattered the flock, Yahweh himself will regather the remnant and restore them to their land. One contrast, then, is between their previous shepherd-kings and Yahweh himself. Yahweh will undo and reverse their damage.

A second contrast is between the previous self-serving shepherds and the future shepherds that Yahweh himself will raise up and install. Jeremiah does not develop this point but immediately moves into the promise of the Davidic Messiah.

The third contrast is between the previous wicked shepherd-kings and the future human, messianic Shepherd-King of the line of David. The reference to "righteous Branch" pictures the messianic King beginning as a small branch and growing into a large tree.

The future messianic Shepherd-King will unite Judah and northern Israel into one people. He will provide them with "salvation" and safety; they "will dwell in safety." The messianic King will be given a symbolical name, "Yahweh is our righteousness." This is a shorthand way of saying "through the righteous Davidic King, Yahweh will be the author of our righteousness." This is in contrast to the current wicked kings described in the previous chapter. The assumption is this: As the king goes, so go the people. Through the righteous Messiah, Yahweh will reckon righteousness to the people. Moreover, the righteous Messiah will lead Israel to walk in the righteous ways of Yahweh. Entailed in this passage are both justification and sanctification.

Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures. The Old Testament Scriptures can help us Christians understand the person and work of Jesus the Messiah. They help us better understand the Messiah's job description and the blessings he now gives us. Jeremiah 23:1-6 is one such text.

Monday, July 19

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Mark 13:1-13 (The Destruction of the Temple is Predicted)

Tuesday, July 20 (Elijah)

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Mark 13:14-23 (The Great Tribulation)
- **About Elijah, the Prophet**

The prophet Elijah, whose name means, "My God is Yahweh *the Lord+," prophesied in the northern kingdom of Israel, mostly during the reign of Ahab (874-853 B.C.). Ahab, under the influence of his pagan wife Jezebel, had encouraged the worship of Baal throughout his kingdom, even as Jezebel sought to get rid of the worship of Yahweh. Elijah was called by God to denounce this idolatry and to call the people of Israel back to the worship Yahweh as the only true God (as he did in 1 Kgs 18:20-40). Elijah was a rugged and imposing figure, living in the wilderness and dressing in a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt (2 Kgs 1:8). He was a prophet mighty in word and deed. Many miracles were done through Elijah, including the raising of the dead (1 Kgs 17:17-24), and the effecting of a long drought in Israel (1 Kgs 17:1). At the end of his ministry, he was taken up into heaven as Elisha, his successor, looked on (2 Kgs 2:11). Later on the prophet Malachi proclaimed that Elijah would return before the coming of the Messiah (Mal 4:5-6), a prophecy that was fulfilled in the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist (Mt 11:14).

Wednesday, July 21 (Ezekiel)

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Mark 13:24-37 (The Second Coming of Christ)
- **About Ezekiel, the Prophet**

Ezekiel, son of Buzi, was a priest, called by God to be a prophet to the exiles during the Babylonian captivity (Ez. 1:3). In 597 B.C. King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army brought the king of Judah and thousands of the best citizens of Jerusalem—including Ezekiel—to Babylon (2 Kgs 24:8–16). Ezekiel's priestly background profoundly stamped his prophecy, as the holiness of God and the Temple figure prominently in his messages (for example, Ezekiel 9–10 and 40–48). From 593 B.C. to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C., Ezekiel prophesied the inevitability of divine judgment on Jerusalem, on the exiles in Babylon, and on seven nations that surrounded Israel (Ezekiel 1–32). Jerusalem would fall, and the exiles would not quickly return, as a just consequence of their sin. Once word reached Ezekiel that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, his message became one of comfort and hope. Through him God promised that his people would experience future restoration, renewal and revival in the coming Messianic kingdom (Ezekiel 33–48). Much of the strange symbolism of Ezekiel's prophecies was later employed in the Revelation to St. John.

Thursday, July 22 (St. Mary Magdalene)

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Acts 13:26-31 (Epistle Lesson, St. Mary Magdalene)
- ***Pray the Collect for St. Mary Magdalene***
 - Almighty God, Your Son, Jesus Christ, restored Mary Magdalene to health and called her to be the first witness of His resurrection. Heal us from all our infirmities, and call us to know You in the power of Your Son's unending life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Friday, July 23

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Mark 14:32-72 (Passion According to St. Mark)

Saturday, July 24

- Catechism: The Ten Commandments—7th Commandment & Meaning
- Read Genesis 9:8-17 (Old Testament Lesson, 9th Sunday after Pentecost)

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE (from *Lutheran Service Book*) by CPH

Sunday:	Galatians 6:1-18
Monday:	Acts 15:22-41
Tuesday:	Acts 16:1-22
Wednesday:	Acts 16:23-40
Thursday:	Acts 18:1-11, 23-28
Friday:	Acts 19:1-22
Saturday:	Acts 21:15-36

End Every Day

Pray the Collect for 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Heavenly Father, though we do not deserve Your goodness, still You provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may acknowledge Your gifts, give thanks for all your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; 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 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.

CATECHETICAL HYMN *from Lutheran Service Book*

819 "Sing Praise to God the Highest Good"