

8 The Law reveals the guilt of sin
And makes us conscience-stricken;
But then the Gospel enters in
The sinful soul to quicken.
Come to the cross, trust Christ, and live;
The Law no peace can ever give,
No comfort and no blessing.

9 Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
For faith alone can justify;
Works serve our neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living.

D 10 All blessing, honor, thanks, and praise
To Father, Son, and Spirit,
The God who saved us by His grace;
All glory to His merit.
O triune God in heav'n above,
You have revealed Your saving love;
Your blessed name we hallow.

*Text: Paul Speratus, 1484–1551; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.
Text: Public domain*

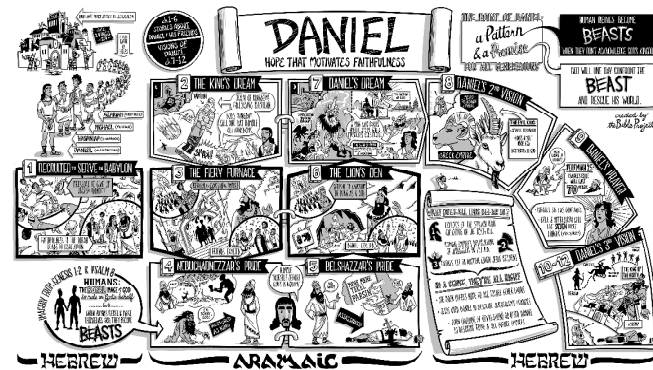


The Congregation at Prayer

The Whole Story

2025

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



Week #44-The Whole Story
19th Week after Trinity
October 26-November 2, 2025

Start Every Day

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

recite **APOSTLE'S CREED**

VERSE: Psalm 46:1 ***"God is our refuge and
strength, a very present help in trouble."***

CATECHISM—*Ten Commandments: Eighth Commandment*

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

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, October 26

- Read **Daniel 4-6**

CHRYSTOSTOM: (Daniel 4:26) Do you wish that I should speak of the ways of repentance? They are many and various and different, and all lead to heaven ... a fourth way is almsgiving. For Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, when he had come to all kinds of evil and had entered on all impiety, "O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you." ... What could be compared with this act of compassion? After countless sins, after so many transgressions, he is promised that he will be reconciled with him whom he has had conflict with if only he will show kindness to his own fellow servants.... So we have shown you five ways to repentance: first the

- 3 It was a false, misleading dream
That God His Law had given
That sinners could themselves redeem
And by their works gain heaven.
The Law is but a mirror bright
To bring the inbred sin to light
That lurks within our nature.
- 4 From sin our flesh could not abstain,
Sin held its sway unceasing;
The task was useless and in vain,
Our guilt was e'er increasing.
None can remove sin's poisoned dart
Or purify our guileful heart—
So deep is our corruption.
- 5 Yet as the Law must be fulfilled
Or we must die despairing,
Christ came and has God's anger stilled,
Our human nature sharing.
He has for us the Law obeyed
And thus the Father's vengeance stayed
Which over us impended.
- 6 Since Christ has full atonement made
And brought to us salvation,
Each Christian therefore may be glad
And build on this foundation.
Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead,
Your death is now my life indeed,
For You have paid my ransom.
- 7 Let me not doubt, but truly see
Your Word cannot be broken;
Your call rings out, "Come unto Me!"
No falsehood have You spoken.
Baptized into Your precious name,
My faith cannot be put to shame,
And I shall never perish.

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.

555 Salvation unto Us Has Come

- 1 Salvation unto us has come
 By God's free grace and favor;
 Good works cannot avert our doom,
 They help and save us never.
 Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
 Who did for all the world atone;
 He is our one Redeemer.
- 2 What God did in His Law demand
 And none to Him could render
 Caused wrath and woe on ev'ry hand
 For man, the vile offender.
 Our flesh has not those pure desires
 The spirit of the Law requires,
 And lost is our condition.

condemnation of sins, next the forgiveness of our neighbor's sins, third that which comes of prayer, fourth that which comes of almsgiving, fifth that which comes of humility. Do not then be lazy, but walk in this day by day. CONCERNING THE POWER OF DEMONS, HOMILY 2.6.¹

Monday, October 27

- Read **Daniel 7-9**

JUSTIN MARTYR: (Daniel 7:13) Does not Daniel allude to this very truth when he says that he who received the eternal kingdom is "as a Son of man"? The words "as a Son of man" indicate that he would become man and appear as such but that he would not be born of a human seed. Daniel states the same truth figuratively when he call Christ "a stone cut out without hands," for, to affirm that he was cut out without hands signifies that he was not the product of human activity but of the will of God, the Father of all, who brought him forth. DIALOGUE WITH TRYPHO 76.²

¹ Stevenson, Kenneth, and Michael Gluerup, eds. 2008. [*Ezekiel, Daniel*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

² Stevenson, Kenneth, and Michael Gluerup, eds. 2008. [*Ezekiel, Daniel*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Tuesday, October 28

- Read **Daniel 10-12**

METHODIUS: (Daniel 12:2) It is the flesh that dies; the soul is immortal. So then, if the soul is immortal and the body is a corpse, those who say that there is a resurrection, but not of the flesh, deny any resurrection; because it is not that which remains standing but that which has fallen and been laid down that is to be set up, according to what was written: “Does not he who falls rise again, and he who turns aside return?” Since flesh was made to border on incorruption and corruption, being itself neither the one nor the other, and was overcome by corruption ... and delivered over to death through disobedience, God did not leave it to corruption, to be triumphed over ... but, after conquering death by the resurrection, he delivered it again to incorruption ... “For this corruptible must put on incorruption.”¹⁸ ON THE RESURRECTION 1.12–13.³

Wednesday, October 29

- Read **Ezra 1-5**

BEDE: (Ezra 1:3-7) In these words the great faith of the king and his great piety shine. His faith, certainly, because he understood that the people of Israel was the people of God before all nations.

³ Stevenson, Kenneth, and Michael Gluerup, eds. 2008. [*Ezekiel, Daniel*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

through more serious efforts of prayer, mortification, vigils, alms and a stricter life. For it is harder for us to be free of known enticements of the vices than unknown, and it takes less effort to avoid an unknown pleasure of the flesh than to reject a familiar one. ON EZRA AND NEHEMIAH 3.20.⁷

Sunday, November 2

- Read **Nehemiah 7-9**

End Every Day

Pray the *Collect for Reformation Day*

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; 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

⁷ 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.

same young men who were doing the work were all equipped with a sword. For so great is the ancient enemy's craftiness, so great the fury of his malice when he fights against the church, that not only preachers of the truth but even the very people of God themselves must always keep watch against his machinations, as though standing firm in battle. For the builders gird their loins with a sword when those who take pains to persevere in good works and who take pains to govern those in their charge by means of an ordered regimen (that is, to place the living stones in the edifice of the holy city in suitable arrangement) endeavor to restrain in themselves the laxness of wanton behavior with the sharpness of God's Word. And we should not pass over the fact that when David and Solomon were building this same city, nothing is said about armed builders or attacking adversaries; rather, the city destroyed by their wrongdoings is restored with greater labor and effort, first because the spiritual edifice, which is concerned with the salvation of souls, is such that, as soon as we are reborn in baptism through the faith and confession of the Holy Trinity, we are made, through God's grace, his city and house without any effort of our own; but if after our ablution in the sacred font we fall back into sins through the devil's seduction and the victorious enemy demolishes the defenses of our virtue with the fire of the vices, it is necessary for us to repair those buildings of good works that we have lost

And his piety because without exception he allowed all who wanted to go back to their homeland. And again his faith, because he testified that that same Lord God dwelled in heaven and was in Jerusalem and moved to Jerusalem together with all those who were coming back from Babylon. Is it not clearer than light that he conceived him not as a corporeal being that can be enclosed in a place but as a Spirit that is everywhere? Indeed Cyrus confessed that [God] was in Jerusalem and in the temple, without doubting that he also ruled the kingdom of heaven at the same time. So he believed that he reigned in heaven but was nevertheless on earth with his faithful, in order to direct their minds and hands to make the good works of salvation. In addition, all the words of this Scripture are fragrant with spiritual meanings. To whom is it not obviously clear that only those with whom God is can actually move from the "confusion" of sin to the works of virtue, as from the bondage of Babylon to the freedom of Jerusalem? ON EZRA AND NEHEMIAH 1.1.⁴

Thursday, October 30

- Read **Ezra 6-10**

BEDE: (Ezra 6:17-22) But since the rebuilding of the house after the captivity, as has often been said,

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.

designates the correction of those who through sin have wandered from the path of truth that they had only just set out on, it is fitting that when the temple has been restored in this way it is dedicated by the priests and Levites and the rest of the descendants of the exiles with joy. For when those who have sinned are set straight, “there is great joy” in heaven “in the presence of the angels of God”; there is joy also for the teachers who have labored for the salvation of those who go astray, and there is joy for all those who have migrated in their thoughts and deeds from Babylon [i.e., from “the confusion of sinners”] to the citadel of the virtues, which is truly the promised land. So both the priests and the Levites and all the people rejoice in the dedication of the Lord’s restored house because all the orders of the holy church must share in the rejoicing when those who have sinned are reconciled by repenting. They offer victims for this dedication when they bring vows of thanks to God for the efforts of sinners to lead a holy life and when many, observing their life devoted to God, are themselves spurred on to works of greater virtue. ON EZRA AND NEHEMIAH 2.8.⁵

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.

Friday, October 31

- Read **Nehemiah 1-3**

BEDE: (Nehemiah 1:1-2) Nehemiah is interpreted in Latin as “My consoler is the Lord” or “the consoler from the Lord.” For when Nehemiah restored Jerusalem’s walls and, after delivering them from the disdain of their enemies, raised up the people of God to the observance of the divine law, it is surely clear that by his word and deed and person he not unsuitably designates the mediator of God and people, the man Christ Jesus, who indicates that he was sent to console the poor in spirit when he said to his disciples as he was about to ascend to heaven: “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete,”² that is, a Consoler, by whom the psalmist showed that God’s holy city (namely, the church) would be rebuilt and also those who mourn would be consoled when he said, “The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted,” and so on. ON EZRA AND NEHEMIAH 3.15.⁶

Saturday, November 1

- Read **Nehemiah 4-6**

BEDE: (Nehemiah 4:16-23) For it should be noted not only that half of the young men did the work and half were prepared to fight, but also that these

⁶ 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.