



5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 55:16-18, 22, 1, 4-5, 17, 16**

As for me, I will call upon God, and He shall / hear my voice.*
 He has redeemed my / soul in peace.
 Cast your burden / on the Lord,*
 and He shall sus- / tain you.
 Give ear to my / prayer, O God,*
 and do not hide Yourself from my suppli- / cation.
 My heart is severely pained with- / in me,*
 and the terrors of death have fallen up- / on me.
 Fearfulness and trembling have come up- / on me,*
 and horror has over- / whelmed me.
 I will pray, and / cry aloud,*
 and the Lord shall / save me.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Ephesians 1:13**

“In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.”

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, as You declare Your almighty power above all in showing mercy and pity, mercifully grant unto us such a measure of Your grace that we may obtain Your gracious promises and be made partakers of Your heavenly treasures; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK
Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

TLH 1, LSB 901
 Benjamin Schmolk



THEME OF THE WEEK: **The Worship of God Wrought by the Spirit**

Jerusalem's days were numbered because they did not know the time of their visitation. What does this mean? When their Lord came to them, their long-expected Messiah, having proven Himself again and again through His words and miraculous works, the city refused to believe in Him. When the crowds shouted "Hosanna!" the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." They rejected and killed the "Author of Life" (Acts 3:15). Nevertheless, even in enemy territory, Jesus gathers a small congregation of saints who hang on His every Word. In this way the Spirit draws us into fellowship with the Father whom we worship by faith.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 19:41-48 "Warning and Comfort"**

This world, like ancient Jerusalem, is doomed for destruction. Rampant wickedness demands God's justice. Under the Lord's altar in heaven, the martyrs cry out, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before You will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth" (Rev. 6:10)? The day is surely drawing near. Knowing the judge is at the gate should cause us to fear. Most importantly, it should wake our sleeping consciences to repentance and faith. This is the day of Jesus' gracious visitation. He comes in humility, not wrath. He comes in gentleness, not anger. He comes to embrace you by His promises so on that terrible day you will be rescued from your graves and will see the Redeemer's face. *Come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 119:73-80 "Rejoicing in Hope"**

The Lord gives knowledge and understanding through His Word just as He gives the bread to sustain our bodies. When our fellow saints see our hope in this Word, they should rejoice. This is especially important when we are afflicted by various trials like poverty, weakness, sickness, grief, and ridicule. Though the world sees these calamities as reasons to renounce the Lord, the Christian's faith shines as a beacon pointing to Jesus Christ who leads the way to life through the resurrection. God's love, promised in the Word, always comforts us. His mercy gives us life in the midst of death. The insolent who insult us will be put to shame. Our faith will be vindicated. *May my heart be blameless in Your statutes, that I may not be put to shame. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **1 Corinthians 12:1-11 "Varieties of Gifts"**

Though we all possess the same Spirit, and through that Spirit the same saving faith, we have different gifts. The superhero movies make supernatural gifts look like Superman's strength or Spiderman's tingly senses. What Paul describes seems mundane, but it is far greater than what Hollywood can imagine. Some of us are given great spiritual wisdom in discerning Law and Gospel and others have great knowledge from the Scriptures. I'm always delighted by the gift of strong faith given to many of my members. Scholars can interpret the old tongues so we can read the wisdom of the ancients. Others use their linguistic gifts to preach the Gospel to gentiles. *O Lord, thank You for the various gifts You give for the common good. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: **Jeremiah 7:1-7 "Amend Your Ways"**

You can almost hear the false prophets on Jerusalem's streets. "Don't worry. The Lord won't let our land, the city, and this glorious temple be destroyed. Don't get worked up by Jerimiah's dangerous misinformation campaign. He's disloyal to our country. He doesn't believe we're God's chosen people. It's treasonous to say that God will take away our worship. This is the temple of the Lord!" They neglected to preach repentance in favor of vain pride in their infallible ethnic identity. We need Jerimiah in our own time. If we do not amend our ways and heed the Lord's Word, the preaching of the Gospel could be taken from us. Hold fast to the Lord's Word, not to the conceits of men. *Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me, O Lord. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 11:16-24 "Hearing the Law as Law and the Gospel as Gospel"**

John came preaching repentance from sin, but the Jews said that he was an extremist. John wanted more than the externalized religiosity of the Jews. He wanted the people to turn their hearts from evil to seek mercy from God in Baptism. So they ignored him and continued in their comfortable religious habits thinking that their polite and customary observance was pleasing to God. Jesus came eating and drinking with sinners, showing them love and mercy. The Jews were scandalized and accused Jesus of the former sins of His dinner companions. They refused to let the Law penetrate their hearts. Therefore they were unable to rejoice in mercy. *God, grant me true contrition over sin so that I may rejoice in Your Son's forgiveness. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **Hebrews 3:7-15 "Hardness of Heart"**

The true worship wrought by the Spirit opens our hearts to receive godly rebuke against sin. We need to hear it. Often. The devil pursues us just as he pursued the children of Israel in the desert. He wants us to toy with impious thoughts, anger, bitterness, and lust. But the more we play with iniquity, the harder our hearts become and the harder it becomes to repent when we've fallen under sin's spell. God be praised that His Law still resounds in our churches to shatter our stony hearts. For today God comes to save us, to forgive, and to promise us eternal life. While it is still "today" let's remember Israel's example and repent quickly, seeking the Lord while He may yet be found. *Keep me from sinful unbelief, O Lord. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 143 "For the Contrite"**

Every Christian who has known shame and guilt needs this psalm. And for everyone who thinks they are Christian and hasn't known the limits of David's despair has yet to truly examine himself with the mirror of the Law. If you have been crushed with the knowledge of your falls into sin, if you're ashamed of what you have thought, said, and done, then rejoice. Though the enemy pursues your soul, he hasn't caught it. The Spirit comes in the words of this psalm to rescue you. He answers your cries for help with Jesus, the Son of God, Who has taken away your sins, Who has washed away your guilt with the blood of the cross. By faith in Him alone, you are delivered and saved. *Grant me to know and rejoice in Jesus by Your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

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