



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
PENTECOST 13—YEAR C**

INVOCATION

L: In the name of the Father
and of the Son +
and of the Holy Spirit.

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 139a

**A: To you, O Lord, I lift my soul;
in you I trust, my God.**

L: O LORD, you have searched me and you know
me;

G: you perceive my thoughts from afar.

L: You discern my going out and my lying down;

G: you are familiar with all my ways.

L: Where can I go from your Spirit?

G: Where can I flee from your presence?

L: If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

**G: if I make my bed in the depths, you are
there.**

L: If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

G: if I settle on the far side of the sea,

L: even there your hand will guide me,

G: your right hand will hold me fast.

**A: To you, O Lord, I lift my soul;
in you I trust, my God.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty and merciful God, it is only by your gift of grace that we come into your presence and offer true and faithful service. Grant that our worship on earth may always be pleasing to you, and in the life to come give us the fulfillment of what you have promised; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READING & MEDITATION *see next page*

PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

**A: 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.**

VERSE OF THE DAY

**A: The Word of God is living and active,
sharper than any two-edged sword,
discerning the thoughts and intentions of the
heart. (Hebrews 4:12 cf. RSV)**

BENEDICTION

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

A: Amen

READING AND MEDITATION:

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Four weeks of warnings for Christians begins on this Sunday that the life of faith will be marked by difficulties. These warnings are given so that the believer will be prepared to meet these challenges with the confidence of the cross. Today we see that the Word of God doesn't always unite—it also divides. The living and active Word of God does not bring peace between believers and unbelievers, but division.

As you study this week, seek to find the connecting theme in all the lessons by using Luther's Four Big Barber Questions to ponder and discuss each individual reading:

1. *What is God saying to me in this lesson?*
2. *For what does this lesson lead me to give thanks?*
3. *What sins does this lesson lead me to confess?*
4. *For what does this lesson lead me to pray?*

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 12:49-53

The fire of the Word has come to destroy evil and bring peace between God and his people. Jesus warns that his fire will bring division between believer and unbeliever, even within that most intimate of human relationships, the family. How can Jesus wish such division were already happening? He can only say that because he knows its final purpose: the salvation and purifying of believers.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: JEREMIAH 23:23-29

With the Kingdom of Judah moving ever closer to judgment, Jeremiah proclaims the Lord's condemnation of false prophets. These false prophets had led the people into idolatry, claiming to speak in the name of the Lord. But there is comfort for the faithful: the true Word of the Lord comes like a hammer to crush and like a fire to refine. It is only through such sin-crushing and soul-refining work that we find eternal righteousness in the Word of truth.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: HEBREWS 12:1-13

Running the race of life requires perseverance because the Word of God brings division and persecution and violence. There will be hardships that cause the heart to grow weary. But God promises that these trials—even to the point of shedding of blood—are meant for our good. They are God's way of disciplining us as his sons. The result will be a harvest of righteousness in our lives and peace in our hearts. The Christian faces the hardships of life head on by fixing his eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Our struggle is against sin and for Christ—so strengthen your feeble arms and your weak knees, focus on the examples of the saints who have gone before us, and run the race.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: 2 KINGS 11:1-3, 12-18

The sins of greed and idolatry can permeate the very fabric of a family and rip it apart. As the faithful fight to hold to the truth of the will of God, relationships may be forever destroyed. The wicked will answer for their sin and receive its penalty. The righteous will live by faith with souls forever protected in the Lord's free and faithful grace. With this confidence, we risk all to carry out the will of the Lord and cling to his promises.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON: EPHESIANS 6:10-20

God's Word brings division because we are at war. Marked by the cross, we are now targets for extra effort on the part of evil. We have no choice; we must give battle. But we are not without hope. As we battle, the Word of the Lord is our strength to stand firm and our full armor against the weaponry of evil. Total victory is already assured in Jesus. But "when the fight is fierce, the warfare long" (CW 551) we turn to the Spirit in prayer on behalf of ourselves, and all the saints, that the mystery of the gospel would continue to be revealed.

My takeaways:

What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?