



DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
EASTER 5 —YEAR A

INVOCATION

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

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 33

**A: The earth is full of the goodness of God,
the goodness of our God.**

L: Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous;

G: it is fitting for the upright to praise him.

L: For the Word of the LORD is right and true;

G: he is faithful in all he does.

L: By the word of the LORD were the heavens made,

**G: their starry host by the breath of his
mouth.**

L: For he spoke, and it came to be;

G: he commanded, and it stood firm.

L: The LORD foils the plans of the nations;

G: he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

L: But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever,

**G: the purposes of his heart through all
generations.**

L: The LORD loves righteousness and justice;

G: the earth is full of his unfailing love.

**A: The earth is full of the goodness of God,
the goodness of our God.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: O God, you form the minds of your faithful people into a single will. Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that among the many changes of this world, our hearts may ever yearn for the lasting joys of heaven; through your Son, Jesus Christ 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: Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!
Alleluia. I am the way, the truth, and the life,
says the Lord. (John 14:6)**

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:

Fifth Sunday of Easter: I am the way, the truth, and the life. Christ's message is so exclusive that it rejects all others. There is only one way to the Father, and that way is a *person*. He does not say, 'I show you the way,' like a second Moses, but I am the way. Nor 'I have the truth,' like another Elijah, but I am the truth. Not only 'I lead unto life,' as one of his apostles, but I am the life. (Kögel) The exclusivity of salvation resting in the person of Jesus Christ is a rock against which the unbelieving world crushes itself, but upon which God builds his Church.

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: JOHN 14:1-12

Jesus bids farewell to his disciples on the night he was betrayed. He tries to set their hearts at rest and tells them to trust God and him regarding this departure. But the disciples' faith is clouded by doubt and false hopes. Thomas cannot conceive of a Messianic kingdom that involves death or departure. They did not want to see God in sufferings, but in glory. Philip, like us all, wanted to see the Father. Show us the glory cloud! Show us the fiery mountain! Show us the sapphire pavement! Show us the throne ringed by cherubim and seraphim! Show us the Father! Sinful man wants to look right past this man from Galilee. Sinful man fails to see the truth expressed in Luther's thesis, the truth so crucial to the theology of the cross: the hidden God reveals himself by hiding himself. There is only one way, and that way is a person. Jesus points Thomas and Philip to the one person who reveals the hidden God to us. Let the preacher note the definite articles in verse 6. We are tempted to think there must be more than this humble man from Galilee. Oh, there is! Look closer and see the hidden God. See grace in the flesh—the God of glory willing to hide himself unto death for me.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: ACTS 17:1-12

Paul said it was necessary for God to hide himself in suffering: τὸν χριστὸν ἔδει παθεῖν. All the popular conceptions of Messiah as earthly king were wrong. Not only *did* Messiah suffer and die, Messiah *had to suffer and die!* All the prophesies found their fulfillment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς ὃν ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν. The exclusivity of the Christian message led to vociferous rejection by the people of Israel, both at home and abroad. But the stone the builders rejected has made a new people, a chosen people, a people filled with eagerness and hope in Christ.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: 1 PETER 2:4-10

The world looks at God hidden in Christ and sees either a loser or a joke (1 Corinthians 1). The Jews rejected him because of his humility. The world today rejects him because of his claims of being the one way, the one truth, the one life. In neither case do they see Christ as the stone that should set their angles or head their corners. They would rather fashion their lives by their own design. This rejected stone, however, will ultimately be their downfall. For believers, though, this rejected stone is what saves and builds. Jesus said, “ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ζωὴ.” That living stone is Life, gives life, and makes living stones out of people who were scattered in darkness.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: 1 KINGS 18:16-45

Ahab and Jezebel had institutionalized idolatry and persecution on a national scale. To people worshipping a false god of the storm, God sent his prophet to announce his judgment: There would be no rain. After three years of drought, famine crippled the kingdom. Against that backdrop, God sent Elijah to a showdown with Ahab and his false prophets. In the context of this Sunday, the lesson shows the emptiness and impotence of all other ways besides the one way. No matter their outward show of power or prestige, 450 prophets and the might of royalty could not change the spiritual reality that there is

one way, one truth, one life. Even today, a whole world of false teachers and TV bible scholars cannot change the spiritual reality that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. The drama of this narrative engages: as the water runs down and fills the trench, we wait. As the fire descends and consumes, we marvel. As the people's hearts are turned back to God, we shout Elijah's (אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי – note the translation) name: The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!

My takeaways:

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