



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
EPIPHANY 6 —YEAR B**

INVOCATION

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

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 32

**A: Remember your mercy, O Lord;
Remember your mercy and love.**

L: Blessed is he whose transgressions
are forgiven,

G: whose sins are covered.

L: When I kept silent,
your hand was heavy upon me;

**G: my strength was sapped
as in the heat of summer.**

L: Then I acknowledged my sin to you

G: and did not cover up my iniquity.

L: I said, "I will confess my transgressions
to the LORD,"

G: and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

L: You are my hiding place;

G: you will protect me from trouble.

L: Many are the woes of the wicked,

**G: but the LORD's unfailing love
surrounds those who trust in him.**

**A: Remember your mercy, O Lord;
Remember your mercy and love.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Lord God, in mercy receive the prayers of your people. Grant them the wisdom to know the things that please you and the grace and power always to accomplish them; 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: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of eternal life.
(John 6:68 cf. NIV)**

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:

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany: The gospel lesson is so packed with doctrine and with material for appropriation and application that it is almost painful to narrow it down. But, sticking with the theme for Epiphany, let it be this: Jesus shows the greatness of his glory in the risks he is willing to take with us. Another obvious theme is: Jesus shows his glory in the way that he answers prayers.

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: MARK 1:40-45

In both his rule over our history and in his answer to our prayers it is axiomatic: the greater the affliction that he permits, the greater his risk that we will fall into despair. The greater his blessings in answer to our prayers, the greater the risk that we will forget him and become arrogant. This leper has not despaired. He comes to Jesus with the perfect prayer: *If you are willing!* He trusts that Jesus is able to help and by his prayer shows trust also in Jesus' mercy. The prayer implies that Jesus might will otherwise, in which case he is ready to accept the will of the Almighty. Jesus takes the second risk when he answers the man's prayer and heals him. But now the man falls into the second peril. With no doubt the best of intentions, he prefers his own will now to the will that Jesus had expressed in his command. (One cannot help but think of 1 Samuel 15:22.) What great glory Jesus shows in his love for us! He knew what the man would do, but blessed him anyway, even when he knew that the man's disobedience would get in the way of Jesus' own will and work. What afflictions have we had that were great blessings because they drove us to our knees in trusting prayer instead of despair? How many times when he answered did we forget the Giver in the enjoyment of the gift?

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: 2 KINGS 5:1-14

Naaman never would have sought the one true God, had it not been for the utter hopelessness of his condition. But notice that he too has to be purged of his pride, of his own will and reason before the Lord helps him. Naaman, like us, had reason for the rest of his life to be grateful for the greatness of his suffering! One compelling central line in the story is: *But he had leprosy.* Again an axiom: no matter how great our accomplishments and our virtues, there is always in life a, *but he ...* Each of us has at least one thorn, one Achilles' heel that can be our undoing or that blessed curse which keeps us humble and crying to the Lord for mercy.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27

The danger of that one *but* is real. It requires serious and concentrated effort to prevent it from destroying us. The gospel is not a license for spiritual laziness but the source of the will and the strength to continue in the fight against our own special obstacle and hindrance to the gospel in our lives. What is that obstacle in yours? How are you fighting and racing so as to win over it? Jesus shows his glory by permitting the struggle and then by giving the will and the energy to overcome and win the prize which his grace and merit has won for us.

My takeaways:

**SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON:
2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-7**

As Jesus shows his glory by giving us comfort and strength to endure even when he does not take the afflictions away, he does so with a second goal in mind. Not only does he keep us close to himself by such affliction, he also gives us the ability to understand, to sympathize with, and to be a source of his strength and comfort to others who suffer. Someone needs to show them the glory of the cross in suffering. Why not you? And so your affliction becomes a double blessing.

My takeaways:

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