

Devotions – October 13-19, 2019

By Pastor Don Ludemann
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Harvey, MI

The biblical texts for this week come from the Daily Lectionary, based on the Sunday Bible readings that most of our congregations use. This lectionary is printed near the back of our hymnal (ELW), starting on page 1121. We are finishing Year C (the year of Luke) in the three-year cycle of readings. Daily devotions begin with the Sunday texts; then Monday -- Wednesday help us further reflect on them. Devotions for Thursday -- Saturday introduce and prepare us for the upcoming Sunday's themes.

Sunday, October 13, 2019

We're now in the heart of the Jewish High Holy Days. Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, is past; as is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the most holy day in the Jewish tradition.

This evening marks the beginning of Sukkot, the 7-day Jewish fall harvest festival. During these days, the devout eat (and some even sleep) in outdoor booths: memorializing the huts in which farmers lived while gathering the harvest, as well as the fragile tents in which the Hebrews lived after fleeing Egypt and sojourning to the Promised Land.

Text: Luke 17:17-19

Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

I always marvel that God comes to us through fragile fellow human beings. Awakened to this, let us return to Jesus, God in the flesh, and give thanks!

Let us pray: *Good and gracious God, we praise and thank you for your healing power and presence made known through your Son, Jesus, whom we meet in our neighbors. Amen.*



Monday, October 14, 2019

Day 1 of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot

On this second Monday of October, some in Canada are observing the federal holiday, Thanksgiving Day. But some provinces and cities observe Thanksgiving on a different day. In the U.S., today is a federal holiday honoring Columbus landing in the Americas in 1492. But some cities and states prefer to observe the day as Native American or Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Text: 2 Kings 5:15

Then he [Naaman] returned to the man of God [Elisha], he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant.”

Like the Samaritan leper in Sunday's Gospel text, Naaman recognizes that he's been healed. He returns to give thanks to Elisha and offers him a present. But Elisha refuses any payment.

Let us pray: *Healing God, we come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all we have comes from you. We pray that you would continue to heal the divisions that separate us from our sisters and brothers around the globe. Make us instruments of your peace. Amen.*



Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Day 2 of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot

Text: Ephesians 6:18-20

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

How might we, in our daily lives, “make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel”? In other words, how do we, fragile and fallible as we are, embody God's love? With lots of prayer!

Let us pray: *O God of love, strengthen and embolden us to be your ambassadors in the world. Amen.*



Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Day 3 of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot

Text: Psalm 61:1-4

Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer.

From the end of the earth I call to you, when my heart is faint.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I;

for you are my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.

Let me abide in your tent forever, find refuge under the shelter of your wings.

Like our Jewish kin who are observing Sukkot, we grow to understand that the only shelter in which we can ultimately trust is God.

Let us pray: *O God, our rock, our refuge, our strong tower, protect us this day under the shelter of your wings. Amen.*



Thursday, October 17, 2019

Day 4 of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot

Our focus turns now to the coming Sunday's texts in the Revised Common Lectionary. The Gospel for that day will be Jesus' parable in Luke 18 about the necessity of persistent prayer.

Text: Psalm 121:1-2

I lift up my eyes to the hills -- from where will my help come?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

The hills in my neck of the woods these days are awash in color! Red, yellow, orange, burgundy! I especially love the beautifully dappled maple leaves, where a single leaf might be three or four colors! I lift my eyes and give thanks to God, the artist, who helps me see the beauty around me.

Let us pray: *O God, creator of sun and moon, sky and sea, earth and all its creatures, your mercies are new each day. Help me to see the beauty in the land, the animals, and the people around me. Amen.*



Friday, October 18, 2019

Day 5 of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot

Text: Psalm 121:3-4

**He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**

I sometimes wake up in the middle of the night, worrying about something. Do you? Knowing that God always hears our prayers -- day or night, no matter the circumstance -- why would we not pray?

Let us pray: *O God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, we thank you for always hearing our prayers. Amen.*



Saturday, October 19, 2019

Day 6 of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot

Text: Psalm 121:7-8

**The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.**

“The Lord will keep you.” What wonderful, reassuring words! No matter the time or circumstance, God will keep you. No matter that your fragile tent, your fragile body, will fail and fade, God will keep you. Thanks be to God!

Let us pray: *O God, grant us the peace that only you can give, knowing that you keep us always safely wrapped in the arms of your love. Amen.*

