

All Saints Day November 6, 2016

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

**A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings
become a part of the rhythms of your life.**

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“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

November 3, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details of this week's location.



<http://www.internetmonk.com/archive/the-feast-of-all-saints>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 677 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 463

“For all the saints who from their labors rest”

“..Combining pure rhythm with great directness and simplicity, (author) Bishop How's compositions arrest attention more through a comprehensive grasp of the subject and the unexpected light thrown upon and warmth infused into facia and details usually shunned by the poet, than through glowing imagery and impassioned rhetoric. He has painted lovely images woven with tender thoughts, but these are few, and found in his least appreciated work. Those compositions which have laid the firmest hold upon the Church, are simple, unadorned, but enthusiastically practical hymns, the most popular of which, "O Jesu, Thou art standing"; "For all the Saints who from their labours rest," and "We give Thee but Thine own," have attained to a foremost rank.” ... http://www.hymnary.org/person/How_William

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OaBgaMcOvM> A sing along version with visuals. A recording of the great Vaughan Williams tune (SINE NOMINE) by the Choir of Paisley Abbey, Cambridge.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvFr8hwFdNM> The funeral service of President Gerald Ford.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

*The readings listed are for All Saints' Day. The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) readings are for the **25th Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 27.***

All Saints' Day, Revelation 7:(2-8), 9-17; RCL, Haggai 1:15b-2:9 or Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21 or Psalm 98 (Next Week: Malachi 4:1-6; RCL, Isaiah 65:17-25)

“When Revelation 7:9-17 is read as an isolated unit, much of its meaning is lost.

To grasp the passage's fuller meaning we need to go to chapter 6, where the first six seals on the scroll are opened. After the sixth seal is opened (verse 12), the physical foundations of creation are rattled. Destruction reaches such a pitch that all people hide. Key is their question in 6:17. Now that the day of wrath has come, "Who is able to stand?"” ... (continued below)

² Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, ³ saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” ⁴ And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

*⁵ 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,
⁶ 12,000 from the tribe of Asher,
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,
12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,*

*⁷ 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,
12,000 from the tribe of Levi,
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,
⁸ 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.*

A Great Multitude from Every Nation

⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” ¹⁴ I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me,

“These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ “Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.

¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.

¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

...So who is able to stand? Those whom the Lamb has washed. With that word of encouragement, this persecuted minority--the first-century church--is able to move ahead, because they know where God is taking them. And today's believers know the same”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=568 [Walter F. Taylor, Jr.](#), Ernest W. and Edith S. Ogram Professor of New Testament Studies, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH

Need a resource for commentaries on the Psalms? Try this one:
http://www.preceptaustin.org/psalms_commentaries

Psalm 149; RCL, Job 19:23-27a or Psalm 17:1-9 (Psalm 98; RCL, Malachi 4:1-2a or Psalm 46)

Sing to the LORD a New Song

149 Praise the LORD! (*Hallelujah*)
 Sing to the LORD a new song,
 his praise in the assembly of the godly!
² Let Israel be glad in his Maker;
 let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!
³ Let them praise his name with dancing,
 making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!
⁴ For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;
 he adorns the humble with salvation.
⁵ Let the godly exult in glory;
 let them sing for joy on their beds.
⁶ Let the high praises of God be in their throats
 and two-edged swords in their hands,
⁷ to execute vengeance on the nations
 and punishments on the peoples,
⁸ to bind their kings with chains
 and their nobles with fetters of iron,
⁹ to execute on them the judgment written!
 This is honor for all his godly ones.
 Praise the LORD! (*Hallelujah*)

“Presumably, Psalm 149 was chosen as the lectionary psalm for All Saints Day because the “saints” show up three times in this psalm (verses 1, 5, 9 NIV).

Indeed, no other psalm has such a “triple play” of saintliness. In NRSV, these are the “faithful”; more significantly, in Hebrew, they are the *hasidim* (though this is not yet the eighteenth-century movement of mystical Judaism that now shares that name).

What did it mean in biblical times to be *hasid*, a faithful one, a saint? The key has to be the adjective’s relation to the noun: *hesed*, God’s own “steadfast love.” Thus, the “saints” in the Old Testament were those who lived in a mutual relationship of *hesed* with God. The relationship worked both ways. Primary, obviously, was God’s own steadfast love -- pure undeserved gift and the basis of any possible human response or “saintliness”: “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (Exodus 34:6-7). In the Bible, sainthood is God’s work, first, last, and always...

...Psalm 149 would not yet have been able to sing of eternal bliss, but it was quite able to revel in the bliss of present worship. Israel’s praise, too, had what we might anachronistically call an eschatological dimension -- entering already, through ritual, song, and story, into the

fullness of life that God has always meant for God's people, but that is now frequently hidden by personal trials and communal distress.

Psalm 149 is one of the "final Hallel," those five songs of praise that conclude the Psalter -- five, perhaps, to match the five "books" of the Psalter, those in turn matching the five books of Moses. All things hang together in those "fives," and the five final psalms sing of God's works in creation and history, in our personal and communal lives, that eventually leave us to do nothing else but praise, along with "everything that breathes" (Psalm 150:12), the Psalter's closing invitation...

...Can we design worship that celebrates life as fully as does Psalm 149? Can our worship so fully prepare us to resist all forces that stand in the way of God's justice, salvation, and shalom? Can our worship hear and echo the praise of all God's creation, as does Psalm 148? All of this is brought together in the Psalter's final Hallel, and all of us are called to join the dance."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1825 *Fred Gaiser*
Professor Emeritus of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

1 John 3:1-3; RCL, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17 (2 Thessalonians 3:(1-5) 6-13;RCL, verses 6-13 only)

"These epistles represent the singular voice of an extraordinary theologian. John, the last living apostle, writes to his "children." For decades he has served as the elder father of the house churches of Asia Minor, but during his exile, false teaching has persuaded some to abandon the faith and the life of the community of the beloved. At least one church's leader has presumed to advance his own teaching at the expense of the apostle's instruction. Knowing that his days are numbered, John sends a general epistle, 1 John, together with its introductory cover letter, 2 John. In order to address the errant leader's conduct, he also sends a situation-specific, personal and pastoral addendum, 3 John. Rallying the faithful so that none would be lost to the ongoing threat of deception, John urges his children to confess by the Spirit in this last hour the man Jesus as the Son of the Father, come in the flesh in truth and love. The fulfillment of God's historic dealings with his people of old is Jesus' atoning sacrifice of himself. Through his shed blood, a cleansing flood, God confers the life of the age to come."

<https://www.cph.org/p-21567-1-3-john-concordia-commentary.aspx>

3 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears^[a] we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

a. [1 John 3:2](#) Or *when it appears*

"...According to the Elder, it is not enough simply to be *called* a son of God, if there is no real substance behind this (perhaps poking at the empty promises of the dissenters). St. Augustine

raises this matter quite poignantly: “For those who are called sons, and are not sons, what profit them the name where the thing is not? How many are called “physicians” but know not how to heal! How many are called “watchers,” but sleep all night long! So, many are called Christians,” and yet in their deeds are not found to be; because they are not actually what they are called, this is, in life, in hope, in charity” (*Homilies IV on the First Epistle of John*). Augustine’s point is that the divine adoption of believers-in-Jesus is not simply words -- *adopted, saved, redeemed*. Believers go through a transformative process. We can easily relate the Elder’s language of adoption to Colossians 1:13-14 -- “He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

In the Roman world adoptions took place, but it was not about compassion for orphans. In fact, many people were adopted as young adults or adults. Adoption was about *inheritance* and *name*. Often a man was adopted to carry on the name of a childless family. The adopted son would sever ties to the old family and this would include relief of any debt owed under the name of the old family. He would become a whole new person, in a new context, with a new inheritance and name.

And so it goes with spiritual adoption through Jesus Christ! The Elder’s vision is not just about the past (a clean slate), or the distant future (going to heaven), but also the *present* and *progress*. As the Elder notes, redemption is illusory if it is not transformative unto righteousness. Sin cannot be ignored or redefined as an evasive tactic (perhaps a tactic the dissenters were using). Christ came to deal with sin, and abiding in him, entering into the family of God through Christ’s own Sonship, is the only way to sever the bondage to sin.”

Notes: ¹ The author of 1 John is conventionally called “the Elder” in scholarship

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2430 [Nijay Gupta](#) Assistant Professor of New Testament, George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Ore

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 5th Chapter”

Matthew 5:1-12; RCL, Luke 20:27-38 (Luke 21:5-28 (29-36); RCL, verses 5-19 only)



<http://www.textweek.com/mlk/matt5a.htm> has 46 links to contemporary commentaries.

The Sermon on the Mount

5 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

The Beatitudes

² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons^[a] of God.

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

a. [Matthew 5:9](#) Greek *huioi*; see Preface

“Glory to You, O Lord”

“The Sermon on the Mount opens with the beatitudes—eight statements beginning with the word *blessed*.^[1]

The word *blessed* translates the Greek word *makarios*. It doesn't pray for a blessing but affirms an existing state of blessedness. There is another Greek word, *eulogia*, that is translated into English as “blessed.” It is the word used to pray that God will bless or bring something good to a person or a community. It does not appear in the beatitudes.

This word affirms a state of blessing that already exists. Each beatitude declares that a group of people usually regarded as afflicted is actually blessed. Those blessed do not have to do anything to attain this blessing. Jesus simply declares that they have already been blessed. Thus the beatitudes are first of all declarations of God's grace. They are not conditions of salvation or roadmaps to earn entry to God's kingdom.

Those who belong to each blessed group experience God's grace because the kingdom of heaven has come near. Consider the second beatitude, “Blessed are those who mourn” ([Matt. 5:4](#)). People do not normally think of mourning as a blessing. It is a sorrow. But with the coming of the kingdom of heaven, mourning becomes a blessing because the mourners “will be comforted.” The

implication is that God himself will do the comforting. The affliction of mourning becomes the blessing of profound relationship with God. That is a blessing indeed!

Although the primary purpose of the beatitudes is to declare the blessings given by God's kingdom, most scholars also regard them as painting a picture of the character of that kingdom.[2] Donald A. Hagner, vol. 33A, *Word Biblical Commentary: Matthew 1-13*, (Dallas: Word, Inc., 2002), 97. This view, though widely held, is not universal. For a brief outline of various alternatives, see W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, *Matthew*, Anchor Bible vol. 26 (New York: Doubleday, 1971), 50-53. As we step into God's kingdom, we hope to become more like those named as blessed—more meek, more merciful, more hungry for righteousness, more apt to make peace, and so on. This gives the beatitudes a moral imperative. Later, when Jesus says, "Make disciples of all nations" ([Matt. 28:19](#)), the beatitudes describe the character these disciples are meant to take on.

The beatitudes describe the character of God's kingdom, but they are not *conditions* of salvation. Jesus does not say, for example, "Only the pure in heart may enter the kingdom of heaven." This is good news because the beatitudes are impossibly hard to fulfill. Given that Jesus says, "Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart" ([Matt. 5:28](#)), who could truly be "pure in heart" ([Matt. 5:8](#))? If it were not for God's grace, no one would actually be blessed. The beatitudes are not a judgment against all who fail to measure up. Instead, they are a blessing for any who consent to join themselves to God's kingdom as it "comes near."

A further grace of the beatitudes is that they bless God's community, not just God's individuals. By following Jesus, we become blessed members of the kingdom community, even though our character is not yet formed in God's likeness. Individually, we fail to fulfill the characteristics of some or all of the blessings. But we are blessed nonetheless by the character of the entire community around us. Citizenship in God's kingdom begins now. The character of the kingdom community is perfected when Jesus returns, "coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" ([Matt. 24:30](#)). With this understanding, we are ready to explore the specific character of each of the beatitudes and explore how it applies to work... .."

<https://www.theologyofwork.org/new-testament/matthew/the-kingdom-of-heaven-at-work-in-us-matthew-5-7/the-beatitudes-matthew-51-12/> This article is from the Theology of Work organization. Using the "next section" like will have a commentary on each of the Beatitudes.



Agnus Day appears with the permission of <http://www.agnusday.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHCGNf7KaVQ> Some going home music (with B.B. King)