

14TH Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 16 August 21, 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”

August 18, 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 at the home of Robert Russo, a Puritas Lutheran Church member. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details.)



http://www.syossetgospelchurch.com/web_images/narrowdoorlarge.jpg

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 510 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 415

“A multitude from the east and the west”

Magnus Brostrup Landstad [author](born 7 October 1802 in Måsøy, Norway and died 8 October 1880 in Kristiania) was a Norwegian minister, psalmist and poet who published the first collection of authentic Norwegian traditional ballads in 1853. This work was criticized for unscientific methods, but today it is commonly accepted that he contributed significantly to the preservation of the traditional ballads. http://www.hymnary.org/person/Landstad_MB

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pR0HZzZbtg>” Improvised hymn introduction on Der mänge skal komme... Mark Peters playing the Lauck pipe organ, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Leland MI”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pT2lo9XfkMQ> A karaoke site that moves at a fast pace!

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

Isaiah 66:18-23; RCL, Jeremiah 1:4-10 or Psalm 71:1-6 (Next Week: Proverbs 25:2-10; RCL, Jeremiah 2:4-13 or Psalm 81:1, 10-16)

¹⁸“For I know^[a] their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming^[b] to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, ¹⁹ and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations. ²⁰ And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. ²¹ And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the LORD.

²²“For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the LORD,
so shall your offspring and your name remain.
²³ From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the LORD.

- a. [Isaiah 66:18](#) Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew lacks *know*
- b. [Isaiah 66:18](#) Hebrew *and it is coming*

<https://www.studylight.org/commentary/isaiah/66-18.html> will give you 16 commentaries, especially verse 18. For example, Matthew Poole suggests the literal translation for verse 18 is “And I their works, and their thoughts, coming together all nations and languages, and they shall come and see my glory”.

The geographical references are detailed in the [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](http://biblehub.com/commentaries/isaiah/66-19.htm) section of <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/isaiah/66-19.htm> . Many of the references suggest several understandings but conclude "that the message would be borne (?) to the most remote regions."

Psalm 50:1-15; RCL, Isaiah 58:9b-14 or Psalm 103:1-8 (Psalm 131; RCL, Sirach 10:12-18 or Proverbs 25:6-7 or Psalm 112)

"How do you respond to the words, "The boss would like to set up a meeting with you?"

Depending upon both your relationship with the boss and your recent performance at work, you may be one who is encouraged by this imminent meeting. "Finally, a raise!" Or you may get that proverbial pit in the stomach which screams, "Oh oh!"

The announcement that God is approaching as judge yields contrasting responses as well. Not unlike the way we talk about law and gospel in preaching (that is, the very same word can be heard as law to some and gospel to others), the effect of this announcement depends upon the stance of the recipient of such news. For some, the announcement that the mighty one, God the Lord, will appear is a longed-for event. Yet, for others, it is the impetus for trembling. Yes, it is clear that judgment takes center stage in the beginning of this Psalm, but is this welcomed or undesirable judgment? Of course, that depends upon what we know about who is doing the judging and, secondly, who is being judged.

Before exploring these two areas (who is doing the judging and who is being judged), it is important to be aware that the remaining seventeen verses of Psalm 50 contain a speech made by God. Prior to God's actual speech, however, there is an introduction to the keynote speaker. The pericope we have before us this week (verses 1-6)* is the introduction. From this introduction alone, what do we find out about the one who is doing the judging?"

*Verses 1-6 are the assigned reading for a Transfiguration Sunday.

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=249 *Shauna Hannan*
Associate Professor of Homiletics, *Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA*

God Himself Is Judge A Psalm of Asaph.*

50 The Mighty One, God the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.

² Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.

³ Our God comes; he does not keep silence;^[a]
before him is a devouring fire,
around him a mighty tempest.

⁴ He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may judge his people:

⁵ "Gather to me my faithful ones,

who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!”

⁶The heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge! Selah

⁷“Hear, O my people, and I will speak;
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.

⁸Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.

⁹I will not accept a bull from your house
or goats from your folds.

¹⁰For every beast of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.

¹¹I know all the birds of the hills,
and all that moves in the field is mine.

¹²“If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and its fullness are mine.

¹³Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?

¹⁴Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,^[b]
and perform your vows to the Most High,

¹⁵and call upon me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”

(Psalm 50 continues through verse 23)

- a. [Psalm 50:3](#) Or *May our God come, and not keep silence*
- b. [Psalm 50:14](#) Or *Make thanksgiving your sacrifice to God*

*“There were a number of Levites that King David assigned as worship leaders in the tabernacle choir, according to [1 Chronicles 6:31–32](#). Asaph was one of these men ([1 Chronicles 6:39](#)). Asaph’s duties are described in detail in [1 Chronicles 16](#). According to [2 Chronicles 29:30](#), both Asaph and David were skilled singers and poets. Asaph is also mentioned as a “seer” or prophet. The “sons of Asaph” are mentioned in [1 Chronicles 25:1](#), [2 Chronicles 20:14](#), and [Ezra 2:41](#). The sons of Asaph were likely a guild of skilled poets and singers, modeling themselves musically after Asaph, their master. The church musicians of our day can be considered spiritual “children of Asaph.”

[Psalms 50](#) and [73–83](#) are called the “Psalms of Asaph” because his name appears in the superscription at the head of those psalms. Regarding Asaph’s role as a prophet, of particular interest is the [imprecatory Psalm 83](#), which deals with God’s judgment of Israel’s enemies: Edom, the Ishmaelites, Moab, the Hagarites, Gebal, Ammon, the Amalekites, Philistia, Tyre, and Assyria. If we examine the psalms written by Asaph, we can see that all of them have to do with the judgment of God, and many involve the prayers of the people at the prospect or moment of a particular event.”
<http://www.gotquestions.org/who-was-Asaph.html>

Hebrews 12:4-24 (25-29); RCL, Hebrews 12:18-29 (*Hebrews 13:1-17; RCL, Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16*) *The readings for August all come from Hebrews.*

“Hebrews is one of the three New Testament commentaries on a single Old Testament verse:

The just shall live by his faith. (Hab 2:4b KJV)

This is the verse that struck a fire in the heart of Martin Luther, and began the Protestant Reformation 450 years ago. This verse opened the eyes of Augustine, and helped him to become a mighty man of faith, and it is still striking fire in many hearts today. It is expanded and amplified in Romans, Ephesians, and Hebrews. Each of these Epistles emphasizes a different aspect of that statement.

The book of Romans talks about the just -- the justified -- those who have been accepted as righteous in Jesus Christ. The just shall live by faith. The book of Ephesians emphasized the words "shall live," and it tells us about life as a justified person -- the walk in the Spirit, the life in Jesus, the life of Christ in us -- the just shall live by faith. And finally, the book of Hebrews takes up the last two words, "by faith," and it shows us how to lay hold of the life by which we are justified.” <http://www.raystedman.org/bible-overview/adventuring/hebrews-all-about-faith>

Read the complete overview of the book of Hebrews at this website.

⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reprov'd by him.

⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”

⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. ¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; ¹⁶ that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. ¹⁷ For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken

¹⁸For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. ²⁰For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” ²¹Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” ²²But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³and to the assembly^[a] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

a. [Hebrews 12:23](#) Or church

"This is your final warning!"

These words, full of gravity and danger, are familiar from television and film or perhaps from our own experience as children or as parents. These bracing words tell us that we have reached a limit, that immediate action is required to change course. Our current path will bring consequences.

In some sense, these words of sharp rebuke are also an apt heading for this passage from Hebrews. Throughout this written sermon, the author has been warning us against neglecting our salvation (2:3), hardening our hearts (3:7--4:13), falling away (6:4-7), and shrinking back (10:38-39). As he comes to the end, he issues one last warning..."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=659 [Bryan J. Whitfield](#), Assistant Professor of Christianity, Mercer University, Macon, GA

"Today's second reading is the third of four consecutive readings from Hebrews. The last two weeks focused on the list of heroes and heroines of the faith in Chapter 11. Today's lesson compares the worship at Mount Sinai (though the actual place is unnamed in the text) with that of Mount Zion. The arrival to the celestial *City of God*, much anticipated earlier in this longer section of Hebrews (11:10, 16) is described in some detail. Yet incorporation of the faithful into the "heavenly Jerusalem" and its divine service (12:22) is, in fact, only the penultimate climax of this motif.

Hebrews description of the City of God itself anticipates the stunning exhortation that flows from Hebrews final reflection on the cross: "Jesus suffered *outside* the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood. Let us then go to him *outside* the camp and bear the abuse he endured." Today's second reading ends by quoting Haggai 2:6 in order to reveal an equally stunning acknowledgement of God's birthing of a new cosmos, where even the most basic distinction between heaven and earth will be dissolved (12:27). In advance of this cosmic "shaking," those of faith are asked "to offer God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe" (12:28)...

Hebrews' point seems to be that in a cosmos without such a basic "religious" distinction between heaven and earth, divine service of God necessarily goes "outside the city gate" of even the *heavenly* Jerusalem to serve those in need. Heavenly worship and responding to the needs of the neighbor are one and the same. The model here, of course, is the incarnation of

the pre-existent Word in the person and work of the high priest of this sacred/profane liturgy, Jesus. In short, Christian worship is a liturgy (service) indelibly marked by the cross and the cruciform life of Christian discipleship...

What if the Word that God speaks from the cross is such that it is truly heard only when it responds to human need? What if God's Word simply falls silent when all it is perceived to contain is the threat of holy, transcendent judgment upon all that is impure, unholy, and profane?" https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1750

Erik Heen, John H.P. Reumann Professor in Biblical Studies, ***The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia***

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 13th Chapter

“Glory to You, O Lord”

Luke 13:22-30; RCL, Luke 13:10-17 (Luke 14:1-14; RCL, 14:1, 7-14)

“Lately, I've been trying to take myself back a few years to when I was just a "Lutheran-In-Name-Only" to recall all of the things I believed that stood in *stark contrast* to what the Bible truly teaches, or what I believe, teach, and confess today.

In short, so much of what I believed was a either a half-truth or an outright lie!

Of course, I didn't know any better at the time, but that certainly didn't excuse me from the error of my ways and the sinful false convert they turned me into.

Thanks be to God things are different now -- extremely different! I can't take any credit whatsoever for all the glory is God's and His alone by His mercy and grace.

For instance, one such Bible passage that this former Evangelical used to absolutely love to beat other believers over the head with was Luke 13:22-30...”

<http://www.lutheranlayman.com/2016/06/the-door-is-narrow-but-at-least-its.html>

“As Christians, while the world continues to be apoplectic over bathroom doors, I humbly suggest we fix our eyes on the narrow door instead. In a Lutheran layman's terms, yes, the door is narrow, but at least it's wide open so repent and be saved!” An additional comment from the author of www.lutheranlayman.com. He describes himself as “not a called and ordained minister of God's Word and Sacraments. I'm a layman or just a regular Christian, Corporate Recruiter, Husband, Father, Friend who lives in the "City of Good Neighbors" here on the East Coast. To be more specific, and relevant to the point I want to make with this disclaimer/note, please understand that I'm a relatively new convert to Confessional Lutheran who recently escaped American Evangelicalism a little more than 3 years ago now...”

The Narrow Door

²² He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³ And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” And he said to them, ²⁴ “**Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.** ²⁵ When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to

knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us,' then he will answer you, 'I do not know where you come from.' ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' ²⁷ But he will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!' ²⁸ In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. ²⁹ And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

"This is the Gospel of the Lord" "Praise to You, O Christ

"Our Lord did not say, "Good question! Let's divide up into groups and discuss what each of you thinks about it." To pool the group's thoughts would only increase speculation. Jesus wasn't interested in speculation about theology. He was concerned about the personal salvation of His hearers. So, rather than opening it up for discussion, Jesus gave a command that applied the question to His hearers' hearts: "Strive to enter by the narrow door." <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-66-narrow-door-luke-1322-30>

"Will it sell? Will it sell in Peoria?" That question is often asked by professional marketers, especially if you belong to the Coca-Cola Corporation and you want to start a new Coca-Cola product... if a product can sell in Peoria, chances are it can sell in Topeka, Omaha, Los Angeles and Seattle...

All politicians and all presidents talk out of both sides of their mouth; that is the only way you get elected in Peoria. Will it sell in Peoria?

Jesus of Nazareth was not a politician. Jesus was oblivious to these kinds of mechanisms. Jesus never asked, "Will this sell in Jerusalem?" "Disciples, do you think that the people in Jericho will buy into this kind of idea?" Jesus was not a politician, at all. And today's Scripture lesson is another one of the many examples of the offensiveness of Jesus of Nazareth, of the radical offensiveness, of the bluntness. Jesus is willing to tell it like it is. He is going to tell you up front about the cost of discipleship

Jesus is blunt. He is so blunt he is not afraid of offending anyone...

Well, it is with this mood that we approach the Scripture for today which is part of Luke, chapter 10 through chapter 18. This section of eight chapters, ten through eighteen, is about radical discipleship, and those ideas wouldn't sell in Jerusalem; they don't sell in Jericho; and they don't sell in Peoria. And today Jesus speaks bluntly about the cost of being a disciple.. .

Jesus of Nazareth was the most radical person this world has ever seen. His was the most revolutionary force of dedicated, selfless, giving, loving people who ever lived. Anytime you gather together a group of people who live under the cross, it is narrow. Anytime you gather together a group of people who understand that the way of discipleship is as wide as the cross. Anytime you gather together a group of people who are committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and are committed to the suffering of the world, you have assembled the most powerful revolutionary force in history. Of course, that will never sell in Peoria. http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series_c_will_it_sell_in_peoria.htm



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