

DEVOTION FOR THE NINTHE WEEK OF PENTECOST

PSALM138

I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; before the “gods” I will sing your praise.

I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and for your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.

When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted.

May all the kings of the earth praise you, O Lord, when they hear the words of your mouth.

May they sing of the ways of the Lord, for the glory of the Lord is great.

Though the Lord is on high, He looks upon the lowly, but the proud He knows from afar.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes, with your right hand you save me.

The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Deuteronomy 20:1-20 Rules of Warfare

- 1) On what would Israel base their confidence in battle?
- 2) Why were the people being disposed, not to be accorded mercy?
- 3) Who and was to be accorded mercy and why?

Romans 4:1-25 Abraham counted righteous through faith

- 1) Who are those who are blessed?
- 2) How is the blessing received?
- 3) On what basis was Abraham accounted righteous in the eyes of God?

“WHEN I CALLED YOU ANSWERED ME”

Do you believe God hears you? The Psalmist thanked God that He heard Him. He sang, “*On the day I called, you answered me...*” We thank God that He hears when we call. Believers in the Lord have this blessed assurance. The ancient Canaanites believed their gods were hard of hearing. They needed hearing aids and so the Canaanites had to shout, make long prayers and repeat the same phrases over and over again. The gods weren’t always watching, often they were watching something else. The Canaanites tried to get their attention, by jumping up and down, dancing, lighting fires, burning and cutting themselves. The Psalmist gives thanks, because when he called the Lord answered him. The Lord always watched over His people and always heard their prayers.

On Mount Carmel, the priests of Baal and the prophet Elijah had a contest to determine which god Israel should follow. They agreed that the god who answered with fire from heaven would be worshiped as God. The priests of Baal jumped, yelled and slashed themselves, but there was no answer. Elijah asked, “*Perhaps he is relieving himself, or is on a journey, or is asleep and must be awakened.*” No one was listening, because no one was there. When Elijah called, the Lord answered immediately with fire from heaven. The Lord heard Elijah, because He loved Elijah. The Lord hears us for the same reason, because He loves us. When we call He answers us.

God hears us as a loving parent listens to a child and answers us in the same manner. He has made us His children for the sake of Christ Jesus. In Him we have access to God at all times and the assurance He hears and answers. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught the disciples to pray with confidence, as children to a loving Father. He said, “*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you...Which one of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him?*” When we call He listens. When we pray He answers with blessings in time and for eternity.

“WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS” (Public Domain)

What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry, ev-'ry-thing to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear—
All because we do not carry, Ev-'ry-thing to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged, Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev-'ry weakness, Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge, Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we give thanks that you hear us when we call and answer our prayers in divine wisdom and with infinite kindness. We thank you for Jesus, through whom we have access to you and for whose you her our prayers. You have adopted us as children through our baptism into Jesus' death and resurrection, given us new birth in our spirits and given your Holy Spirit to dwell within us. Teach us to pray! Impel us to pray! Give us confidence that our prayers are heard and answered according to your perfect will. In Jesus' Name. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Psalm 144:14-15

“May our cattle be heavy with young, suffering no mishap or failure in bearing, may there be no cry of distress in our streets! Blessed are the people to whom such blessings fall! Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord!”