

DEVOTION for PENTECOST 21/REFORMATION

PSALM 46

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.

Though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.

God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts.

The Lord almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come and see the works of the Lord, the desolations He has brought on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; He breaks the bow and shatters the spear,

He burns the shields with fire.

“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

The Lord almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

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 32:1-52

THE SONG of MOSES

- 1) What good things did The Lord do for Israel?
- 2) What did Israel do in response that angered God, which He knew they would do again and again?
- 3) What would the Lord do for Israel after he chastened them?

ROMANS 16:1-27

PAUL COMMENDS PHOEBE and GREETES HIS FRIENDS

- 1) Where did congregations commonly gather in Rome?
- 2) What does the large number of Greek names say about the success of the gospel?
- 3) What is most important for the unity of the church?

“REFORMATION SUNDAY”

On October 31, 1517 an Augustinian monk nailed several sheets of paper to the door of the Cathedral Church in Wittenberg, Germany. The sound of his hammer blows echoed off the surrounding buildings and faded away. Yet, the effects of those hammer blows continues to reverberate through the world more than 500 years later. 95 Theses were written on that paper that questioned some of the practices and beliefs of the medieval Western Church. There was no drum roll, no band playing, no pyrotechnics, just a monk with a hammer.

It took some time for powerful people in distant places to notice, but the result was a social, political and religious upheaval that would turn Western Civilization upside down. There would be a Lutheran Reformation, a Protestant Reformation, a Radical Reformation and a Catholic Reformation. People would begin to question the right of princes and kings to rule over them. People would no longer blindly obey authority. In many ways October 31, 1517 was the birth date of modern Western Civilization.

Reformation Sunday isn't only a remembrance of past events and historic persons, such as Martin Luther. It is a remembrance and celebration of the power of God's word. The reformations of the 16th century were caused by God's word, which like a hammer crushes our spirits with the law, convicts us of our sin, and then raises our spirits to life, through the comfort of the gospel of Christ's sacrifice for our sins. The Reformation was the occasion for many social and political changes, but in the hearts of men, women and children who yearned for God, it was essentially a spiritual phenomenon. It was to know God as love and to be known by God in forgiveness, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

We remember the Reformation each year, because all of us have a yearning to know God as love and to be known by God in forgiveness. The heart of the Reformation is God's word, through which the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see our sin and opens our heart to receive our Saviour. The question men, women and children asked then is the same question people ask today: “What must we do to be saved?” The answer is the same today as in the 16th century, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”

“A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD” (Public Domain)

**A mighty fortress is our God, A sword and shield victorious;
He breaks the cruel oppressor’s rod. And wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe. With craft and dreadful might,
he arms himself to fight. On earth he has no equal.**

**No strength of ours can match his might. We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight, Whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he, Christ Jesus,
mighty Lord, God’s only Son adored. He holds the field victorious.**

**Though hordes of devils fill the land, all threatening to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand; They cannot overpower us.
Let this world’s tyrant rage; in battle we’ll engage. His might is doomed to fail;
God’s judgement must prevail! One little word subdues him.**

**God’s Word forever shall abide, No thanks to foes who fear it;
For God himself fights on our side, with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house, Goods, honour, child or spouse.
Though life be wrenched away, They cannot win the day.
The kingdom’s ours forever!**

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you are our Rock and Fortress. You bless us with your Holy Spirit to open our hearts to faith in Jesus, through the hearing of the word and the washing of Holy Baptism. Your word is a light to our path and a lamp to our feet. Bless us to always seek you in your word, until your word is fulfilled and we see our Saviour’s face and dwell in your presence, in the resurrection to eternal life. 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 Romans 16:20

**“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.”**

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

- 1) What mountain did Moses ascend to prepare to die?
- 2) What Church did Paul’s friend Phoebe belong to?
- 3) What weapon did David use to finish off Goliath?

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEKS QUIZ

- 1) Moses was 80 years old when God called him. Exodus 7:7
- 2) Zechariah. Luke 1:5-13
- 3) Seth.