

DEVOTION FOR THE FIFTH TUESDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PSALM 127

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for He gives to His beloved sleep.

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.

Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are the children of one's youth.

Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He will not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

*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*

Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 12:1-32 *The acceptable way to worship*

New Testament Reading: Acts 24:1-27 *Paul addresses the Sanhedrin*

“HE GIVES TO HIS BELOVED SLEEP”

What is the longest you have gone without sleep? Twenty-four hours? Thirty-six hours? Forty-eight hours? We may not think of it along the same lines as water boarding, electrical shocks or physical beating, but sleep deprivation is considered a form of torture. If you have endured sleepless nights, you might agree. Psalm 127 celebrates the blessing of sleep, saying it is a gift of God and a sign of His grace, in line with the rest of the Sabbath.

Do you have a hard time to sleep? Sometimes there is a physical cause of sleeplessness, such as chronic pain. Some sleeplessness is the result of anxiety. Have you ever been too worried or afraid to sleep? Kids (and adults) sometimes make themselves so frightened with scary books or movies that they can't sleep. People who are in danger from physical threat, sleep 'with one eye open.' We are vulnerable when we sleep. We sleep in peace because as Psalm 121 says, the Lord who watches over us, never sleeps.

Whether we sleep restfully or fitfully, our courage and confidence is in the Lord. Anxiety, worry and fear are the fruit of sin. We live in a sinful world in which there is much cause for anxiety, worry and fear. Worrying never made anything better. We shouldn't worry, but that's easier said than done. Even if it does more harm than good, it's our nature to worry. The cure for worry and the best sleeping aid, is the knowledge that God loves us (He gave Jesus to die for our sins) and that He watches over us, without slumbering or sleeping. Whether we are awake or asleep the Lord is watches over us. We rest in His peace!

“O, BLESS THE LORD, MY SOUL” (Public Domain)

Oh, bless the Lord, my soul! Let all in me combine.

To aid my tongue to bless His name, whose favour is divine.

Oh, bless the Lord, my soul. Nor let His mercies lie.

Forgotten in unthankfulness. And without praises die.

The Lord forgives my sins. And he relieves my pain;

The Lord has healed my sicknesses. And made me whole again.

He crowns my life with love. He ransoms from the grave;

He that redeemed my soul from hell, has sovereign power to save.

He fills the poor with good; He gives the sufferers rest;

The Lord has judgements for the proud, Relief for those oppressed.

His works and laws and ways, He made through Moses known.

But showed the world His loving heart, In Christ, His only Son.

PRAYER

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son that you have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that you would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen (Martin Luther)

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 134

“Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord! Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth.”