

Tuesday August 4, 2020

Opening

Selected verses from Psalm 31

Leader: Be merciful to me, LORD.

Family: **For I am in distress.**

Let your face shine on your servant.

Save me in your mercy.

Be strong, and let your heart be firm,

All who wait confidently for the LORD. Amen

Bible Reading - 1 Chronicles 21:1-19

21 Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel. ² So David said to Joab and the commanders of the troops, “Go and count the Israelites from Beersheba to Dan. Then report back to me so that I may know how many there are.”

³ But Joab replied, “May the Lord multiply his troops a hundred times over. My lord the king, are they not all my lord’s subjects? Why does my lord want to do this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?”

⁴ The king’s word, however, overruled Joab; so Joab left and went throughout Israel and then came back to Jerusalem. ⁵ Joab reported the number of the fighting men to David: In all Israel there were one million one hundred thousand men who could handle a sword, including four hundred and seventy thousand in Judah.

⁶ But Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, because the king’s command was repulsive to him. ⁷ This command was also evil in the sight of God; so he punished Israel.

⁸ Then David said to God, “I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.”

⁹ The Lord said to Gad, David’s seer, ¹⁰ “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.’ ”

¹¹ So Gad went to David and said to him, “This is what the Lord says: ‘Take your choice: ¹² three years of famine, three months of being swept away before your enemies, with their swords overtaking you, or three days of the sword of the Lord—days of plague in the land, with the angel of the Lord ravaging every part of Israel.’ Now then, decide how I should answer the one who sent me.”

¹³ David said to Gad, “I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into human hands.”

¹⁴ So the Lord sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead. ¹⁵ And God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem. But as the angel was doing so, the Lord saw it and relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was

destroying the people, “Enough! Withdraw your hand.” The angel of the Lord was then standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁶ David looked up and saw the angel of the Lord standing between heaven and earth, with a drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell facedown.

¹⁷ David said to God, “Was it not I who ordered the fighting men to be counted? I, the shepherd, have sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Lord my God, let your hand fall on me and my family, but do not let this plague remain on your people.”

¹⁸ Then the angel of the Lord ordered Gad to tell David to go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. ¹⁹ So David went up in obedience to the word that Gad had spoken in the name of the Lord.

Questions for Discussion

Take whatever time is necessary or possible to discuss these questions. Discussion does not have to be lengthy.

For the kids: *What would have been King David’s evil reason for wanting to know how big his army was?*

For the grownups: *Why did King David choose the third option: “three days of the sword of the Lord?”*

Prayer

Luther’s Morning Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

or

Luther’s Evening Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

The head of the household may lead other prayers and petitions. The members of the family may also take turns with their own prayers and petitions. The head of the household closes the prayer in Jesus’ name.

Blessing

Leader: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
bless and preserve us.

Amen.

Hymn

Read or sing the hymn verse as a family.

***Not unto us, not unto us be glory, Lord;
Not unto us but to your name be praise;
Not unto us but to your name all honor be giv'n
For matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace.
(CW392)***

A recording of this hymn can be found on [YouTube](#).

Large Catechism Study

Optional: Briefly discuss and apply this portion of Luther's Large Catechism.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT (Continued)

The same I say also of mechanics, workmen, and day-laborers, who all follow their wanton notions, and never know enough ways to overcharge people, while they are lazy and unfaithful in their work. All these are far worse than sneak-thieves, against whom we can guard with locks and bolts, or who, if apprehended, are treated in such a manner that they will not do the same again. But against these no one can guard, no one dare even look awry at them or accuse them of theft, so that one would ten times rather lose from his purse. For here are my neighbors, good friends, my own servants, from whom I expect good [every faithful and diligent service], who defraud me first of all.