

Wednesday July 1, 2020

Opening

Selected verses from Psalm 9

Leader: My enemies turn back;

Family: **They stumble and perish before you.**

For you have upheld my right and my cause,

Sitting enthroned as the righteous judge.

The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed,

A stronghold in times of trouble.

Those who know your name trust in you,

For you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you. Alleluia!

Bible Reading - 1 Samuel 4:1-22

4 And Samuel's word came to all Israel.

Now the Israelites went out to fight against the Philistines. The Israelites camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines at Aphek. ² The Philistines deployed their forces to meet Israel, and as the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand of them on the battlefield. ³ When the soldiers returned to camp, the elders of Israel asked, "Why did the Lord bring defeat on us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh, so that he may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies."

⁴ So the people sent men to Shiloh, and they brought back the ark of the covenant of the Lord Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim. And Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

⁵ When the ark of the Lord's covenant came into the camp, all Israel raised such a great shout that the ground shook. ⁶ Hearing the uproar, the Philistines asked, "What's all this shouting in the Hebrew camp?"

When they learned that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp, ⁷ the Philistines were afraid. "A god has come into the camp," they said. "Oh no! Nothing like this has happened before. ⁸ We're doomed! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? They are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. ⁹ Be strong, Philistines! Be men, or you will be subject to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Be men, and fight!"

¹⁰ So the Philistines fought, and the Israelites were defeated and every man fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; Israel lost thirty thousand foot soldiers. ¹¹ The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

¹² That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head. ¹³ When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair

by the side of the road, watching, because his heart feared for the ark of God. When the man entered the town and told what had happened, the whole town sent up a cry.

¹⁴ Eli heard the outcry and asked, “What is the meaning of this uproar?”

The man hurried over to Eli, ¹⁵ who was ninety-eight years old and whose eyes had failed so that he could not see. ¹⁶ He told Eli, “I have just come from the battle line; I fled from it this very day.”

Eli asked, “What happened, my son?”

¹⁷ The man who brought the news replied, “Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.”

¹⁸ When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and he was heavy. He had led Israel forty years.

¹⁹ His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near the time of delivery. When she heard the news that the ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor and gave birth, but was overcome by her labor pains. ²⁰ As she was dying, the women attending her said, “Don’t despair; you have given birth to a son.” But she did not respond or pay any attention.

²¹ She named the boy Ichabod, saying, “The Glory has departed from Israel”—because of the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² She said, “The Glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

Questions for Discussion

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

For the kids: Who won the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites?

For the grownups: The Israelites seemed to think that they could use the ark of the covenant to get God to fight for them. Tragedy resulted. What is wrong with their idea? How might we sometimes try to make God do what we want him to do?

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.

***The will of God is always best And shall be done forever.
And they who trust in him are blest; He will forsake them never.
He helps indeed In time of need;
He chastens with forbearing.
They who depend On God, their friend,
Shall not be left despairing.
(CW 435)***

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 FOURTH COMMANDMENT (Continued)

This, now, I say should be the first and most important consideration to urge us to the observance of this commandment; on which account, even if we had no father and mother, we ought to wish that God would set up wood and stone before us, whom we might call father and mother. How much more, since He has given us living parents, should we rejoice to show them honor and obedience, because we know it is so highly pleasing to the Divine Majesty and to all angels, and vexes all devils, and is, besides, the highest work which we can do, after the sublime divine worship comprehended in the previous commandments; so that giving of alms and every other good work toward

our neighbor are not equal to this. For God has assigned this estate the highest place, yea, has set it up in His own stead, upon earth. This will and pleasure of God ought to be a sufficient reason and incentive to us to do what we can with good will and pleasure.

Besides this, it is our duty before the world to be grateful for benefits and every good which we have of our parents. But here again the devil rules in the world, so that the children forget their parents, as we all forget God, and no one considers how God nourishes, protects, and defends us, and bestows so much good on body and soul; especially when an evil hour comes, we are angry and grumble with impatience, and all the good which we have received throughout our life is wiped out [from our memory]. Just so we do also wit our parents, and there is no child that understands and considers this [what the parents have endured while nourishing and fostering him], except the Holy Ghost grant him this grace.