

Wednesday July 29, 2020

## Opening

*Selected verses from Psalm 65*

**Leader:** Praise waits for you, O God, in Zion.

**Family:** **To you vows will be fulfilled.**

The record of my guilt overpowered me.

**You atone for our rebellious acts.**

How blessed is the one you choose and bring near!

**He will dwell in your courtyards. Amen.**

## Bible Reading - 2 Samuel 12:1-23

**12** The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, “There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. <sup>2</sup> The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, <sup>3</sup> but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

<sup>4</sup> “Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.”

<sup>5</sup> David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, “As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! <sup>6</sup> He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man! This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. <sup>8</sup> I gave your master’s house to you, and your master’s wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. <sup>9</sup> Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. <sup>10</sup> Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’

<sup>11</sup> “This is what the Lord says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. <sup>12</sup> You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’ ”

<sup>13</sup> Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.”

Nathan replied, “The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. <sup>14</sup> But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord, the son born to you will die.”

<sup>15</sup> After Nathan had gone home, the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill. <sup>16</sup> David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. <sup>17</sup> The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them.

<sup>18</sup> On the seventh day the child died. David's attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, "While the child was still living, he wouldn't listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate."

<sup>19</sup> David noticed that his attendants were whispering among themselves, and he realized the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked.

"Yes," they replied, "he is dead."

<sup>20</sup> Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate.

<sup>21</sup> His attendants asked him, "Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!"

<sup>22</sup> He answered, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live.' <sup>23</sup> But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

<sup>24</sup> Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and made love to her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved him; <sup>25</sup> and because the Lord loved him, he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.

<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and captured the royal citadel. <sup>27</sup> Joab then sent messengers to David, saying, "I have fought against Rabbah and taken its water supply. <sup>28</sup> Now muster the rest of the troops and besiege the city and capture it. Otherwise I will take the city, and it will be named after me."

<sup>29</sup> So David mustered the entire army and went to Rabbah, and attacked and captured it. <sup>30</sup> David took the crown from their king's head, and it was placed on his own head. It weighed a talent of gold, and it was set with precious stones. David took a great quantity of plunder from the city <sup>31</sup> and brought out the people who were there, consigning them to labor with saws and with iron picks and axes, and he made them work at brickmaking. David did this to all the Ammonite towns. Then he and his entire army returned to Jerusalem.

## Questions for Discussion

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

**For the kids:** *Identify David's confession of sin in this reading and the prophet Nathan's words of absolution or forgiveness.*

**For the grownups:** *Even though David's sins were fully forgiven, why does the Lord still have painful consequences come into David's life?*

## 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.*

***With broken heart and contrite sigh,  
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry.  
Your pard'ning grace is rich and free  
O God, be merciful to me!***

***No gifts, no deeds that I have done  
Can for a single sin atone.  
To Calvary alone I flee  
O God, be merciful to me!  
(CW 303:1,4)***

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

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## Large Catechism Study

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

### **THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT (Continued)**

From this you see how this popish rabble, priests, monks, and nuns, resist God's order and commandment, inasmuch as they despise and forbid matrimony, and presume and vow to maintain perpetual chastity, and, besides, deceive the simple-minded with lying words and appearances [impostures]. For no one has so little love and inclination to chastity as just those who because of great sanctity avoid marriage, and either indulge in open and shameless prostitution, or secretly do even worse, so that one dare not speak of it, as has, alas! been learned too fully. And, in short, even though they abstain from the act, their hearts are so full of unchaste thoughts and evil lusts that there is a continual burning and secret suffering, which can be avoided in the married life. Therefore all vows of chastity out of the married state are condemned by this commandment, and free permission is granted, yea, even the command is given, to all poor ensnared consciences which have been deceived by their monastic vows to abandon the unchaste state and enter the married life, considering that even if the monastic life were godly, it would nevertheless not be in their power to maintain chastity, and if they remain in it, they must only sin more and more against this commandment.