

*Thursday June 18, 2020*

## Opening

*Selected verses from Psalm 9*

*Leader:* I will thank you, LORD, with all my heart.

*Family:* **I will tell about all your wonderful deeds.**

The wicked return to the grave,

**All the nations who forget God.**

But he will never forget the needy.

**The hope of the afflicted will never perish.**

Rise up, O Lord. Do not let man triumph.

**Let the nations be judged in your presence.**

Strike them with fear, O LORD.

**Let the nations know they are only human. Amen.**

## Bible Reading - Acts 12:1-19

**12** It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. <sup>2</sup> He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. <sup>3</sup> When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. <sup>4</sup> After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

<sup>5</sup> So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

<sup>6</sup> The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. <sup>7</sup> Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

<sup>8</sup> Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. <sup>9</sup> Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. <sup>10</sup> They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

<sup>11</sup> Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen."

<sup>12</sup> When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. <sup>13</sup> Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. <sup>14</sup> When

she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!"

<sup>15</sup> "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel."

<sup>16</sup> But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. <sup>17</sup> Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this," he said, and then he left for another place.

<sup>18</sup> In the morning, there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. <sup>19</sup> After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed.

## Questions for Discussion

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

***For the kids:*** How did God rescue Peter from prison?

***For the grownups:*** What comfort is there for modern Christians in this account?

## 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.*

***Lord, take my hand and lead me Upon life's way;  
Direct, protect, and feed me From day to day.  
Without your grace and favor I go astray;  
So take my hand, O Savior, And lead the way.***

***Lord, when the tempest rages, I need not fear;  
For you, the Rock of Ages, Are always near.  
Close by your side abiding, I fear no foe,  
For when your hand is guiding, In peace I go.  
(CW 439:1,2)***

*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 THIRD COMMANDMENT (Continued)**

Secondly, and most especially, that on such day of rest (since we can get no other opportunity) freedom and time be taken to attend divine service, so that we come together to hear and treat of God's Word, and then to praise God, to sing and pray.

However, this, I say, is not so restricted to any time, as with the Jews, that it must be just on this or that day; for in itself no one day is better than another; but this should indeed be done daily; however, since the masses cannot give such attendance, there must be at least one day in the week set apart. But since from of old Sunday [the Lord's Day] has been appointed for this purpose, we also should continue the same, in order that everything be done in harmonious order, and no one create disorder by unnecessary innovation.

Therefore this is the simple meaning of the commandment: since holidays are observed anyhow, such observance should be devoted to hearing God's Word, so that the

special function of this day should be the ministry of the Word for the young and the mass of poor people; yet that the resting be not so strictly interpreted as to forbid any other incidental work that cannot be avoided.