**WORSHIP**

**Ninth Sunday after Pentecost**

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 55:1-5

*Invitation to the Thirsty*

**“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ﻿2﻿ Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. ﻿3﻿ Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. ﻿4﻿ See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. ﻿5﻿ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.”**

**55:1-5** The battle that led to the victory of Isaiah 55 reaches back to the previous chapters, particularly ch 53. This great Suffering Servant passage does two tasks for this sermon. First, it identifies what comprises the meal of ch 55, but especially what the Suffering Servant did to set the table. Second, it provides the jump to Jesus and his work on Good Friday as the fulfillment of that prophecy. With Isaiah 53 providing the basis for the proclamation of the suffering and death of Christ, Isaiah 55 then follows up by opening the door for the proclamation of Jesus’ resurrection and his presence at the celebratory victory meal. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

Reed Lessing (Isaiah 40–55, Concordia Commentary [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011], 665) summarizes this passage: Yahweh has prepared a victory feast (55:1–2) and has invited all to be incorporated into David’s everlasting covenant (55:3). The result is that the guests become his witnesses to the world (55:4–5). Deportees dare not drag their feet into this new life. “Seek Yahweh while he allows himself to be found!” (55:6). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

**55:1**† The summons to salvation’s banquet, prepared by the servant, is issued to all people (see Lk 14:17). (CSB)

In the OT, longing for God and His wisdom is often associated with longing for water and food (cf Ps 36:8; Pr 18:4; Jer 2:13; for more on wisdom). (TLSB)

 LISTEN TO ME – HO (KJV) – A cry arousing attention or expressing pity. It is like saying “attention everyone.” In Jerusalem the shopkeepers cry to the passer-by, “Ho, everyone that hath money, let him come and buy!” They indeed expect to get full value, though they offer for nothing. God intends a free and sovereign gift. This verse is a most urgent plea to accept freely all the good gifts that God has now in readiness for his own. (PC)

 COME – This is almost an imperative but also a kind invitation. This as such shows us the nature of God, which is in itself a healing and satisfying nature, finding expression in the incarnation and redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is love – all things are now ready – come the banquet is open to us all.

Repeated cry to come mimics the sounds of the marketplace, where the staples of life—water, bread, milk, wine—could be bought. Attendance at salvation’s banquet, prepared by the Servant, is not restricted to the socially and financially elite. As a town crier, God broadcasts the invitation: “Come, for everything is now ready” (Lk 14:17). No one is forced to obey the summons. However, those who disregard it must reckon with the possibility that they have heard it for the last time (Is 49:8; Jn 12:35; 2Co 6:2). (TLSB)

Isaiah 64:6 “All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.”

Matthew 6:33 “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Matthew 11:28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

1 Timothy 2:4 “who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

 *thirsty.* Spiritual thirst is primary (see 41:17; 44:3; Ps 42:1–2; 63:1). (CSB)

This is spiritual thirst. Thirsting differs from hungering in this – the hungering man will quietly lie down and die; the thirsting man will spend himself in mad striving. This invitation goes out to all who are spiritually dehydrated and starving. In every generation life apart from God proves unsatisfying. Luther says “This is an exhortation for Christians in the midst of their trials, lest disgust take control of all of them. For life-long Christians this exhortation is especially necessary lest they fall into contempt and loathing of the Word.”

 *waters.* Figurative for spiritual refreshment. Cf. Wisdom’s invitation in Pr 9:5. Christ similarly invited people to drink the water of life (Jn 4:14; 7:37). (CSB)

Though readily available in many parts of the world, water was most precious in dry Israel. (TLSB)

Christ does not destroy the thirsting, but sets us down close beside the living spring. When the soul is quickened and feels new life, then is conscious of need – need of God – thirst for love and friendship – intellectual nature (Bible study to know more about power and love of God) The soul that has Christ has an up-springing well beside him; he lives near to the waters of life. What can better represent salvation than water – the well springs up into everlasting life? Waters, floods, overflowing streams or copious showers, are often used to denote abundant blessing from God. (PC)

Matthew 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Luke 14:17 “At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.”

 *no money.* In hard times even water had to be purchased (see La 5:4). (CSB)

It is especially addressed to the poor. No man can excuse himself for not being a Christian because he is poor; no man who is rich can boast that he has bought salvation. We frankly confess that we have nothing to pay, and he frankly forgives all. The reception of grace gifts are dependent upon nothing but a sense of need, and a readiness to accept he blessings offered.

This merchant offers staples at no cost, because the Suffering Servant has already paid the price (cf Is 53:11–12). (TLSB)

 COME BUY – In this world you get what you pay for. Everything in the world costs something, must be paid for in money or labor, or in some act representing compensation for value received. The price here is the suffering and death of Jesus.

 *wine and milk.* Symbols of abundance, enjoyment and nourishment. (CSB)

Wine and milk are figurative representatives of spiritual revival, re-creation and nourishment. These terms stand as symbols of impending salvation. This salvation is primarily thought of in terms of restoration from the prevailing exile. Luther says “Milk belongs to the children (young or new in faith), wine to adults (old or mature in faith.) In Scripture each person will find his appropriate remedies. As we grow in our faith the same text will have different application.

1 Peter 2:2 “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.”

 *without money.* The death of the servant (53:5–9) paid for the free gift of life (see Ro 6:23). (CSB)

**55:2** *what is not bread.* Perhaps the husks of pagan religious practices. Cf. Dt 8:3. (CSB)

Describes false teaching. Also, mere bread, and water drawn even from Jacob’s well, cannot satisfy our spiritual needs (Dt 8:3; Ps 42:1–2; 63:1; Pr 9:4–6; Jn 4:10–14; 1Pt 2:2). (TLSB)

The nation with its many talented people is devoting much effort to the acquisition of the lesser values. The Jew in Babylon had made themselves quite comfortable in the possession of material comforts. The affections of the great mass of Israelites were set on worldly things, on enriching themselves – adding field to field and hose to house. (The good life – the more things change, the more they are the same.) This could not sustain them and spiritually will do them no good. Many people are over weight physically but under weight spiritually.

John 6:27 “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

 ON WHAT DOES NOT SATIFY – Men labor, as a general rule, during the greater part of their lives for that which that doesn’t satisfy. Only a fortunate few learn early to set their affections on spiritual things. (greener pastures on other side of fence) A strange plant, called the nardoo, grows in the deserts of Lento, Australia. Its seeds formed for months almost the sole food of a party of explorers who crossed the continent. It is lacking in certain nutritious elements. These men starved even while eating fully every day. Luther says “We must constantly remain pupils of the Word, because practice and custom are always fighting us.”

 *Listen*. By listening, people receive the Lord’s good, life-giving gifts (cf Is 6:9; 50:4–5). (TLSB)

 *richest of fare.* Great spiritual blessings are compared to a banquet (see 25:6 and note; Ps 22:26; 34:8; Jer 31:14). (CSB)

The spiritual eating of the believers is done through their hearing of the Word, for God has placed His whole salvation in the Word, in the Gospel.

Deuteronomy 8:3 “He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”

**55:3** *you*. Plural; includes Israel and the Gentiles. (TLSB)

 *everlasting covenant.*† Cf. Jer 31:31–34. David had been promised an unending dynasty, one that would culminate in the Messiah (see 9:7; 54:10; 61:8; 2Sa 7:14–16 and notes). (CSB)

The promises regarding David include the Lord’s sworn oath that the Davidic house will endure forever (cf 2Sm 7:13–16; 1Ch 17; Ps 89:1–4; 110; 132). (TLSB)

The center of the reading is God’s everlasting covenant. This covenant is one of total grace, initiated and fulfilled by God alone. Hence, whatever is offered is done so free of charge. Despite the buying and spending language, the paradoxical completion of those sentences reflects this covenant of grace—without money or price (v 1). What is offered is in abundance as it fully satisfies, and the phrase “that your soul may live” (v 3) moves this from mere physical eating and drinking in the Promised Land to the fullness of God’s salvation. From our post-Easter view, we see that the soul lives fully in the final resurrection on the day of Jesus’ return. The wine and milk indicate joy and richness of this meal of blessings. The many imperatives are inviting, and everyone is included because everything is free and such things as status, wealth, power, and fame do not matter. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

That everlasting covenant once made between God and man had been broken by man and by Israel. It would naturally follow from this that unless God gave up man altogether, he would enter into a new covenant with him. The mediatorship of Christ promised to David.

Isaiah 54:10 “Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.”

 *faithful love.*† Assuring the continuation of God’s direction of history. See 54:8 and note. Christ’s resurrection was further proof of God’s faithfulness to David (see Ac 13:34, which quotes from this verse). (CSB)

 PROMISED TO DAVID – David is probably to be understood in a representative sense; he is radiant with the reflected light and the spirituality of the messianic age.

The illustrious reign God graciously granted David was in turn a prophetic guarantee of the eternal Kingdom that the Son of David would establish, as Paul proclaimed in Ac 13:34 (cf Ps 21:7; 89:34–37; Ezk 34:23–24). The prophet does not spell out the full implications of this new understanding of the Davidic covenant. But in the NT, the baptized reign with Christ forever (cf 2Tm 2:12; Rv 22:5). (TLSB)

**55:4-5** Attention turns toward how those who have received this good food are to respond. David is a witness, and so also the people are to call those who do not know the Lord to come to him. This reflects Is 42:6, where Israel is to be a light to the Gentiles; Jesus then reiterates (Mt 5:14) that all those who feast with him at this celebration meal are to be “the light of the world” (cf. Lessing, 663). (These notes draw heavily from Lessing’s commentary.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

**55:4** *Him*. David’s Son, the Messiah. (TLSB)

 *witness to the peoples.*† A reference to David’s Son, the Messiah, who was a light to the nations (see 42:6; 49:6 and notes). (CSB)

God’s testimony to “the peoples” through Israel’s king reached full clarity in “Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth” (Rv 1:5; cf Jn 18:37). (TLSB)

For the many and unusual victories that David gained as king of Israel, he was making his Lord known to all the surrounding nations. David in this sense was a “witness. This was also true of Jesus the Son of David.

He not only demands of us that our minds shall be possessed with his own principles, and that our lives shall illustrate them. He also has the power of constraining us to think as he thought, to feel as he felt, to do as he did, to be what he was. If this purpose of his is not accomplished or is not being wrought in us, then are we not his disciples.

 *leader … of the peoples.*† Similar titles are used of the Messiah in Da 9:25; Rev 1:5. (CSB)

**55:5** *you will summon nations.* The attraction of nations to Zion and to the God of Israel is a major Biblical theme (see, e.g., 2:2–4; 45:14; Zec 8:22 and notes). (CSB)

Many nations, esp those thus far unknown, will stream to Israel because of the deeds of the Lord (cf 2:1–5; chs 13–23). This envisioned worldwide outreach begins with the Lord’s summons to Abram (Gn 12:1–3), who will be the source of blessing to all the families of the earth (Gn 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). The election of Israel is the very means of salvation for the nations (cf Ex 19:5–6). At Sinai, Israel is distinctly marked and empowered to be an evangelist. (TLSB)

God chose them to witness and so he does with us. This was a type of reverse exile. Today people from many nations are coming to America, to us as it were.

Isaiah 49:6 “he says: “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.

 *that do not know you.* The reverse of the exile, when Israel was sent to a nation unknown to them (see Dt 28:36). Ruth left Moab to live with a people she “did not know before” (Ru 2:11). (CSB)

 *Holy One of Israel.* See 1:4; 41:14 and notes. (CSB)

 *endowed … with splendor.*† See 4:2; 60:9. (CSB)

EPISTLE

Romans 9:1-13

*God’s Sovereign Choice*

**I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit— ﻿2﻿ I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ﻿3﻿ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ﻿4﻿ the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. ﻿5﻿ Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised!﻿ Amen. ﻿6﻿ It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. ﻿7﻿ Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.”﻿ ﻿8﻿ In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring. ﻿9﻿ For this was how the promise was stated: “At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son.” ﻿10﻿ Not only that, but Rebekah’s children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. ﻿11﻿ Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: ﻿12﻿ not by works but by him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”﻿ ﻿13﻿ Just as it is written: “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”﻿**

**Chs 9–11** Paul now addresses the question of Jewish rejection of the Gospel. How can it be that the Gospel for “the Jew first” (1:16) has failed in its appeal to Israel? Is it really, therefore, the Gospel “of God” (1:1), and is it consistent with His plan of salvation? See note, 9:6. “Paul first directs people to repentance [Romans 1–2], to knowledge of sins [Romans 3:1–20], to faith in Christ [Romans 3:21–5:21], to divine obedience [Romans 6–8]. Then he speaks of the mystery of God’s eternal election [Romans 9–11]. This doctrine is useful and consolatory to the person who proceeds in this way” (FC Ep XI 11). (TLSB)

Luth: “In chapters 9, 10, and 11 [Paul] teaches of God’s eternal predestination—out of which originally proceeds who shall believe or not, who can or cannot get rid of sin—in order that our salvation may be taken entirely out of our hands and put in the hand of God alone. And this too is utterly necessary. For we are so weak and uncertain that if it depended on us, not even a single person would be saved; the devil would surely overpower us all. But since God is dependable—his predestination cannot fail, and no one can withstand him—we still have hope in the face of sin. (TLSB)

“Here, now, for once we must put a stop to those wicked and high flying spirits who first apply their own reason to this matter. They begin at the top to search the abyss of divine predestination, and worry in vain about whether they are predestinated. They are bound to plunge to their own destruction, either through despair, or through throwing caution to the winds. (TLSB)

“But you had better follow the order of this epistle. Worry first about Christ and the gospel, that you may recognize your sin and his grace. Then fight your sin, as the first eight chapters here have taught. Then, when you have reached the eighth chapter, and are under the cross and suffering, this will teach you correctly of predestination in chapters 9, 10, and 11, and how comforting it is. For in the absence of suffering and the cross and the perils of death, one cannot deal with predestination without harm and without secret anger against God. The old Adam must first die before he can tolerate this thing and drink the strong wine. Therefore beware that you do not drink wine while you are still a suckling. There is a limit, a time, and an age for every doctrine” (AE 35:378). (TLSB)

**9:1** I SPEAK THE TRUTH…I AM NOT LYING – The first phrase indicates that the Christ who lives in Paul causes him to be truthful. The second, which modifies the participle, indicates that the Holy Spirit causes him to be truthful.

Rhetoric, not a defense. He is setting up his new topic. (TLSB)

 CONSCIENCE CONFIRMS – The conscience of a Christian is instructed by the Word of God.

Paul’s clear conscience provides testimony to his truthfulness; he feels a deep compulsion to speak. (TLSB)

 *in the Holy Spirit.* Conscience is a reliable guide only when enlightened by the Holy Spirit. (CSB)

Paul speaks as God’s child having the indwelling Spirit (8:15-16). (TLSB)

**9:2** GREAT SORROW...UNCEASING ANGUISH – Paul could hardly find words strong enough to convey his feeling.

Paul continually feels deep personal distress because of his sense of solidarity with his own people. (TLSB)

**9:3** *cursed.* The Greek for this word is *anathema,* and it means delivered over to the wrath of God for eternal destruction (see 1Co 12:3; 16:22; Gal 1:8–9). Such was Paul’s great love for his fellow Jews. For a similar expression of love see Ex 32:32. (CSB)

He is saying, “In case it were possible, he would be ready to buy the deliverance of his brethren with his own salvation.” Moses made a similar statement in Exodus 32:32. Perhaps we could compare Paul’s situation with that of a Christian parent whose child has become wayward and will accept admonition from no one. David mourned Absalom in 2 Samuel 18:33.

Luther says: “A most excellent and entirely apostolic way of speaking here of love both toward Christ as well as toward the Jews.” (TLSB)

 BROTHERS – This is the only place where Paul uses this term for Jews, his kinsmen by race. (TLSB)

**9:4** *people of Israel.* The descendants of Jacob (who was renamed Israel by God; see Ge 32:28). The name was used of the entire nation (see Jdg 5:7), then of the northern kingdom after the nation was divided (see 1Ki 12), the southern kingdom being called Judah. During the intertestamental period and later in NT times, Palestinian Jews used the title to indicate that they were the chosen people of God. Its use here is especially relevant because Paul is about to show that, despite Israel’s unbelief and disobedience, God’s promises to her are still valid. (CSB)

Sacred name that marks the Jews as elect and favored recipients of the revelation, the grace, and the promises of God (cf Eph 2:12). Spanning the OT, Paul gives a compact summary of the magnificent privileges belonging to God’s people. (TLSB)

This name goes back to Jacob whose name God changed to “Israel” (contender with God) in honor of his prevailing faith, which would not let God go until God had blessed him.

 *adoption.* Israel had been accepted as God’s son (see Ex 4:22–23; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1). (CSB)

uothesia means that God chose them because of his mercy, not because of their merit.

“Calling to sonship” expresses the import of this word, since neither this gift to Israel (cf. Ex 4:22-23) nor any of the other gifts in this list is of any value as something to be possessed or claimed in and of itself. Entrusted to Israel for the benefit of many, they all testify beforehand of the righteousness and sonship which are in Christ. Sonship” (8:23) is for the sons and heirs (8:15-17) in whom dwells that Spirit of sonship (8:15) who is the Spirit of Christ and of God (8:9).

 *glory.* The evidence of the presence of God among his people (see Ex 16:7, 10; Lev 9:6, 23; Nu 16:19). (CSB)

Called to be God’s “Son,” Israel had the glory of God dwelling in her midst and leading her. Indeed having “the glory” simply means having the gracious presence of God.

This showed itself in the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night and in the temple when Solomon dedicated it.

 *covenants.* For example, the Abrahamic (Ge 15:17–21; 17:1–8); the Mosaic (Ex 19:5; 24:1–4), renewed on the plains of Moab (Dt 29:1–15), at Mounts Ebal and Gerizim (Jos 8:30–35) and at Shechem (Jos 24); the Levitical (Nu 25:12–13; Jer 33:21; Mal 2:4–5); the Davidic (2Sa 7; 23:5; Ps 89:3–4, 28–29; 132:11–12); and the new (prophesied in Jer 31:31–40). (CSB)

He made a formal covenant with the patriarch and promised them and their descendants that he would be their God.

 LAW – This was the perfect Law which was given to Israel on Mt. Sinai.

The fact that God had entrusted to them His Law is a distinguishing mark of the Israelite people. Possession of the Law given at Sinai puts the Israelites in mind (2:12), but does not, per se, save them.

 WORSHIP – That worship, with its assurance of the presence of a gracious God, was in itself a promise, a shadowing-forth of good things yet to come.

The word refers to the worship of God as given in the instructions for the tabernacle and temple, priesthood and sacrificial cult (cf. Heb 9:1, 6). Al of this, too, is a gracious gift. The OT cult of testimony to Christ, the ordained means of reconciliation to God, and so it is of value only in connection with faith in Christ’s fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation.

 *promises.* Especially those made to Abraham (Ge 12:7; 13:14–17; 17:4–8; 22:16–18) but also including the many OT Messianic promises (e.g., 2Sa 7:12, 16; Isa 9:6–7; Jer 23:5; 31:31–34; Eze 34:23–24; 37:24–28). (CSB)

Especially messianic (2Sm 7:12, 16, 28–29; Is 9:6–7; 53; Jer 23:5; 31:31–40). (TLSB

The promises of God again and again opened up the future when Israel’s unfaithfulness had slammed and bolted shut the door to future blessings.

The history of the OT is the history of words of promise, all of which find their “Yes!” in Jesus Christ (2 Cor 1:20).

**9:5** *patriarchs.* Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons. (CSB)

Lit, “fathers”—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his 12 sons, the recipients of the promises. (TLSB)

 Lit, “from whom,” i.e., the patriarchs. (TLSB)

 C*hrist, who is God.* One of the clearest statements of the deity of Jesus Christ found in the entire NT, assuming the accuracy of the translation (see NIV text note). See also 1:4; Mt 1:23; 28:19; Lk 1:35; 5:20–21; Jn 1:1, 3, 10, 14, 18; 5:18; 2Co 13:14; Php 2:6; Col 1:15–20; 2:9; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:3, 8; 2Pe 1:1; Rev 1:13–18; 22:13. (CSB)

Some scholars place a period after “Christ” (the Gk text was originally not punctuated), ascribing this praise to “God.” However, “God” is a direct reference to Christ, who is “blessed forever.” Calling Jesus God would not be unusual for Paul, given what he says elsewhere (8:32, 34; Php 2:9–11; Col 2:9; see note, Rm 10:13). “Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary” (FC SD VIII 6). (TLSB)

This was the highest prerogative of Israel. The Messiah was born in their midst but they, for the most part, denied that Christ was true God. They accused him of blasphemy and for that reason saw to it that he was crucified. This pains Paul very much. To this day the majority of the Jew deny that Jesus was the Messiah, the Godman who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

 FOREVER PRAISED! AMEN – ESV has “blessed forever.” These words were a common devotional language of Jews, who daily prayed the “Eighteen Benedictions” or blessings. Always doxological for Paul (cf. 1:25; 2 Cor 1:3). (TLSB)

**9:6** *God’s word.*† His clearly stated purpose, which has not failed, because “not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.” Paul is stating that within Israel there is a separation, that of unbelieving Israel and believing Israel. Physical descent is no guarantee of a place in God’s family. (CSB)

That Paul grieves for Israel (9:1-5) does not mean God’s Word has failed to achieve its purpose. (TLSB)

 *blessed forever*. *Amen*. Words common in the devotional language of Jews, who daily prayed the “Eighteen Benedictions” or blessings. Always doxological for Paul (cf 1:25; 2Co 1:3). (TLSB)

**9:7** *descendants.* Physical descendants (e.g., Ishmael and his offspring). (CSB)

Descendants who believe God’s promise (4:16). (TLSB)

 YOUR OFFSPRING – Luther: “He says that those are not children of Abraham who are his descendants merely according to the flesh but that those are his children who share his faith (Gal. 3:7). This Moses, too, implies in a hidden manner when he expressively says: ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Shem’ (Gen 9:26); for he signifies thereby that the blessing is to be found only where the God of Shem, that is, unless he believes. (TLSB)

**9:8** *natural children.* Those merely biologically descended from Abraham. (CSB)

 *God’s children.* See v. 4. Not all Israelites were God’s children. The reference is to the Israel of faith. (CSB)

In contrast to Jewish belief that the physical descendants of Israel will naturally inherit everlasting life. Paul argues from Gn 21:12 that only descendants born as a result of God’s promise are “the seed” (true successors of Abraham). In other words, the offspring receive the promise by faith. (TLSB)

**9:9** Words of promise spoken to Abraham that called Isaac into being. (TLSB)

**9:10** Someone in Paul’s audience might argue that God chose Isaac to be the son of promise because he was born of Sarah, Abraham’s wife—and not of Hagar, a slave woman. (TLSB)

SAME FATHER – God’s elective choice is especially clear in the case of Jacob and Esau, for both were born of the same father and mother. (TLSB)

**9:11** *done anything good or bad.*† God’s choice of Jacob was not based on the fulfillment of any prior conditions. (CSB)

 *God’s purpose in election.* God’s purpose embodied in his election (see note on Eph 1:4). (CSB)

God’s elective purpose has not fallen by the wayside, but remains at work in history. (TLSB)

The Formula of Concord: “It is false and wrong when it is taught that not only God’s mercy and Christ’s most holy merit, nut also something in us is a cause of God’s election, on account of which God has chosen us to eternal life…Before we were born, yes, even before the foundations of the world were laid, He elected us in Christ.” (TLSB)

**9:12** *not by works but by him who calls.* Before Rebekah’s children were even born, God made a choice—a choice obviously not based on works. (CSB)

Esau’s descendants, the Edomites, would serve Jacob’s descendants, the Israelites (cf. 2 Sm 8:14; 1 Kg 22:47). The topic here is God’s works in history, not spiritual election or predestination as in 8:28-30. the Holy Spirit calls through word and sacrament.

Christians are these things by the calling of God, who “calls things that are not so that they are (Rom. 4:17). Those “called” are from Jews and Gentile; they are “my people,” “beloved,” “sons of the living God” (Rom. 9:24-26).

 *calls.* See 8:28 and note – (the Holy Spirit calls through word and sacrament.) (CSB)

Christians are these things by the calling of God, who “calls things that are not so that they are (Rom. 4:17). Those “called” are from Jews and Gentile; they are “my people,” “beloved,” “sons of the living God” (Rom. 9:24-26). (CC)

**9:13** *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.* Equivalent to “Jacob I chose, but Esau I rejected.” In vv. 6–13 Paul is clearly dealing with personal and not national election—he is not portraying the nation Israel (Jacob) over the nation Edom (Esau)—though Mal 1:2–3 (see NIV text note) does speak of the nations. Paul’s intention is evident in light of the problem he is addressing: How can God’s promise stand when so many who comprise Israel (in the OT collective sense) are unbelieving and therefore cut off? (CSB)

Refers to the nations of Israel and Edom. The “love/hate” language emphasizes preference of one over another, not literal hatred (compare Gn 29:30 to 29:31). (TLSB)

“Loved” and “hated” pertain to selection in the historical unfolding of the plan of salvation – the salvation to be brought about by the Seed of the woman and the Seed of Abraham.

This makes both terms here to have their meaning in relationship to history, and not absolutely, as regards eternity. “Hated” can then be seen to mean “did not select.” This is similar to the usage in Gen 29:31 (Leah was “hated” in the sense of “loved less”), where a stark opposite can simply mean less of its antonym. As the context in Malachi shows, the histories of Israel and Edom are evidence of God’s selection-favor resting on Jacob-Israel, but neither is this “loved” any guarantee of eternal salvation for all the Israelite nation.

Jacob’s calling to be favored over Esau is for the sake of service to Esau, even as Abraham’s call was for the sake of God’s blessing to all nation of the earth. Jesus is the Savior of the Jews and the Gentile; the heavenly Jerusalem is for Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Arabs – and even all the rest of the (non-Semitic) Gentiles.

GOSPEL

Matthew 14:13-21

*Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand*

**13﻿ When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. ﻿14﻿ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. ﻿15﻿ As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” ﻿16﻿ Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” ﻿17﻿ “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered. ﻿18﻿ “Bring them here to me,” he said. ﻿19﻿ And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ﻿20﻿ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. ﻿21﻿ The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.**

**13:13–14** Jesus speaks in parables because of the spiritual dullness of the people (see note on Lk 8:4). (CSB)

**13:18** LISTEN THEN – Jesus will interpret vv 3–8 for His disciples. (TLSB)

“Listen,” He says, for that is what the whole parable is about – listening, listening to the Word of God. Some hear but don’t really listen. Some hear and listen, but only for a little while. Some hear and listen for a while, but imagine that they need not give their undivided attention to what God is telling them. They are too easily distracted. Some keep on hearing and listening: they grow in faith and in sanctification. They produce the fruits of faith in great abundance. (PBC)

While Jesus simply tells (laleō) the rest of the people the parable, he says to his disciples, “You therefore hear!” (akousate). The imperative verb form emphasizes the forcefulness of opening deaf and unbelieving ears to hearing and understanding. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

Joshua1:8, “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

 BOOK OF THE LAW – In Hebrew it is called the “Torah.” While “Torah” is usually translated “law,” its root meaning is much broader. It means “instruction” or “teaching.” It can refer to all of God’s revealed teaching in the OT – His laws, His promises, the prophetic history of His acts among His people. (PBC)

 MEDITATE – The Hebrew word for “meditate” means literally to “murmur to oneself in a low voice” (as Orthodox Jews commonly do to this day). We miss something if none of our Bible reading is oral.

Luke 2:19, “But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart..”

 TREASURED – Her treasures were not any earthly relics: a bit of straw from the manger, the cloth in which the baby was wrapped, or one of the shepherd’s staffs left behind. Her scrapbook of this event was carried within her heart. (PBC)

“Kept” KJV – “She continued guarding” is the imperfect, which stands out among all the aorists; Mary’s impressions were enduring. She said nothing – it was all too sacred, too miraculous for her. (Lenski)

 PONDERED – She turned over again and again in her mind what had happened and was amazed at what a great thing God had done. (PBC)

The present participle with its durative sense matches the durative imperfect verb. The idea in the participle is that of throwing things together, comparing; letting one explain and add to another. We catch a glimpse of the depth of Mary’s character, it was calm and deep, spiritually receptive and strong, steady and persevering in grace. The Greek conceives the heart as being the seat not merely of the emotions but of the entire personality, will, min, and emotions. Mary’s entire personality was involved. (Lenski)

Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly”

 DWELL – The present tense of the imperative “let dwell” points to a continual presence of the Word. It is not merely to be read, commented on, and the like, but it is to be internalized so that it is continually present. Believers are to live, think, and exist in relation to the Word of Christ. It is to empower and norm everything about their existence. (CC)

 RICHLY – As a cognate of ploutos “richness” a term used by Paul almost exclusively to describe the splendor of the way of salvation, here not only means “a great deal” but also “with great benefit,” for the riches of salvation will come through the employment of Christ’s Word. (CC)

Acts 17:11, “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”

 EAGERNESS – The complete eagerness is shown by the fact that they engage in this activity everyday. (Sacra)

 EXAMINED – To inspect or scrutinize (a person, thing, or situation) in detail, observe or analyze carefully. (Dictionary)

2 Timothy 3:15-17, “﻿15﻿ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ﻿16﻿ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ﻿17﻿ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. From "Grace to Receive the Word" (Page 308 in LSB)

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

Writer Charles Swindoll once found himself with too many commitments in too few days. He got nervous and tense about it. "I was snapping at my wife and our children, choking down my food at mealtimes, and feeling irritated at those unexpected interruptions through the day," he recalled in his book Stress Fractures. "Before long, things around our home started reflecting the patter of my hurry-up style. It was becoming unbearable.

"I distinctly remember after supper one evening, the words of our younger daughter, Colleen. She wanted to tell me something important that had happened to her at school that day. She began hurriedly, 'Daddy, I wanna tell you somethin' and I'll tell you really fast.'

"Suddenly realizing her frustration, I answered, 'Honey, you can tell me -- and you don't have to tell me really fast. Say it slowly." "I'll never forget her answer: 'Then listen slowly.'"

*Bits & Pieces,* June 24, 1993, pp. 13-14.

How good a listener are you?
1) Since you think about four times faster than a person usually talks, do you use this time to think about other things while you're keeping track of the conversation?
2) Do you listen primarily for facts rather than ideas when someone is speaking?
3) Do you avoid listening to things you feel will be too difficult to understand?
4) Can you tell from a person's appearance and delivery that there won't be anything worthwhile said?
5) When someone is talking to you do you appear to be paying attention when you're not?
6) Do certain words and phrases prejudice you so you cannot listen objectively?
7) When listening are you distracted by outside sights and sounds?

*Leadership*, Vol.1, No. 4, p. 99.

Good listening is like tuning in a radio station. For good results, you can listen to only one station at a time. Trying to listen to my wife while looking over an office report is like trying to receive two radio stations at the same time. I end up with distortion and frustration. Listening requires a choice of where I place my attention. To tune into my partner, I must first choose to put away all that will divide my attention. That might mean laying down the newspaper, moving away from the dishes in the sink, putting down the book I'm reading, setting aside my projects.

Robert W. Herron, *Homemade*, June, 1987.

**13:19** *word.* Note the sixfold repetition in vv 19–23. (TLSB)

 *of the kingdom*. Gospel message that Christ is the messianic King who rules (4:17; 9:35). God’s rule springs from His Word. (TLSB)

 DOES NOT UNDERSTAND IT – sunietos – means to receive, accept or take it in. They rejected it. Jesus is picturing the ancient and modern Pharisees noted in verses 14-15. Luther says: “it went in one ear and out the other.”

Jesus uses the examples of three different soil conditions to explain why hearers failed to understand the Word, something Isaiah also experienced (vv 14–15). (TLSB)

 *evil one*. Satan. (TLSB)

 SOWN ALONG THE PATH – The seed that falls on the hard ground of the footpath points to those people who go through the motions of hearing the Word of God but almost immediately let the devil take it away from them. The devil calls God a liar, and many believe his lies and go with him to eternal destruction. God wanted to save them and invited them into His kingdom, but they simply declined His gracious invitation. They preferred to live this life according to the ignorance and evil lusts of their sinful flesh. God does not drive or drag anyone into His kingdom by force. Christ died for everybody and redeemed the whole world, but those who despise His salvation and reject Him rightfully remain in Satan’s kingdom for time and eternity. (PBC)

The Word is heard but quickly rejected. “Those fussy spirits are to be rebuked who, after they have heard a sermon or two, find hearing more sermons to be tedious and dull. They think that they know all that well enough and need no more instruction” (LC I 99). (TLSB)

Jesus reveals that the seed is the Word of the Kingdom and that the soil or path is the heart of the hearer. The birds represent the evil one (ponēros) who carries the Word away from those who do not understand. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

He wants His hearers to know that this stands for the sad fact that there is a battle going on for the lives of men and women and children and that sometimes Satan simply takes away the message about the reign of God that Jesus in proclaiming and His hearers never understand it or even begin to believe it. (CC)

The first soil, the wayside, is the class which, without further ado, repudiates the Word, the indifferent who have hardened their hearts through the steadfast service of sin. Among them are the self-righteous Pharisees then and now. (Y)

**13:20-21** Jesus identifies the rocky ground as the hearer who first receives the Word with joy but is scandalized (skandalizetai) into falling away when tribulation and persecution from the world come because of it. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 3)

**13:20** ON ROCKY PLACES – The shallow ground describes the person who gladly hears the Word of God and believes it. He is very enthusiastic about being received into God’s kingdom and into membership in a Christian congregation. He expects that His Christian faith will exempt him from the troubles that other people experience in this life. He looks for success and prosperity, good health and uninterrupted happiness. (Sad to say, there are some false prophets who lure people into their churches by giving them such false hopes.) But then reality strikes. The troubles that are an inescapable part of living as sinful people in a sinful world come into this person’s life. He even faces some forms of persecution, some hardships that are inflicted upon him because of his Christian faith. He was unprepared for such developments, and he gives up his faith without much of a struggle. (PBC)

A Faith that is small and weak saves a person for heaven just as well as a strong, heroic faith saves. But we must not be satisfied with a weak faith because it can so easily be snuffed out. We rather want to put on the whole armor of God, so that we are fully protected against anything that might threaten to destroy our faith. You might want to refresh your memory on this matter by reading Ephesians 6:10-18. (PBC)

 RECEIVES IT WITH JOY – This pictures an emotional hearer whose thrill is very short-lived.

The second soil is the populace in its wild enthusiasm for the Savior, soon a thing of the past; today “Hosanna!” and tomorrow “Crucify him!” These are the emotional , superficial, sentimentalists who are easily impressed by the Word, who are moved to tears and make good resolutions. But they would retain at the same time the contrariness of an unbroken heart, and therefore they lapse again into the sleep of death and destruction. As long as our attitude toward the Word consists merely in easily aroused, pleasing emotions, all is well, but when the Word presents its demands, that is, to become a determining factor in the heart, exacting obedience in the hour of trails, then is encountered the opposition of the unbroken, unregenerate heart, and the newly created life of promise sickens and dies. (Ylvisaker)

**13:21** The Word is heard but does not produce a vigorous root because the soil lacks depth. (TLSB)