DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
PENTECOST 21 —YEAR B

INVOCATION

L: In the name of the Father
and of the Son +
and of the Holy Spirit.

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 90

**A: In every age, O Lord,
you have been our refuge.**

L: Lord, you have been our dwelling place

G: throughout all generations.

L: Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the earth and the world,

G: from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

L: For a thousand years in your sight are like a day
that has just gone by,

G: or like a watch in the night.

L: You have set our iniquities before you,

G: our secret sins in the light of your presence.

L: You turn mortals back to dust.

G: You sweep them away in the sleep of death.

L: The length of our days is seventy years—
or eighty, if we have the strength;

G: yet their span is but trouble and sorrow.

L: Teach us to number our days aright,

G: that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

L: Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,

G: that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

**A: In every age, O Lord,
you have been our refuge.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Grant, O merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace that they may be cleansed from all their sins and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READING & MEDITATION *see next page*

PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

VERSE OF THE DAY

**A: This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.
(Isaiah 25:9b cf. NIV)**

BENEDICTION

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

A: Amen

Devotional material taken from Jonathan E. Schroeder, *Year A*. Jonathan E. Schroeder, ed., *Planning Christian Worship* (WELS Commission on Worship, 2010). *Visit www.BreadForBeggars.com for more resources.*

READING AND MEDITATION:

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost: Next to the attachment to hearth and home, a person's chief attachment is to his purse. So it is not out of order to consider what God has to say about his gifts of wealth and to let him put those gifts in a proper context for us.

As you study this week, seek to find the *connecting theme* in all the lessons by using Luther's Four Big Barber Questions to ponder and discuss each individual reading:

1. *What is God saying to me in this lesson?*
2. *For what does this lesson lead me to give thanks?*
3. *What sins does this lesson lead me to confess?*
4. *For what does this lesson lead me to pray?*

THE GOSPEL: MARK 10:17-27

This is the context: God's gifts to us of wealth more than most of his other gifts can become snares to our salvation when we treasure them more than the Giver and more than our salvation. From a rhetorical standpoint this reading is one of the most brilliant of all of the discourses that Jesus held during his earthly ministry. First he sets up this wealthy young man who would be a treasure to his mother and to any congregation. He sets him up to learn that he has not even kept the First Commandment and that thereby he has lost all hope of saving himself by the law. Then to drive the point home that salvation is the work of God alone, he sets up his disciples and us to see that we are too attached to his gifts of wealth. We either treasure too much what we have or covet too much what we don't have. We don't want to miss the triple point that Jesus so effectively places before us. Our situation before the law is always a hopeless one, since we all have things that we think we cannot bear to do without, and thereby we forfeit any claim to salvation even on the basis of the First Commandment. We need to examine ourselves to see what those things are that might make us also go away sad from Jesus our Savior. We, too, can only marvel at his grace and goodness, that he would even give us those things which he knows we are tempted to treasure more than we treasure him.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: AMOS 5:6, 7, 10-15

The worship of money and the pleasure it could buy were among the chief sins that Amos denounced. "Seek the Lord and live!" The pursuit of wealth and the ease it can buy will not give life. Quite to the contrary, with wealth as the goal of life, life is forfeit and swept away by the God who gives life and wealth and who will not endure the insult of having the gift worshipped in place of the Giver. But the days are evil. We have two cars and two houses, two boats and a new this and that whenever we want it. Or we covet those things if we do not have them. So common is the idolatry that we do not recognize it. It is part of our culture and is woven into the fabric of the consumer society. Strict and severe is the pronouncement of the Lord and sharp as can be is the contrast: "Hate evil, love good … Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy!" May we not go away sad, but longing for his mercy. Rather let us go with a new appreciation of his generosity in giving wealth and in his far greater generosity in showing mercy when we turn to seek him and his grace!

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: HEBREWS 3:1-6

How will we resist the glitter of gold and the honey taste of luxury, pleasure and ease that so easily become gods and drive all thought of bearing the cross? "Fix your thoughts on Jesus!" In him we have not things nor fleeting pleasure nor pointless ease. In him we have one whose thoughts are constantly fixed on us as he bears his cross before his Father's throne and intercedes for us. It is He who has won for us an eternal home in heaven in spite of our wandering and our foolish misplaced priorities. Therefore let us learn to be content even as we do the labor necessary for our brief pilgrimage here on earth. Let us see that labor as a means to other ends, i.e., the support of our family, of those in need and of the work of the Church. He will, as he has in the past, see to it that we have enough and often more than enough to carry out those God given responsibilities.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON:
2 KINGS 5:14-27

Voltaire noted in his day that the church spent a lot of time denouncing wealth and even more time trying to get its hands on wealth. Naaman had such gratitude for the gift of healing that he wanted to give his wealth to God's instrument in healing him. Elisha had no wealth, only God's Word, and did not want to do anything that would cause Naaman to think that he could buy the blessing of God. Ah, but Gehazi, a servant of the Church, had other ideas. He knew how to make greed look good. Judas was his disciple. Nor have they lacked followers since their day. We all need to examine ourselves to see if even our piety is a cloak for avarice. Leprosy on the soul kills just as surely as unhealed leprosy on the body.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON:
HEBREWS 13:1-6

The reading ties together and sums up the themes of this Sunday and last. It bids us trust in the mercy of God and in his abiding presence in his Word of the gospel. Doing so keeps our priorities where they ought to be: first on him and his Word and then on loving service to our neighbor in family life and in our lives in society as reflectors of his grace and goodness.

My takeaways:

What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?