

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 24 May 2026

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 100:1-5

Opening Hymn: 266 Thou Art the Way

Confession of Sin

O eternal God and merciful Father, we humble ourselves before your great majesty, against which we have frequently and grievously sinned. We acknowledge that we deserve nothing less than eternal death, that we are unclean before you and children of wrath. We continually transgress your commandments, failing to do what you have commanded, and doing that which you have expressly forbidden. We acknowledge our waywardness, and are heartily sorry for all our sins. We are not worthy to be called your children, nor to lift up our eyes heavenward to you in prayer. Nevertheless, O Lord God and gracious Father, we know that your mercy toward those who turn to you is infinite; and so we take courage to call upon you, trusting in our Mediator Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Forgive all our sins for Christ's sake. Cover us with his innocence and righteousness, for the glory of your name. Deliver our understanding from all blindness, and our hearts from all willfulness and rebellion, we pray through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. *Amen*

Assurance of Pardon: Titus 3:4-7

Hymn of Preparation: 282 I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

Old Covenant Reading: Exodus 9:13-35

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 12:12-17

Sermon Title: *Division Among the Gentiles*

Hymn of Response: 411 Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns

Confession of Faith: 1 Heidelberg Catechism (p. 872)

Doxology (Hymn 569)

Closing Hymn: 416 Your Hand, O God, Has Guided

PM Worship

95A O Come before the LORD, Our King

210 O God, We Praise Thee

95C Now with Joyful Exultation

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 95 (Sermon Passage)

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 3:7-19

Sermon Title: *Resting on the Rock*

Adult Sunday School – WCF 8:6 - Lucas Queresma teaching

“Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof were communicated unto the elect, in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman which

should bruise the serpent's head; and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world; being yesterday and today the same, and forever."

Suggested Preparations

Monday (5/18) Read and discuss Exodus 9:13–35

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth. You are still exalting yourself against my people and will not let them go. Behold, about this time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. Now therefore send, get your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the hail falls on them.'"" Then whoever feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh hurried his slaves and his livestock into the houses, but whoever did not pay attention to the word of the LORD left his slaves and his livestock in the field.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and every plant of the field, in the land of Egypt." Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. The hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.

Then Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron and said to them, "This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. Plead with the LORD, for there has been enough of God's thunder and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer." Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD's. But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God." (The flax and the barley were struck down, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the emmer were not struck down, for they are late in coming up.) So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and stretched out his hands to the LORD, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. So the heart of

Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses. (ESV)

R. Reed Lessing writes:

Pharaoh thinks that he is holding his own. Nothing could be further from the truth. God boasts, “For by now I could have put out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth.” In effect, Yahweh says, “Pharaoh, I could have wiped you out a long time ago – but I didn’t. Why? Because through the plagues, all the world will hear of My great power and might.”

Beginning with the plague of hail, Moses also starts to compare God’s judgments on Egypt with the past and the future. The scope and intensity of these latter plagues set them apart from earlier disasters, leading Pharaoh to lament, “This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. And, for the third time, the king pledges to let Israel go – only to change his mind again. Pharaoh talks the talk but won’t walk the walk. As soon as the hail ends, the king goes back to his dirty bag of tricks. “But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.”

Read or sing Hymn 266 Thou Art the Way

Tuesday (5/19) Read and discuss Read and discuss Exodus 9:1–12

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, behold, the hand of the LORD will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall die.”’” And the LORD set a time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.” And the next day the LORD did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died. And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils came upon the magicians

and upon all the Egyptians. But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses. (ESV)

More jarring than the boils and sores on the animals, this is the first plague that strikes the Egyptians in their own bodies and it must have terrified them.

Now think about the symbolism. What is soot? It is ash - the residue of something that has been consumed, burned up, reduced to nothing. And Moses takes it in his hands and tosses it into the air where it drifts away like dust ... in the wind.

Egypt, the superpower. Egypt, the magnificent. Egypt, with its towering monuments and its vast armies and its great Pharaoh who claimed to be divine ... are struck down by *soot* ... floating ashes reduced to a handful of burned residue in the hands of an old shepherd.

This is what all human power looks like when it comes into conflict with Almighty God.

Psalm 2 asks:

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, 'Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.'

And the LORD's response?

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.

This isn't because the LORD God is cruel. It is because the LORD is in fact God.

While the Caesars and Pharaohs of this world should tremble there is great comfort for the people of God in these three words: "Our ... God ... reigns!"

Read or sing Hymn 282 I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

Wednesday (5/20) Read and discuss Hebrews 12:12–17

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears. (ESV)

Commenting on verses 12 and 13, Philip Edgecumbe Hughes writes:

The practical logic of the argument that has preceded is now applied to the readers in a prolonged and diversified exhortation, which continues virtually to the end of the epistle. In these two verses the imagery of the athletic contest is retained: the severity of the conflict with its continuous discipline is such that the competitor who lacks determination allows his hands to hang down and feels his knees to be weakened; and, giving way to discouragement, he easily falters in the race and fails to keep a straight course. The essential thing, however, is to press on and to continue competing. The struggle is serious, and on its outcome eternal issues depend. Present trials are the way to the greatest prize. Those to whom this letter is sent are, like us, not the only contestants, nor are they the first contestants (ch. 11!). Paul and Barnabas, as they blazed a trail for the gospel, learned the fierceness and the fatigue of the struggle; not only, however, did they themselves joyfully and undauntedly persevere, but they also “strengthened the souls” of their converts, “exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

Read or sing Hymn 411 Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns

Thursday (5/21) Read and discuss Hebrews 3:7–19

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
on the day of testing in the wilderness,
where your fathers put me to the test
and saw my works for forty years.
Therefore I was provoked with that generation,
and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart;
they have not known my ways.’
As I swore in my wrath,
‘They shall not enter my rest.’”

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. (ESV)

John Kleinig writes:

The introduction of 3:7-19 by “so,” shows that it continues the unit of instruction that began in 3:1 with the command to “consider” Jesus. Since the Christian congregation is God’s house, which depends on access to Him to fulfill its “heavenly calling,” the teacher gives two further imperative instructions to his hearers in 3:12-13 based on the warning against hardheartedness in 3:8. In 3:14 he recalls his earlier address to them as “partakers of a heavenly calling” by the confessional affirmation that they are “partakers of Christ.” In 3:14 he also repeats his emphasis from 3:6 on their need to “hold on to” what they already have. Likewise he once again addresses them as “brothers”, just as he had in 3:1. Yet despite these links there is a topical shift in the sermon from instruction about the faithful service of Jesus as High Priest over God’s house to instruction about the consequence of faithlessness for those who make up His house.

Friday (5/22) Read and discuss Psalm 95

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.
Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,

as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
when your fathers put me to the test
and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.
For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, “They are a people who go astray in their heart,
and they have not known my ways.”
Therefore I swore in my wrath,
“They shall not enter my rest.” (ESV)

Tim Keller writes:

This psalm and the next give us almost a liturgy for a service of gathered worship. The first step is adoration. Let us rise up in joy to God the Creator (verses 1-5). Let us praise him for being the maker and sustainer of the world. Worshipping is not always quiet and decorous. It can entail shouting, praising, leaping to our feet, singing our hearts out. When the love of the immeasurably great and transcendent God of the universe becomes real to us, the joy should be uncontainable.

The next element of worship is confession of our sin and need. Let us bow down in humility to God the Redeemer (verses 6-7). In contrast to the exuberance of the first five verses, which fits with the postures of standing or even dancing, each of the three verbs in verse 6 have to do with getting low before God, since the Hebrew word for “worship” here literally means to prostrate oneself. We are to bow reverently, to kneel humbly before God, admitting our sinfulness and dependence. While adoration comes from seeing a God of glory, submission comes from seeing a God of grace, one who is our covenant God, who redeemed us and brought us as sheep into His fold (verse 7).

The third element in corporate worship is to soften our hearts and listen to God’s word read, studied, and taught. Israel failed to do this, but Hebrews 4:1-13 says that we too can fail. In Christ we are offered not a physical promised land but the ultimate rest – rest from the crushing burden of self-salvation through effort and performance (Hebrews 4:10). Why wouldn’t everyone want to enter such rest? Because it is a freedom unknown to modern people – one that is on the far side of trusting God rather than ourselves.

Read or sing Hymn 416 Your Hand, O God, Has Guided

Saturday (5/23) Read and discuss Exodus 9:13–35

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people

go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth. You are still exalting yourself against my people and will not let them go. Behold, about this time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. Now therefore send, get your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the hail falls on them.””” Then whoever feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh hurried his slaves and his livestock into the houses, but whoever did not pay attention to the word of the LORD left his slaves and his livestock in the field.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and every plant of the field, in the land of Egypt.” Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. The hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.

Then Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron and said to them, “This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. Plead with the LORD, for there has been enough of God’s thunder and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.” Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD’s. But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God.” (The flax and the barley were struck down, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the emmer were not struck down, for they are late in coming up.) So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and stretched out his hands to the LORD, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses. (ESV)

Christopher Wright comments:

Round three begins with the expected morning encounter, demand, and warning. However, this time we move to a new intensity that indicates we are into the climactic final sequence.

- First, this is the longest of all the plague accounts.
- Second, there is a greatly lengthened theological interpretation. It is not just that there is a lesson for Egypt to learn about God but also that God has ordained and prolonged this whole encounter for a universal purpose – demonstrating *to* “all the earth” that Yahweh is God *in* “all the earth.”
- Third, the plague itself is portrayed (twice) as a storm of hail, lightning, and thunder that was utterly unprecedented in its destructive ferocity. This was not just a spot of bad weather for the time of year.
- Fourth, God not only spares the *Israelites* from the storm, but he offers to save the lives of any *Egyptians* who were prepared to get themselves and their animals under cover in time – and some, at least, took advantage of God’s discriminating mercy in the midst of judgment.
- Fifth, for the first time, pharaoh not only relents (temporarily as before) but also confesses that he has sinned. Furthermore, he acknowledges that Yahweh is “in the right” while he and his people are “in the wrong” – forensic language that shows he is aware that this is a serious battle of right and wrong and that his own behavior stands condemned in court.
- Finally, Moses, who may once have hoped that pharaoh would fully relent and keep his word, now knows for certain that there is no “fear of the LORD” in his adversary – and that is a posture that will lead to inevitable destruction, in spite of God hearing Moses’s prayer for respite one more time.

Prayer: Please lift up tomorrow’s morning and evening worship services.