

Prayer and Study Guide

Daily Scripture Readings – 6/23/19

Monday – Read Psalm 8:1-9. **The God Who Creates.** *O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hand have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed.* The Latin phrase *creatio ex nihilo* means *creation from nothing*. In the beginning God created something out of nothing. Carl Boberg's poem, "O Store Gud" was a paraphrase of Psalm 8. Carl writes, "It was that time of year when everything seemed to be in its richest colouring; the birds were singing in trees and everywhere. It was very warm; a thunderstorm appeared on the horizon and soon there was thunder and lightning. We had to hurry to shelter. But the storm was soon over and the clear sky appeared. When I came home I opened my window toward the sea. There evidently had been a funeral and the bells were playing the tune of "When eternity's clock calls my saved soul to its Sabbath rest." That evening, I wrote the song, "O Store Gud." As you pray, consider the way that God's creation inspires you to praise God. Praise the Lord!

Tuesday – Read Psalm 19:1-4 and Psalm 104. **Natural Revelation.** *When through the woods and forest glades I wander, and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees; when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.* Where do you see God at work in your life, our church, and our community? *Natural revelation is knowledge about God and spiritual matters, discovered through natural means, such as observation of nature, philosophy, and reasoning.* God makes creation to reflect aspects of His glory. We also call this "general" revelation because it goes out to all people. Everyone can see and hear it. We are surrounded with this revelation of God. By virtue of being made in His image the knowledge of God is plainly before us. Take some time to listen to the birds singing. Watch the sun rise or set. Feel the breeze blow across your skin. As you pray, thank God that God's glory is ever-present in our lives.

Wednesday – Read Hebrews 9:24-26. **The God Who Saves.** *And when I think that God, his Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in; that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, he bled and died to take away my sin.* A British Methodist missionary named Stuart Wesley Keene Hine and his wife, Mercy, were on their way to visit the only Christians in a village. As they approached Dmitri's house, they heard a strange and wonderful sound: Dmitri's wife was reading from the gospel of John about the crucifixion of Christ to a houseful of guests, and those visitors were in the very act of repenting. In Ukraine this act of repenting is done very much out loud. So the Hines heard people calling out to God, saying how unbelievable it was that Christ would die for their own sins, and praising Him for His love and mercy. They just couldn't barge in and disrupt this obvious work of the Holy Spirit, so they stayed outside and listened. Stuart wrote down the phrases he heard the repenters use, and even though this was all in Russian, it became the third verse that we know today. As you pray, praise Jesus for giving his life to save you.

Thursday – Read Hebrews 9:27-28. **The God Who Takes Us Home.** *When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart. Then I shall bow in humble adoration, and there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!* In 1948, Stuart Hine and David Griffiths visited a camp in Sussex, England, where displaced Russians were being held. He heard the people ask, "When are we going home." One man to whom they were ministering had been separated from his wife at the very end of World War II, and had not seen her since. At the time they were separated, his wife was a Christian, but he was not, but he had since been converted. His deep desire was to find his wife so they could share their faith together, but he did not think he would ever see his wife on earth again. Instead he was longing for the day when they would meet in heaven, and could share in the Life Eternal there. These words inspired the fourth verse. Pour out your heart to God in prayer.

Friday – Read Psalm 8:3-9. **The Gift of Dominion.** *O when I see ungrateful man defiling this bounteous earth, God's gifts so good and great. In foolish pride, God's holy Name reviling, and yet, in grace, His wrath and judgment wait.* In this optional verse Hine addresses stewardship. God created us to live in a right relationship with God, humanity, and all of creation. Through the gift of dominion, God makes all of us stewards or caretakers of all of God's creation. As you pray, consider the ways you can please God through exercising dominion.

Saturday – Read II Corinthians 12:7b-10. **My Grace is Sufficient for Thee.** *When burdens press, and seem beyond endurance, Bowed down with grief, to Him I lift my face. And then in love He brings me sweet assurance: 'My child! for thee sufficient is my grace.'* The Apostle Paul asked three times for God to heal him of his thorn in the flesh. In spite of not receiving healing, God's power was made present in Paul's weakness. What does *my grace is sufficient for you* mean for your life? In what ways is it true for you that *when we are weak, then we are strong*? Ask God to offer you grace and give you strength when you feel weak.

Lectionary Readings: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 Psalm 8; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15.

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