

Watching Daily At My Gates

January 2 Read Psalm 26:1-7

Here David asks God to judge his works in his walk of sanctification in this life. When we read through the first five verses, we might think that David is boasting in his own works. But then in verses 6 and 7, we see the reason for the request. David wishes to approach the house of God and to speak of God's goodness to others with a clean heart and clean hands. Is this our desire? Are we looking to speak of God's goodness to others? Are we willing to walk in his law daily? This must be our desire as the way to show thanksgiving for our salvation. The first 5 verses are a road map to right living. May they be our guide every day. Sing Psalter 69.

January 3 Read Psalm 26:8-12

As David finishes this Psalm, he expresses his devotion for God's house. We know from both history and other Psalms that this was not an occasional desire. David often makes note of the fact that he wants to be in God's house. He had to be content that God, in his counsel, would have his son build the temple. Is our chief desire the house of God? Do we look forward for every Sunday service with great anticipation? We, like David, need to pray the prayer found in these verses. We, like David, need to live with the same desire for God's house. David knew that God's house on earth was only temporary. We must look for the same eternal dwelling that David did. We must live the same life filled with the desire and devotion for God's house on this earth and in heaven. Sing Psalter 70.

January 4 Read Psalm 27:1-6

This is a Psalm of faith that can be confessed by any believer at any time. To have a God who is our light, our salvation, and the strength of our life gives to us utmost peace and a freedom from fear in our lives. David was faced with many foes and many fears. He had to remember, like we do, to go to his God. He realized that when he was in trouble he could not forget God's house. Is this our reaction in our troubles? Do we tend to "miss" church when we have problems? That is the worst thing we can do, for in church is the only place of refuge. We do not hide from our problems there, but we find the answers for them there. When we find those solutions, then we need to praise the name of him whose mercies endure forever. Sing Psalter 71.

January 5 Read Psalm 27:7-14

Even though we are reading the last 8 verses of this beautiful and comforting Psalm, we are only going to look at verses 7-10. These verses are a sincere prayer from the heart. Do we pray it? Do we pray it often? Do we seek God's face in all that we do? For us we can find that face in the Bible. We can find it in the preaching of the Word. In seeking that face in these ways, we can be assured that God will not hide it from us. We can also know that he will stay with us no matter what circumstances of life come upon us. We need to seek his face in the confidence that he will care for us forever. Sing Psalter 72.

January 6 Psalm 27:7-14

As we finish this beautiful Psalm, let us turn our attention to verse 14. The Psalmist has thanked God for all of the goodness that God has given to him through all of the trials that he has faced. Now he asks for patience. This is not an easy virtue for the child of God. We are apt to wish "to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps." We must learn to wait on God to provide for us solutions to all our trials. As evidenced throughout David's life as well as our own, God always provides for his people. Often it seems like God is "too slow." We need to pray for the needed patience to wait on Jehovah for all things in his time. Sing Psalter 73.

January 7 Read Psalm 28:1-5

Here we have a passionate prayer from the pen of David. Are we this passionate in prayer? Do we pray for spiritual help from our God, or are we focused on some physical need? While both are definitely matters for prayer, we often forget to pray for spiritual aid. We also see him praying for help against the wicked who oppress him. Do we have this experience? Should we have this experience? We also need to make sure that we do not become as the wicked. The works of Jehovah are precious; let us regard them and hold them precious in our lives. Let us pray, and let us pray without ceasing. Sing Psalter 75.

January 8 Read Psalm 28

To end his prayer, David gives thanks because Jehovah has heard his prayer. He again reiterates his trust in the Almighty. He not only gives thanks in prayer but also in song. These are the two chief means of thankfulness that we have to thank our God for all of the blessings that he has bestowed upon us. Do we use these means? Do we pray each day and often throughout the day for the salvation given to us by grace alone? When we have the opportunity to use music, do we do it? Do we sing the songs of Zion as lustily as we can? I often see the very young singing with all of their might. I often see the elderly sing with whatever strength that is left in their frail bodies.

What about those of us in-between? Do we use our strength to praise God at all times? Let the words of this Psalm be our praise and our prayer. Sing Psalter 75.

January 9 Read Psalm 29

Do you hear the voice of Jehovah? He calls in many ways. We can hear him peacefully calling us in the myriad of stars that shine down upon us from on high. We can hear him in the roar of the wind as it whistles past our homes by day or night. We can hear him in the crash of thunder and the lightning's flash. He speaks loudly in the storms, earthquakes, and volcanoes that seem to increase in number. What is he saying to us? First of all, the Psalm says he calls us to worship. We are to worship him in the beauty of holiness. Secondly, the Psalmist tells us that he is conferring upon us strength and peace. Let us worship daily giving thanks for the strength to live in this world which will soon experience his second coming. Let us worship daily giving thanks for the peace that is ours through Christ Jesus. Sing Psalter 76.

January 10 Read Psalm 30:1-6

David looks back at the wars that he has fought and won with God's help to enable him to establish his throne in Jerusalem. Some of the time as he was fighting, he thought death was very near. Think of being in Saul's throne room and the javelins that went whistling by his head. His response to becoming king is to sing and realize that the joy that was his was spiritual joy afforded to him by his covenant God. May we, too, live this life in the realization that it is God who gives to us what we need. It is God who cares for us in all things. May we, too, say that in God we shall never be moved. Sing Psalter 78.

January 11 Read Psalm 30:7-12

There are times in our lives that it appears that God has turned from us. It may be that we have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. It may be that in his counsel he has willed a trial in order to strengthen our faith. It may be something for which we can find no reason. What will our reaction be? Will we turn from him? If we do, we will be sorely tried. He is our refuge and the rock of our strength. If God be truly gone from us, and that will never happen, we are dead, and the dead cannot praise God. No, God will turn to us. He will show us the way once more. Let us give thanks for all of his goodness now as this is the way that we will be able to eternally give thanks in heaven. God will have mercy upon his people; he will help them in all situations. He is God. Sing Psalter 79.

January 12 Read Psalm 31:1-8

In this Psalm of David we have a prayer which proceeds out of David's faith. Faith in God is necessary for us to pray. If we do not have the true knowledge of God and the hearty confidence in him, we will not pray in confidence. David is concerned about his spiritual life. This we see in verse 5, which words are also the words our Savior used as he hung dying on the cross for our souls. We need to go to God in prayer often every day. We need to do this by faith, for how else can we pray? We need to ask God to preserve our soul until the day that he takes it to heaven. Let us turn to him in prayer now and often each day. Sing Psalter 80:1-6

January 13 Read Psalm 31:9-18

In the first part of this Psalm, David recounts some of the troubles in which he found himself in his life. These were troubles from both outside Israel as well as inside Israel. When things looked the darkest, he speaks these words of verses 14 and 15. Do we trust in Jehovah to deliver us out of troubles? Do we confess that our times are in his hands all of the time? We must never hesitate to go to God in prayer for help in times of trouble. We can know that "all things work together for good to them that love God." This confession of Paul, who faced many of the same troubles as David did, can be and should be ours. Let us call upon our God daily and in all situations of life. Sing Psalter 80:7-12.

January 14 Read Psalm 31:19-24.

Here is a portion of Scripture that makes you want to read it over and over. In fact its words are so comforting that really we do not need to add ours to it. In verse 19 David proclaims God's goodness. How often are we not exposed to that goodness in our lives? How often are we not guilty of the error of verse 22? We speak in haste about many things, but speaking in haste about God's supposed lack of care in our lives is most damaging. He hears us! What a blessing and comfort that is!. Finally let us love him, and let us trust in him with our whole beings. He does care for us, and he will be with us at all times. Go back and read this section again, and then pray for God's care in your life. Sing Psalter 81.

January 15 Read Psalm 32:1-5

Sometimes when we read this Psalm we forget about how it begins. We are so busy commiserating and empathizing with David in his sin, that we forget that the first word is blessed. This Psalm speaks of confession and forgiveness that only belongs to the child of God. We find in this Psalm the three parts of the Heidelberg Catechism: guilt, grace, and gratitude. When we continue in our sins, we never get to the last two parts. If we have no knowledge of our sin and Savior, we will never find comfort. But the child of God is blessed in the way of confession. He is blessed because he does

obtain forgiveness. Blessed means happy. The only way to true happiness is confession. Let us confess our sins to each other and especially to our God. Sing Psalter 83.

January 16 Read Psalm 32:6-11

After confessing his sin and being forgiven by our gracious heavenly Father, David reiterates his trust in Jehovah. He knows that even though he has sinned grievously, God will not cast him off. God will care for him in all troubles. David knows that he must pass these truths on to those around him. We, too, must never hide the trust that we find in God. We must instruct others. Our instruction must contain the mercy of God and the command to rejoice in Jehovah. David starts with prayer and ends with singing. Do we make these two parts of thankfulness ours? Sing Psalter 84.

January 17 Read Psalm 33:1-11

As you walk around this earth, do you look at it to see reasons why you should praise Jehovah? As verses 4-11 point out there are many of those reasons. Here is another of those portions of Scripture that those who are anti-creation need to remove from their Bibles. The Psalmist extols the greatness and the power of God in making all things. As we see the creation, whether it be the world of animals, plants, or nonliving creatures, we should be incited to praise Jehovah. What else can you do when you see a beautiful starry night, a majestic whitetail deer, a brilliant hibiscus, or the strength of the mountains? In all of those things we can see some of God's attributes for which he must be praised by us. Look around you and praise Jehovah. Sing Psalter 85.

January 18 Read Psalm 33:12-22

God sees us. What a wonderful and blessed truth this is! He sees us in all of our needs and cares, and he cares for all of our needs. The child of God can go through life with this as his confidence. God not only sees us, but he sees all man. He sees what man does to his children, and by his mercy cares for us. Sometimes we have to wait for our help and shield. This waiting is in God's time, not ours. God's longsuffering makes all things work out in his time for our good. Let us wait and let us rejoice because his mercy will give to us hope in all situations of life. Sing Psalter 86.

January 19 Read Psalm 34:1-10

As David penned this Psalm, he was away from his beloved Israel. He had been chased out by Saul. He had attempted to make his own way in Philistia, and when that had failed he realized that his only help was in Jehovah. God answered his cry for help as we read in the first few verses. He then realized that God cares for his people

in whatever situation they might find themselves. We need to learn from this Psalm two lessons. First of all, we need to pray often unto our heavenly Father. We can pray in confidence that he will hear our prayers and care for us. Secondly, we must know that God cares for his people at all times. It may not seem like it at times, but even as he cares for the sparrow, he cares for all of the saints. Let us pray knowing that God will give to us all that is necessary for both body and soul. Sing Psalter 88.

January 20 Read Psalm 34:11-22

David not only wants Israel to hear his instruction about the way of the Lord; he wants all of Israel, including its covenant seed, to hear about that blessed way. Our children need to learn at a very young age about the goodness of Jehovah. And then they need to continue learning about that goodness each year until they reach the years of discretion. They need to hear about God in all his ways. In this way they will be able to take up their place in the church militant. In this way they will have knowledge about he who will deliver them out of all and any kind of trouble. Many of life's experiences are outlined in this Psalm. Young people, take the time to read it over again. Parents and grandparents, show these words unto them often. Sing Psalter 89.

January 21 Read Psalm 35:1-10

Some commentators say that this Psalm and the previous one form a pair and are written about the same subject. That subject would be David's persecution at the hands of King Saul. It seems from the text that this might be true. It is a beautiful confession of faith of the child of God that we would do well to take upon our lips. Look at verses 2, 3, and 9 once more. Would we be able to take them upon our lips in times of trouble? Do we even think about God in those times except to blame him for our situation? Yet, David calls upon his soul to be joyful and to sing in the way of salvation that Jehovah has wrought for him. Let us read and mediate these words in order that we may know what should be our thoughts in time of troubles. Sing Psalter 92: 1-3.

January 22 Read Psalm 35:11-16

Pride or humility: each of us exhibits one of those two characteristics. Sometimes we fall deeply into the sin of pride. We are called to exhibit humility like our elder Brother Christ Jesus as he left his throne in heaven and came to earth to die for our sins. David, in the face of his enemies, as a type of Christ, exhibited this grace. He treated his enemies as his friend or brother. Do we do this? We need to pray for the grace to be humble in all situations in life. May God grant to us this grace each day of our lives. Sing Psalter 92:4-6.

January 23 Read Psalm 35:17-28

There are two themes in this section of Scripture. First of all, David petitions God for relief from those who strive against him. David realizes that his struggles against the wicked will prove fruitless unless God is on his side. Therefore he asks for help. He does this on the basis of the righteousness that God has wrought within David. Secondly, David promises to speak and sing of this righteousness and praise God daily and even hourly. It is God who deserves this praise and not David himself. May we, too, go to God in prayer daily for deliverance from evil doers. May we vow to praise Jehovah in the congregation of his people. Sing Psalter 92:7-8.

January 24 Read Psalm 36

There are two doctrinal truths that can be illustrated in this text. First of all, there is the doctrine of election and reprobation. David clearly shows that there are two classes of people in this world. In the first four verses and the last one and a half we clearly see the wicked and their ways. In between those verses, David shows God's love for his people. Secondly, we find many of those qualities that show to us who God is. These qualities are his attributes. Some are communicable such as mercy, faithfulness, lovingkindness, and others. Others are incommunicable like his omnipresence found in verse 5. These qualities give to us great comfort. And as we walk in their light, we will see light upon our paths. May we know him, for to know him is to have eternal life. Sing Psalter 93.

January 25 Read Psalm 37:1-7

Can you find the seven commands in this passage of Scripture? They are seven ways to find true peace in this world of disorder and sin. We tend to look around us and become nervous and dismayed at what we see and hear. The antidote for this malady is found in these verses and summed up in verse 7. "Rest in the Lord." When we realize that there is no comfort or solutions to be found in the world around us, we must rest in Jehovah. When we realize that we are not going to make it doing it our way, we need to commit our way unto our covenant God who gives to us delight and affords us the trust that we need. Finally, let us not worry about the wicked, but rather let us wait patiently for our God to care for us. Sing Psalter 95.

January 26 Read Psalm 37:8-17

Two more commands are present in the first verse of this section of Psalm 37. How many of us are prone to anger at almost any happening in our lives? We are quick to be angry at what we perceive to be injustice to us or to someone we love. We are told in the catechism that anger is sin against the sixth commandment. We need to know

that God is in control of all things, and that he will vindicate any evil done to us. Secondly, we must realize that in this life God will also take care of our physical needs. It is hard for most of us to think of being poor. But the righteous poor are cared for by our heavenly Father who watches even the birds of the field. Let us go forward in life in love toward God and our neighbor. Sing Psalter 96.

January 27 Read Psalm 37:18-24

As we enter winter in the Northern Hemisphere, we can see the truth of verse 24. Sometimes we slip and fall on the ice. That fall sometimes may cause a broken bone. Yet we can pick ourselves up or be picked up and know that God has sustained us. God cares for his people, and even though the wicked seem to be prospering, we can have the assurance that our covenant God sees our needs and cares for them. We can show mercy to others only because he is merciful towards us. Let us be thankful that God cares for us at all times, and let us give thanksgiving in prayer for that care. Sing Psalter 97.

January 28 Read Psalm 37:25-33

In this section of reasons why we must be thankful at all times, we find verse 27. Here we have another of those commands. We are to depart from evil and do good. Evil is all around us; we might wonder how we can get away from it, but yet David tells us to leave it. This is a guide that should guide us in all areas of our lives. Secondly, he tells us to do good. We have many opportunities to do good. We will find more of them when we depart from evil. The section closes with beautiful words of comfort. God will never leave his children. He will care for them in all situations. Let us be thankful now and every day until Christ returns for such gracious care. Sing Psalter 98.

January 29 Psalm 37:34-40

As we finish this Psalm there are two ideas to which we should pay attention. First of all is another command. In verse 37 we have the word "wait." This is used in several places in Scripture. Waiting is a virtue that many of us have in short supply. We do not want to wait. We are of the now generation. But yet the Holy Spirit through the Psalmist commands us to wait on the Lord. We need to learn that his times are best. Secondly, we need to keep in the forefront of our thoughts that salvation is of the Lord alone. We like the idea of "pulling ourselves up by our own boot straps." But we need to remember one of main themes of the Reformation namely that salvation is from God alone. This virtue is related to waiting. As we go through this life let us wait on Jehovah who gives to us the salvation we desperately need. Sing Psalter 99.

January 30 Read Psalm 38:1-11

David, like all of God's people, fell into sin. David, again like all of God's people, delayed in going to the heavenly Father to confess that sin and receive the forgiveness, which only comes from Jehovah, for that sin. God will bring us to him when we sin. Sometimes the chastisement necessary is severe like that described in the first part of this Psalm. When we get the type of spiritual leprosy described here, we need to fall on our knees in prayer. Only in that way will we receive the sweet balm of healing that is the forgiveness of sin. Sing Psalter 102.

January 31 Read Psalm 38:12-22

In the final part of this Psalm, David continues his lament about the troubles that the wicked bring upon him. David was in sore distress, and humanly speaking, one might think that he was ready to give up all hope. But David knew that he must hope in God. He knew that God would hear him and prevent the enemies from coming upon him. This was not easy, but by grace he could prevail and cry out, "Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation." This should be our cry. Is it? Sing Psalter 103.

February 1 Read Psalm 39:1-6

Sins of the tongue have plagued God's people throughout the ages. David knew what to do. We need to bridle our tongues. Is this possible? Not in our own strength as James told us in his epistle. Sometimes we fail to speak that which is good. This must be avoided as well. But we must not speak rashly. David realized that only God could help him in this kind of distress, and only God could show him the way that his life must go. Let us daily pray for help in the use of our tongue. Let us use it to praise God and not to sin. Sing Psalter 105.

February 2 Read Psalm 39:7-13

David realizes and we must too that the only way of help is from God. We must pray as David did. God is sovereign and controls all things. We must see this as we live in this world of vanity. If we try to find salvation in this world, we will find nothing. We must realize this and live as the strangers and pilgrims that we are. This world is not our home. Our home is spiritual and not earthly. Let us seek that home, and let us do that with prayer and supplication to our sovereign God. Sing Psalter 106.

February 3 Read Psalm 40:1-10

In this Psalm we seem to see the answer to David's prayers of the last two Psalms. First of all David confesses that he has waited patiently. This we must do to find true peace on this earth. Secondly, we must sing that new song that is given to the saved ones. Then we see that the way of salvation is only in Christ as he is foreshadowed in

verses 6-10. Those words are repeated in the New Testament about Christ. We must follow them and use them as our example throughout our entire life. Sing Psalter 111.

February 4 Read Psalm 40:11-17

We sin daily. We need to pray the prayer of verse 11 daily as well. It is only through the tender mercies and lovingkindness, which are “new every morning,” that we will find true peace on our pilgrimage on this earth. Only the child of God can pray, “Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me.” Only by grace do we dare take these words on our lips. Only the elect can pray that God will take vengeance upon the wicked. They can do this because those wicked are God’s enemies. God will come quickly to save his people; of that there is no doubt. Sing Psalter 112.