

# May

The seasonal canticle for May is Hannah's prayer singing praise and thanksgiving to God, echoed by Mary's song, the Magnificat. Though Hannah speaks of her conceived son, Samuel, who will establish the kingship and usher in a new period of Israel's history, her supreme source of joy is the God Who answered her prayer for a child. We might take special note of v.6 and think of the work of the law and Gospel, respectively bringing us death for our sin and raising us to life by faith in Christ.

On May first, we finish the collection of St. Paul's letters. The letter to Titus, like those to Timothy, is to a pastor and his congregation (note especially the great summaries of grace and Baptism). Philemon is to a believer in Collose, which believer Paul asks to accept back as a brother the runaway slave, Onesimus.

On May 2-13, we read other New Testament letters. In reading Hebrews, notice especially how the author warns us about the dangers of abandoning the true teaching and sacraments for the sake of escaping persecution, and notice the "roll-call" of the saints or "heroes of the faith" in chapter 11. James, a kinsman of the Lord, exhorts us by describing the life that Christians should live. Peter's two letters give Jewish and Gentile Christians scattered through Asia Minor (1) strong Baptismal teaching and instructions regarding persecution inside and outside the church, and (2) directions for dealing with false teachers and evildoers in the revealed church. The Apostle John has three letters in the New Testament, though, like in his Gospel account, he does not refer to himself by name in them. The first expresses God's grace very clearly and also addresses false teaching. The second and third letters address the issue of discouraging false teaching by not showing hospitality. Jude, another kinsman of the Lord, writes briefly like 2 Peter of the Gospel as the antidote for false teaching.

On May 11, note well Psalm 130. Psalm 130 is one of the seven penitential psalms (the others are Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, and 143). As such, Psalm 130 expresses well our plea to God for the forgiveness He so graciously offers. Martin Luther paraphrased this psalm in a hymn, *TLH* #329.

On May 14-24, we read John's Gospel account, written for people to come to believe and continue believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, so that by believing they might have life in His Name (see 20:31). This account compliments the other "synoptic" Gospel accounts and treats in a circular, escalating fashion the same sub-themes. The other accounts were no doubt known to John and he, by the Spirit's inspiration, did not cover exactly the same ground, though his ultimate purpose was the same.

The rest of May, our attention is directed to Acts. As noted in regards to March's readings, the book of the Acts of the Apostles is the second New Testament book recorded by St. Luke. Where the earlier book that bears his name tells "about all Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was given up to heaven" (1:1-2), this book details the spread of the Church from Jerusalem, to Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth (1:8) after Jesus' ascension. In May we read only through Luke's divinely-inspired narration of St. Paul's first missionary journey (chapter 14).

1	1 Samuel 2:1-10
	Titus, Philemon
2	Psalm 121
	Hebrews 1-4
3	Psalm 122
	Hebrews 5-7
4	Psalm 123
	Hebrews 8-10
5	Psalm 124
	Hebrews 11-13
6	Psalm 125
	James 1-3
7	Psalm 126
	James 4-5
8	Psalm 127
	1 Peter 1-2
9	Psalm 128
	1 Peter 3-5
10	Psalm 129
	2 Peter
11	Psalm 130
	1 John 1-3
12	Psalm 131
	1 John 4-5
13	Psalm 132
	2 John, 3 John, Jude
14	Psalm 133
	John 1-2
15	Psalm 134
	John 3-4
16	Psalm 135
	John 5-6
17	Psalm 136
	John 7-8
18	Psalm 137
	John 9-10
19	Psalm 138
	John 11-12
20	Psalm 139
	John 13-14
21	Psalm 140
	John 15-16
22	Psalm 141
	John 17-18
23	Psalm 142
	John 19
24	Psalm 143
	John 20-21
25	Psalm 144
	Acts 1-2
26	Psalm 145
	Acts 3-4
27	Psalm 146
	Acts 5-6
28	Psalm 147
	Acts 7-8
29	Psalm 148
	Acts 9-10
30	Psalm 149
	Acts 11-12
31	1 Samuel 2:1-10
	Acts 13-14