Opening prayer: Heavenly Father, as we spend these moments pondering Your work in both drought and famine, instill in us a thankful countenance in the midst of both situations. We know that You can work good through all conditions in our temporal lives. Bless our time in Your Word. May we continue to grow as redeemed children through the life, death, and resurrection of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, set apart now to spread the good news of the Gospel everywhere to everyone. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

We begin by reading aloud together Ezekiel 34:26 (ESV): And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing.

In this text, God is again promising a blessing on a people who often forgot about Him. Those wayward Israelites in olden times were not unlike us today. During times of prosperity they became complacent and frequently began to worship idols and/or false prophets. After a time of testing they would once again repent and were again blessed by the One Triune God.

In Genesis 34:26, what caused Abram to leave the promised country to live in Egypt? See Genesis 12:10. _______________________

In Genesis 26:1–2, what caused Isaac to leave his land? __

Can you think of a time in your life when adversity caused you to move in another direction? Share. ______________

God also used famine or drought as a form of judgment upon a wayward people. Read Haggai 1:7–11. Why did God call for a famine on the Judeans who returned to Jerusalem? ______________________________________

Do you think that God can still use droughts or famine in our time to move people to repentance? ____________

Look at Genesis 26:2–5. When we are in a season of famine, what do these words of comfort to Isaac tell us about God? _____________________________

What words of comfort does Apostle Paul write in Romans 8:35–39? _____________________________
There is great comfort in knowing that, through all adversity, even when disciplined for being wayward, our God is with us and nothing will ever separate us from His love. How does this fact help us as sisters in Christ to relate to others dealing with adversity? _____________________________________________

As I continued working through this study, our Lord saw it fit to bless with life-giving showers. Once again the small ponds teemed with life, the grasses grew lush and green, and all things seemed to flourish. There was a time, though, when God used water in another way. Read Genesis 7:4. What was God's form of judgment on a sin-filled world? ____________________________

Noah and his family were saved from the waters of judgment that would bring certain death on the entire created world. Take a moment to discuss the differences and similarities of judgment and chastisement.  ______________________________________

As Noah was saved through the waters, we are saved through the waters. Look up Colossians 2:12 and 1 Peter 3:18–21. Which waters save us? ______________________________________

In Isaiah 55:10–11, God draws a comparison between what rain and snow produce and His Word. What is the analogy? ______________________________________

Christ often spoke of life-giving water. In John 4:13–14 what does Jesus offer this woman of Samaria? ____________________

Christ uses the metaphor of a bubbling spring to bring across the fact that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, this life-giving water wells up within us — not just to give us temporal relief from thirst, but to become an everlasting spring, welling up in us eternal life and an ever-lasting quenching of thirst. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are assured that we receive this life-giving water in our Baptism. We then tell others of this blessed eternal gift so they, too, can receive its blessings.

We close our study by reading together the words of Apostle Paul in Titus 3:5–7 (ESV): He saved us, not because of work done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Closing Prayer/Hymn: With one accord, O God, we pray: Grant us Your Holy Spirit. Help us in our infirmity Through Jesus’ blood and merit. Grant us to grow in grace each day That by this sacrament we may Eternal life inherit. [Amen.]*

“All Who Believe and Are Baptized,” LSB #601, verse 2. (Tune: “Dear Christian, One and All, Rejoice.”)

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