

A reading from the book of Job

19:1, 23-27

(I know that my Redeemer lives.)

Job answered and said:

Oh, would that my words were written down!

Would that they were inscribed in a record:
That with an iron chisel and with lead
they were cut in the rock forever!

But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives,
and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;
Whom I myself shall see:
my own eyes, not another's, shall behold Him,
And from my flesh I shall see God;
my inmost being is consumed with longing.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Wisdom

3:1-9

(God accepted them.)

The souls of the just are in the hand of God,
And no torment shall touch them.

They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead;
And their passing away was thought an affliction
And their going forth from us, utter destruction.

But they are in peace.

For if before people, indeed, they be punished,
yet is their hope full of immortality;
Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,
because God tried them and found them worthy.

As gold in the furnace, God proved them.

In the time of their visitation they shall shine,
and shall dart about as sparks through stubble.
They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,
and God shall be their King forever.

Those who trust in God shall understand truth,
and the faithful shall abide with God in love
Because grace and mercy are with the holy ones
and God's care is with the elect.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Wisdom

4:7-15

(A blameless life is a ripe old age.)

The just one, though he die early, shall be at rest.

For the age that is honorable comes not
with the passing of time,
nor can it be measured in terms of years.

Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men,
and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.

The one who pleased God was loved;
he who lived among sinners was transported—
snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind
or deceit beguile his soul,
For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right
and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.

Having become perfect in a short while,
he reached the fullness of a long career;
for his soul was pleasing to the Lord,
therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness.

But the people saw and did not understand,
nor did they take this into account.

Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,
and his care is with his elect.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Isaiah

25:6a, 7-9

(The Lord God will destroy death forever.)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts
will provide for all peoples.

On this mountain he will destroy
the veil that veils all peoples,
the web that is woven over all nations;
He will destroy death forever.

The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces;
the reproach of his people he will remove
from the whole earth;

For the Lord has spoken.

on that day it will be said:

“Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!
This is the Lord for whom we looked;
Let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Lamentations

3:17-26

(It is good to wait in silence for the Lord God to save.)

My soul is deprived of peace,
I have forgotten what happiness is;
I tell myself my future is lost,
all that I hoped for from the Lord.

The thought of my homeless poverty
is wormwood and gall;
Remembering it over and over
leaves my soul downcast within me.

But I will call this to mind,
as my reason to have hope:
the favors of the Lord are not exhausted,
His mercies are not spent;
they are renewed each morning,
so great is his faithfulness.

My portion is the Lord, says my soul;
therefore will I hope in him.

God is the Lord to one who waits for him,
to the soul that seeks him;
It is good to hope in silence
for the saving help of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel 12:1-3

(Of those who lie sleeping in the dust of the earth many will awake.)

[I, Daniel, mourned and I heard this word of the Lord:]

“At that time there shall arise
Michael, the great prince,
guardian of your people;
It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress
since nations began until that time.

At that time your people shall escape,
everyone who is found written in the book.

Many of those who sleep
in the dust of the earth shall awake;
some shall live forever,
others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.

But the wise shall shine brightly
like the splendor of the firmament,
and those who lead the many to justice
shall be like the stars forever.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the second book of Maccabees 12:43-46

(It is good and holy to think of the dead rising again.)

Judas [the ruler of Israel] then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.

In doing this, he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought.

Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of the prophet Micah

6:8

(What God asks of you.)

This is what God asks of you, only this:

“To act justly,
To love tenderly,
And to walk humbly with your God.”

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 40: 28-31

(God is faithful.)

God does not faint or grow weary,
and God's knowledge is beyond scrutiny,
giving strength to the fainting
and making vigor abound for the weak.

Though the young faint and grow weary,
and they stagger and fall,
they who hope in God will renew their strength.

They will soar as with eagles' wings.
They will run and not grow weary,
walk and not grow faint.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

3:1-13

(To everything there is a season)

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under heaven.

A time to be born, a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to uproot from the plant.
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them;
A time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
A time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

What advantage has the worker from toil? I have considered the task that God has appointed for us to be busied about. God has made everything appropriate to its time, and has put the timeless into our hearts, without us ever discovering, from beginning to end, the work that God has done.

I recognize that there is nothing better than to be glad and to do well during life. For everyone, moreover, to eat and drink and enjoy the fruit of our labor is a gift of God. I recognize that whatever God does will endure forever; there is no adding to it or taking from it. Thus may God be revered.

The Word of the Lord

11b

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

3:1-8

(To everything there is a season)

To everything there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

A time to be born
 and a time to die;
A time to plant,
 and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to weep,
 and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn,
 and a time to dance;
A time to get,
 and a time to lose;
A time to keep,
 and a time to cast away;
A time to love,
 and a time to hate;
A time of war,
 and a time of peace.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Sirach

3:2-6, 12-14

(The importance of honoring one's father)

For the Lord honored the father above the children,
and confirmed the right of the mother over her children.

Honoring one's father atones for sins,
and glorifying one's mother is like laying up treasure.

Those who honor their father will be gladdened
by their own children,
and when they pray, they will be heard.

Those who glorify their father will have long life,
and those who obey the Lord will refresh their mother.

O child, help your father in his old age,
and do not grieve him as long as he lives;
even if he is lacking in understanding,
show forbearance;
in all your strength, support him.

For kindness to a father will not be forgotten,
and against your sins it will be credited to you.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 60:19-20

(God is our everlasting light.)

No longer will you need the sun or moon to give you light,
for the Lord your God will be your everlasting light,
and he will be your glory.
Your sun shall never set
the moon shall not go down,
for the Lord will be your everlasting light.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Proverbs 31:10-12, 20-22, 24-31

(Characteristics of a good wife.)

When one finds a worthy woman, her value is beyond pearls.

Her family, entrusting their heart to her, has an unfailing prize.
She brings them good and not evil, all the days of her life.

She reaches out her hands to the poor
And extends her arms to the needy.
She fears not the snow for her household;
all her charges are doubly clothed.
She makes her own coverlets;
fine linen and purple are her clothing.
She makes garments and sells them.

She is clothed with strength and dignity,
and she laughs at the days to come.
She opens her mouth in wisdom,
and on her tongue is kindly counsel.
She watches the conduct of her household,
and eats not her food in idleness.
Her children rise up and praise her;
her family extols her:
“Many are the women of proven worth,
but you have excelled them all.”

Charm is deceptive, and beauty fleeting;
The woman who reveres God is to be praised.
Give her a reward of her labors,
and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord

14 b (shorter version)

A reading from the book of Proverbs 31:10-12, 20-21, 24a, 26-28,30-31

(Characteristics of a good wife.)

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is beyond pearls.
Her husband, entrusting his heart to her, has an unfailing prize.
She brings him good and not evil, all the days of her life.

She reaches out her hands to the poor
And extends her arms to the needy.
She fears not the snow for her household;
all her charges are doubly clothed.

She makes garments and sells them.
She opens her mouth in wisdom,
and on her tongue is kindly counsel.
She watches the conduct of her household,
and eats not her food in idleness.
Her children rise up and praise her;
her husband, too, extols her:

Charm is deceptive, and beauty fleeting;
The woman who reveres God is to be praised.
Give her a reward of her labors,
and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 43:1-5

But now, thus says the Lord,
 Who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel:
Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
 I have called you by name:
 You are Mine.
When you pass through the water,
 I will be with you;
 in the rivers you will not drown.
When you walk through fire,
 you shall not be burned;
 the flames shall not consume you.
For I am the Lord, your God,
 the Holy One of Israel, your Savior,
Because you are precious in my eyes and glorious,
 and because I love you.
Do not be afraid—I am with you!

The Word of the Lord