

A reading from the book of Job.

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;

And from my flesh I shall see God;

my inmost being is consumed with longing.

Whom I myself shall see:

my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

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 men, 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 of himself.

As gold in the furnace, he proved them,
and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

Those who trust in him shall understand truth,
and the faithful shall abide with him in love:

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

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The just man, 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.

He 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.

Those who trust in him shall understand truth,

and the faithful shall abide with him in love:

Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,

and his care is with the elect.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

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.

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.

Good 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 second book of Maccabees.

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 Ecclesiastes.

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

A time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.

A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to tear down, and a time to build.

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 his toil?

I have considered the task
which God has appointed for men to be busied about.

He has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into their hearts,
without men's ever discovering, from beginning to end,
the work which God has done.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Strengthen the hands that are feeble,
 make firm the knees that are weak,
Say to those whose hearts are frightened:
 Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God,
 he comes with vindication;
With divine recompense
 he comes to save you.
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
 the ears of the deaf be cleared;
Then will the lame leap like a stag,
 then the tongue of the dumb will sing.
Streams will burst forth in the desert,
 and rivers in the steppe.
Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return
 and enter Zion singing,
 crowned with everlasting joy;
They will meet with joy and gladness,
 sorrow and mourning will flee.

The Word of the Lord.