

A Reading from the Second Book of Maccabees:

(2 Maccabees 12:43-46)

Judas, the ruler of Israel,
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 Job:

(Job 19:1, 23-27A)

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite 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 Proverbs:

(Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-31)

When one finds a worthy wife,
her value is far 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 obtains wool and flax and make cloth with skillful hands.
Like merchant ships, she secures her provisions from afar.
She rises while it is still night,
and distributes food to her household.
She picks out a field to purchase;
out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.
She is girt about with strength, and sturdy are her arms.
She enjoys the success of her dealings; at night her lamp is undimmed.
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 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.
Her children rise up and praise her; her husband, too, extols her:
“many are the women of proven worth,
but you have excelled them all.”
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 Ecclesiastes:

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every thing 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 to war, and a time to peace.

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Book of Wisdom:

(Wisdom 3:1-6, 9)

The Souls of the just are in the hands of God,
and no torment shall touch them.

They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead,
and their passing away was though 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.

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 the Lord shall be their King forever.

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 his elect.

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Book of Wisdom:

(Wisdom 4:7-15)

The just man,
though he die early, shall be at rest.
For the age that is honorable come not with the passing of time,
nor can it be measured in terms of years.
Rather, understanding is the crown,
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 transform 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.

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

(Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9)

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 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:

(Lamentations 3:17-26)

My soul is deprived of peace,

I have forgotten what happiness is;

I tell myself my future is lost,

and 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.