

FIRST READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. A reading from the second Book of 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.

2. A reading from the Book of 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.

3. Long form

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

3: 1-9

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. 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.

OR

Short form

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

3:1-6, 9

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 in the eyes of 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 his elect.

The Word of the Lord.

4. A reading from the Book of Wisdom

4: 7-15

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.

The Word of the Lord.

5. A reading from the Book of the Prophet 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 our God, to whom he 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.

6. A reading from the Book of Lamentations

3: 17-26

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.

7. A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel

12: 1-3

In those days, I, Daniel, mourned and 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.

8. A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes

3:1-11

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 of war, and a time of peace. What advantage has the worker from his toil? I have considered the task that God has appointed for the sons of men to be busied about. He has made everything appropriate to its time, and has put the timeless into their hearts, without man's ever discovering, from beginning to end, the work which God has done.

The Word of the Lord.

9. A Reading from the Book of Sirach

(26:1-4,13-16)

Happy the husband of a good wife,

twice-lengthened are his days;

A worthy wife brings joy to her husband,

peaceful and full is his life.

A good wife is a generous gift

bestowed upon him who fears the LORD;

Be he rich or poor, his heart is content,

and a smile is ever on his face.

A gracious wife delights her husband,

her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones;

A gift from the LORD is her governed speech,

and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth.

Choicest of blessings is a modest wife,

priceless her chaste person.

Like the sun rising in the LORD'S heavens,

the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.

Like the light which shines above the holy lampstand,

are her beauty of face and graceful figure.

Golden columns on silver bases

are her shapely limbs and steady feet.

The Word of the Lord.

10. A Reading from the Book of Genesis

9:12-17

God said to Noah:

“This is the sign that I am giving for all ages to come,
of the covenant between me and you
and every living creature with you:
I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant
between me and the earth.
When I bring clouds over the earth,
and the bow appears in the clouds,
I will recall the covenant I have made
between me and you and all living beings,
so that the waters shall never again
become a flood to destroy all mortal beings.
As the bow appears in the clouds,
I will see it and recall the everlasting covenant
that I have established between God and all living beings
–all mortal creatures that are on earth.”

God told Noah:

“This is the sign of the covenant I have established
between me and all mortal creatures that are on earth.”

The Word of the Lord.

11. A Reading from the Book of Genesis

48:21; 49:29-33

Jacob said to Joseph:

“I am about to die. But God will be with you
and will restore you to the land of your ancestors.”

Then Jacob gave his sons this charge:

“Since I am about to be taken to my kindred,
bury me with my fathers
in the cave that lies in the field of Ephron the Hittite,
the cave in the field of Machpelah, facing on Mamre,
in the land of Canaan, the field that Abraham bought
from Ephron the Hittite for a burial ground.
There Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried,
and so are Isaac and his wife Rebekah,
and there, too, I buried Leah—
the field and the cave in it
that had been purchased from the Hittites.”

When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons,
he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last,
and was taken to his kindred.

The Word of the Lord.

12. A Reading from the Book of Proverbs

31: 10-12, 25-26, 28-31

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 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.”
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the Lord 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. A Reading from the Book of Sirach

6:14-17

A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter;
You who find one find a treasure.
A faithful friend is beyond price,
no sum can balance this worth.
A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy,
such as you who fear God find;
[For you who fear God behave accordingly,
and your friend will be like yourself.]

The Word of the Lord.

13. A Reading from the Book of Sirach

41:1-4a

O death! how bitter the thought of you
for the one at peace amid possessions,
for the person unruffled and always successful,
who still can enjoy life's pleasures.

O death! how welcome your sentence
to the weak person of failing strength,
tottering and always rebuffed,
with no more sight, with vanished hope.

Fear not death's decree for you;
remember, it embraces those before you, and those after.
Thus God has ordained for all flesh;
why then should you reject the will of the Most High?

The Word of the Lord.

15. A Reading from the Book of Sirach

44:1a, 10b-15

Now will I praise those godly people, our ancestors ...
... whose virtues have not been forgotten;
Their wealth remains in their families,
their heritage with their descendants;
Through God's covenant with them
their family endures, their posterity, for their sake.
And for all time their progeny will endure,
their glory will never be blotted out;
Their bodies are peacefully laid away,
but their name lives on and on.
At gatherings their wisdom is retold,
and the assembly proclaims their praise.

The Word of the Lord.

16. A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

43:1-3a

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 shall 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.

The Word of the Lord.

17. A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

46:3-4

Hear me, O house of Jacob,
all who remain of the house of Israel,
My burden since your birth,
whom I have carried from your infancy.
Even to your old age I am the same,
even when your hair is gray I will bear you;
It is I who have done this,
I who will continue,
and I who will carry you to safety.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah