

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;

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.

(People:) Thanks Be To God

Job 19:1, 23-27a

A reading from the Book of Proverbs

Here is a Valiant Woman,

her value is worth far more than pearls.,

Her family honored and cherished her

and she loved them to great things.

Love she gave them,

companionship, inspiration, wisdom and care all her days.

She kept good watch over those in her care

and prayed for them always.

She was clothed in strength and dignity,

determination and beauty,

kindness and giving,

courage and faith.

She opened her arms to the poor

and extended her hands to the needy.

Life was her song,

singing and dancing her melody/

Those who knew her stand up to praise and acclaim her.

May her works bring her the eternal reward that she has earned.

The Word of the Lord

(People:) Thanks be to God

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes

There is a season for everything,
A time for every occupation 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 each one to be busied about.
God has made everything appropriate to its time,
 and has put the timeless into our hearts,
 without our ever discovering,
 from beginning to end, the work which God has done.

The Word of the Lord.

(People:) Thanks be to God

A Reading from the Song of Songs

My lover speaks; he says to me,

“Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!

“For see, the winter is past,

the rains are over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth,

the time of pruning the vines has come,

and the song of the dove is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,

and the vines, in bloom, give forth fragrance.

Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!

The Word of the Lord

(People:) Thanks be to God

Song of Songs 2:10-13

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

(People:) Thanks be to God

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 his elect.

The Word of the Lord

(People:) Thanks be to God

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 crown of righteousness 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

(People:) Thanks be to God

A Reading from the Book of Sirach

My son, when you come to serve the LORD, stand in justice and fear,
prepare yourself for trials.

Be sincere of heart and steadfast,
incline your ear and receive the word of understanding,
undisturbed in time of adversity.

Wait on God, with patience, cling to him, forsake him not;
thus will you be wise in all your ways.

Accept whatever befalls you,
when sorrowful, be steadfast, and in crushing misfortune be patient;

For in fire gold and silver are tested,
and worthy people in the crucible of humiliation.

Trust God and God will help you;
trust in him, and he will direct your way;
keep his fear and grow old therein.

You who fear the LORD, wait for his mercy,
turn not away lest you fall.

You who fear the LORD, trust him,
and your reward will not be lost.

You who fear the LORD, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.

You who fear the LORD, love him,
and your hearts will be enlightened.

Study the generations long past and understand;
has anyone hoped in the LORD and been disappointed?

Has anyone persevered in his commandments and been forsaken?
has anyone called upon him and been rebuffed?

Compassionate and merciful is the LORD;
he forgives sins, he saves in time of trouble
and he is a protector to all who seek him in truth.

The Word of the Lord

(People:) Thanks be to God

Sirach 2:1-11

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

On this mountain the LORD of hosts

will provide for all peoples

A feast of rich food and choice wines,

Juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.

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

(People:) Thanks be to God

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Do you not know or have you not heard?

The LORD is the eternal God,
creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint nor grow weary,
and his knowledge is beyond scrutiny.

He gives strength to the fainting;
for the weak he makes vigor abound.

Though young people faint and grow weary,
and youths stagger and fall,

They that hope in the LORD 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

(People:) Thanks Be To God

Isaiah 40:28-31

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

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 the 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.

You are precious in my eyes and glorious

and I love you.

Fear not, for I am with you.

The Word of the Lord

(People:) Thanks Be To God

A Reading from the Book of Lamentations

(Short Form)

I will call this to mind,
as my reason to have hope:
The favors of the Lord are not exhausted,
God's mercies are not spent;
They are renewed each morning,
so great is God's 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

(People:) Thanks Be To God

Lamentations 3:21-26

A Reading from the Book of Lamentations

(Long Form)

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.

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,
God's mercies are not spent;
They are renewed each morning,
so great is God's 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

(People:) Thanks Be To God

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel 34:11-16

For thus says the LORD God:

I myself will look after and tend my sheep.

As a shepherd tends his flock

when he finds himself among his scattered sheep,
so I will tend my sheep.

I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered
when it was cloudy and dark.

In good pastures will I pasture them,
and on the mountain heights of Israel
shall be their grazing ground.

There they shall lie down on good grazing ground,
and in rich pastures they shall be pastured
on the mountains of Israel.

I myself will pasture my sheep;
I myself will give them rest, says the LORD God.

The lost I will seek out,
the strayed I will bring back,
the injured I will bind up,
the sick I will heal,
shepherding them rightly.

The word of the Lord

(People:) Thanks Be To God

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel

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
(People:) Thanks Be To God

A reading from the second Book of Maccabees

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

(People:) Thanks Be To God

Maccabees 12:43-46