

# A Reading from the book of Job

19:23-27

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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

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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 thought an affliction  
and their going forth from us, utter destruction.  
But they are at 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 a sacrificial offering 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.**

# A Reading from the prophet Isaiah

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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 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

3:17-18, 21-26

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.

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 the 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 12: 43-46

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 have 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 Proverbs 31: 10-13, 20, 29-31

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 makes cloth with skillful hands.

She picks out a field to purchase;  
out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.

She reaches out her hands to the poor,  
and extends her arms to the needy.

She watches the conduct of her household,  
and eats not her food in idleness.

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.**

# A reading from the book of Sirach

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44: 1, 10, 11b-15

Now will I praise the godly ones,  
our ancestors, each in their own time:

these also were godly,  
whose virtues have not been forgotten;  
their heritage remains 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.**

# A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

3: 1-2, 4-8, 11

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

A time to give birth, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.

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.

God has made everything appropriate to its time,  
but has put the 'timeless' into their hearts  
so they cannot find out, from beginning to end,  
the work which God has done.

**The Word of the Lord.**

# A reading from the Songs of Songs

2: 10-14

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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!

O my dove in the clefts of the rock,  
in the secret recesses of the cliff,  
let me see you, let me hear your voice,  
for your voice is sweet, and you are lovely.

**The Word of the Lord.**

# A Reading from the prophet

## Isaiah

## 35: 1-2, 5-8, 9b-10

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The desert and the parched land will exult;  
the steppe will rejoice and bloom.  
They will bloom with abundant flowers,  
and rejoice with joyful song.

The glory of Lebanon will be given to them,  
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;  
they will see the glory of the LORD,  
the splendor of our God.

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 mute will sing.

Streams will burst forth in the desert,  
and rivers in the steppe.  
The burning sands will become pools,  
and the thirsty ground, springs of water;  
A highway will be there, called "the holy way";  
no one unclean may pass over it,  
nor fools go astray on it.

It is for those with a journey to make,  
and on it the redeemed will walk.  
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.**

# A Reading from the prophet Ezekiel

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## 37: 12-14

Therefore, prophesy and say to them:  
thus says the Lord God:

O my people, I will open your graves  
and have you rise from them  
and bring you back to the land of Israel.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord,  
when I open your graves  
and have you rise from them,  
O my people!

I will put my spirit in you  
that you may live,  
and I will settle you upon your land;  
thus you shall know that I am the Lord.  
I have promised,  
and I will do it, says the Lord.

**The Word of the Lord.**

# A reading from the book of Sirach

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## 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 on 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.

**The Word of the Lord.**