

Old Testament Scripture Readings

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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 atone ment for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

A reading from the book of Job

Job 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 Redeemer lives,
 and will at last stand forth upon the dust;
Whom I myself shall see;
 my own eyes, not another's, shall behold the Lord God
And from my flesh I shall see God;
 my inmost being is consumed with longing.”

The Word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

A reading from the book of Proverbs

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 puts her hands to the distaff,
and her fingers ply the spindle.
She reaches out her hands to the poor,
and extends her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the Lord God 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

R/. Thanks be to God.

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 do people gain from the efforts they make?
I contemplate the tasks which God gives humanity.
God has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into their hearts,
without their ever discovering, from beginning to end,
the work which God has done.

The Word of the Lord.

R/.Thanks be to God

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 humankind 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, God proved them,
and as sacrificial offerings God took them to himself.
Those who trust in God shall understand truth
and the faithful shall abide with God in love;
Because grace and mercy are with the holy ones,
and God's care is with God's elect.

The Word of the Lord

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

The Word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

Old Testament Reading #7
Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 6: 14-17

A reading from the book of Sirach.

Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter;
whoever finds one has found a rare treasure.

Faithful friends are beyond price,
no sum can balance their worth.

Faithful friends are a life-saving remedy,
those who fear the Lord God will find them.

Whoever fears the Lord God makes true friends,
for as a person is so are their friends

The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

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, God will destroy
the veil that veils all peoples,
the web that is woven over all nations;
and God will destroy death forever.

The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces;
The reproach of God's people will be removed from the whole earth;
for the Lord God 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 God has saved us!”

The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

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.

R/. Thanks be to God.

A reading from the book of Daniel

I, Daniel, mourned and I 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

R/. Thanks be to God