

C-1

## A READING FROM THE 2<sup>ND</sup> 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 atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

C-2

## A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

Then 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.

And from my flesh I shall see God.

My inmost being is consumed with longing  
For Whom I myself shall see;

My own eyes, not another's, shall behold Him.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

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 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

C-3a

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 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

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM

But the righteous, though they die early, will be at rest.  
For old age is not honored for length of time,  
or measured by number of years;  
but understanding is gray hair for anyone,  
and a blameless life is ripe old age.

There were some who pleased God and were loved by him,  
and, while living among sinners, were taken up.  
They were caught up so that evil might not change their  
understanding, or guile deceive their souls.  
For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good,  
and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.

Being perfected in a short time, they fulfilled long years;  
for their souls were pleasing to the Lord,  
therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.

Yet the peoples saw and did not understand,  
or take such a thing to heart,  
that God's grace and mercy are with his elect,  
and that he watches over his holy ones.

The Word of the Lord

## A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH

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

## READING FROM 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

C-7

## A READING FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL

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

## A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

There is an appointed time for everything,  
And a time for every concern 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 hurt, 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 hold tight, and a time to let go.  
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 refrain from loving;  
A time of war, and a time of peace.  
God has made everything appropriate to its time.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

## A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH

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. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in return for you.

Because you are precious in my eyes and glorious, and because I love you, I give men in return for you and peoples in exchange for your life.

Fear not, for I am with you; from the east I will bring back your descendants, from the west I will gather you.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

*A Reading from the Book of Proverbs*

When one finds a worthy woman, her value is far beyond pearls.

Her family, entrusting their hearts to her, has an unfailing prize.

She brings them good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

She rises while it is still night, and distributes food to her household.

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

She enjoys the success of all her dealings.

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.

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

Her children rise up and praise her; her husband, too, extols her, saying:

“Many are the women of proven worth, but you have excelled them all.”

Charm is deceptive and beauty does not last;

The woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Give her a reward of her labors, and let her works bring her praise.

**The Word of the Lord**

## A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

The LORD sets a father in honor over his children;  
a mother's authority he confirms over her sons.  
He who honors his father atones for sins;  
he stores up riches who reveres his mother.  
He who honors his father is gladdened by children,  
and when he prays he is heard.  
He who reveres his father will live a long life;  
he obeys the LORD who brings comfort to his mother.  
In word and deed honor your father that his blessing may come upon  
you;  
for a father's blessing gives a family firm roots.  
My son, take care of your father when he is old;  
grieve him not as long as he lives.  
Even if his mind fails, be considerate with him;  
revile him not in the fullness of your strength.  
For kindness to a father will not be forgotten,  
it will serve as a sin offering--it will take lasting root.  
In time of tribulation it will be recalled to your advantage,  
like warmth upon frost it will melt away your sins.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

## A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

Now will I praise those godly men, our ancestors, each in his own time.

These were godly men 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

## A READING FROM PSALM 139

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me:  
you know when I sit and stand;  
you understand my thoughts from afar.  
My travels and my rest you mark;  
with all my ways you are familiar.  
Even before a word is on my tongue, Lord, you know it all.  
Behind and before, you encircle me and rest your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is beyond me, far too lofty for me to reach.

Where can I hide from your Spirit?  
From your Presence, where can I flee?  
If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;  
If I lie down in Sheol, you are there too.  
If I fly with the wings of dawn and alight beyond the sea,  
Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand holds me fast.  
If I say, Surely darkness shall hide me and night shall be my light,  
Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day.  
Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, so wonderfully you made me;  
wonderful are your works! My very self you knew;  
my bones were not hidden from you when I was being made in secret,  
fashioned as in the depths of the earth.  
Your eyes foresaw my actions; in your Book all are written down; my  
days were shaped before one came to be.

How precious to me are your designs, O God;  
how vast the sum of them!  
Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sands;  
to finish them, I would need eternity.

THE WORD OF THE LORD