

A Reading from the book of Revelation.

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth;
the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now,
and there was no longer any sea.

I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God
out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband.

Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne,
"You see this city? Here God lives among men. He will make his home
among them; they shall be his people, and he will be their God;
his name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes;
there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness.
The world of the past has gone."

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: "Now I am making
the whole of creation new," he said.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.
I will give water from the well of life free to anybody who is
thirsty; it is the rightful inheritance of the one who proves victorious;
and I will be his God and he a child to me."

The Word of the Lord

Lamentations Chapter 3: 22-26

A Reading from the Book of Lamentations.

The favors of the Lord are not all past,
his kindnesses are not exhausted;
every morning they are renewed;
great in his faithfulness.

“My portion is the Lord,” says my soul,
“and so I will hope in him.”

The Lord is good to those who trust him,
to the soul that searches for him.
It is good to wait in silence
for the Lord to save.

The Word of the Lord

Isaiah Chapter 25: 6-9

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

On this mountain the Lord Sabaoth
will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food.

On this mountain he will remove
The mourning veil covering all peoples,
the shroud enwrapping all nations.

He will destroy death forever.

The Lord God will wipe away
the tears from every cheek;
He will take away his people's shame
Everywhere on earth;
for the Lord has said so.

That day it will be said:

"See, this is our God;
In whom we hoped for salvation;
the Lord is the one in whom we hoped.
We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us!"

The Word of the Lord

A Reading from the Book of Job.

Job said to those who reproached him:

“Ah, would that these words of mine were written down,
inscribed on some monument
with iron chisel and engraving tool,
cut in the rock forever.”

“This I know: that my Redeemer lives,
and he, the Last, will take his stand on earth.
After my awaking, he will set me close to him,
And from my flesh I shall look on God.
He whom I shall see will take my part.”

The Word of the Lord

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes.

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven:

- A time for giving birth,
 - a time for dying;
 - a time for planting,
 - a time for uprooting what has been planted.
- A time for killing,
 - a time for healing;
 - a time for knocking down,
 - a time for building.
- A time for tears,
 - a time for laughter;
 - a time for mourning,
 - a time for dancing.
- A time for throwing stones away,
 - a time for gathering them up;
 - a time for embracing,
 - a time to refrain from embracing.
- A time for searching,
 - a time for losing;
 - a time for keeping,
 - a time for throwing away.
- A time for tearing,
 - a time for sewing;
 - a time for keeping silent,
 - a time for speaking.
- A time for loving,
 - a time for hating;
 - a time for war,
 - a time for peace.

What does a man gain for the efforts that he makes? I contemplate the task that God gives mankind to labour at. All that he does is apt for its time; but though he has permitted man to consider time in its wholeness, man cannot comprehend the work of God from beginning to end.

Wisdom Chapter 4: 7-10, 13-15

A Reading from the Book of Wisdom.

The virtuous, though they die before their time, will find rest.
Length of days is not what makes age honourable,
nor number of years the true measure of life;
understanding, this is our gray hair,
untarnished life, this is ripe old age.

They sought to please God, so God loved them;
They lived among sinners, they have been taken up.
Coming to perfection in so short a while, they achieved long life.
Their souls being pleasing to the Lord,
He has taken them quickly from the wickedness around him.
Yet people look on, uncomprehending.
It does not enter their heads that grace and mercy
Await the chosen of the Lord, and protection, his holy ones.

The Word of the Lord

Romans Chapter 6: 3-9

A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

You have been taught that when we were baptized in Christ Jesus we were baptized into his death; in other words, when we were baptized we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection.

We must realize that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin.

When a person dies, of course, they have finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ

we shall return to life with him:

Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again.

Death has no power over us anymore.

The Word of the Lord

Romans Chapter 5: 5-11

A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Hope is not deceptive, because God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men.

It is not easy to die even for a good man - though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die - but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Having died to make us righteous, is it likely that he would now fail to save us from God's anger?

When we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, we were still enemies; now that we have been reconciled, surely we may count on being saved by the life of his Son? Not merely because we have been reconciled by because we are filled with joyful trust in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already gained our reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord

Romans Chapter 8: 31b-35, 37-39

A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

With God on our side who can be against us?
Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all,
we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can
give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits,
could anyone condemn?
Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the
dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if
we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or
clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials
through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince,
nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or
depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of
God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

Romans Chapter 14: 7 - 12

A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others;
if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord,
so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord.

This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he
might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

We shall all have to stand before the judgement seat of God;
as scripture says: By my life - it is the Lord who speaks - every knee
shall bend before me, and every tongue shall praise God.

It is to God, therefore, that each of us must give an account of himself.

The Word of the Lord

Corinthians 4: 14-5:1

A Reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

We know that he who raised the Lord Jesus to life will raise us with Jesus in our turn, and put us by his side and you with us.

You see, all this is for your benefit, so that the more grace is multiplied among people, the more thanksgiving there will be, to the glory of God.

That is why there is no weakening on our part, and instead, though this outer man of ours may be falling into decay, the inner man is renewed day by day.

Yes the troubles which are soon over, though they weigh little, train us for the carrying of a weight of eternal glory which is out of all proportion to them.

And so we have no eyes for things that are visible, but only for things that are invisible; for visible things last only for a time, and the invisible things are eternal.

For we know that when the tent that we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home not made by human hands, in the heavens.

The Word of the Lord

Philippians 3: 20-21

A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

The Word of the Lord

A Reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,
who is to judge the living and the dead,
and in view of his appearing and his kingdom,
I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message;
be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable;
convince, rebuke and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.

For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine,
But having itching ears,
they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires,
and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths.

As for you, always be sober, endure suffering,
do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.
As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation,
And the time of my departure has come.

I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day,
and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

The Word of the Lord

A Reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy.

As for me, my life is already being poured away as a libation,
and the time has come for me to be gone.

I have fought the good fight to the end;

I have run the race to the finish;

I have kept the faith;

all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness reserved for me,
which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day;
and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his Appearing.

But the Lord stood by me and gave me power, so that through me the whole
message might be proclaimed for all the pagans to hear;
and so I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

The Lord will rescue me from all evil attempts on me,
and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom.

To him be glory forever and ever.

The Word of the Lord

A Reading from the first letter of John.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.

Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people,
we are already the children of God,
but what we are to be in the future
has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed,
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.

The Word of the Lord