

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.

He has made everything appropriate to its time, and has put the timeless into
their hearts, without men's ever discovering, from beginning to end, the work
which God has done.

What now is, has always been;

What is to be, already is;

And God restores what would otherwise be displaced.

The Word of the Lord.

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.

A reading from the Book of Job

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite 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.

Omit the words in bolded brackets [] for the short form of this reading.

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.

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.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of 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.

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.

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.

A Reading from the Book of Proverbs

Who can find a woman of worth? Far beyond jewels is her value.

Her husband trusts her judgment; he does not lack income.

She brings him profit, not loss, all the days of her life.

She seeks out wool and flax and weaves with skillful hands.

Like a merchant fleet, she secures her provisions from afar.

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

She picks out a field and acquires it; from her earnings she plants a vineyard.

She girds herself with strength; she exerts her arms with vigor.

She enjoys the profit from her dealings; her lamp is never extinguished at night.

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.

She is not concerned for her household when it snows—
all her charges are doubly clothed.

She makes her own coverlets; fine linen and purple are her
clothing.

Her husband is prominent at the city gates as he sits with the
elders of the land.

She makes garments and sells them, and stocks the
merchants with belts.

She is clothed with strength and dignity, and laughs at the
days to come.

She opens her mouth in wisdom; kindly instruction is on her
tongue.

She watches over the affairs of her household,
and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband, too,
praises her:

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

Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

Acclaim her for the work of her hands,
and let her deeds praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord.