

OLD TESTAMENT

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A reading from the second book of Maccabees

2 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 the 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 his 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 prophet Daniel

Daniel 12: 1-3

[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.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-14 (short form follows)

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 tear, 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 advantage has the worker from his toil? I have considered the task which God has appointed for men to be busied about. 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. I recognized that there is nothing better than to be glad and to do well during life. For every man, moreover, to eat and drink and enjoy the fruit of all his labor is a gift of God. I recognized that whatever God does will endure forever; there is no adding to it, or taking from it. Thus has God done that he may be revered.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8

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
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be silent and a time to speak.

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war, and a time of peace.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 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 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 saved us!”

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

(Isaiah 42: 1-4. 6-7)

Here is my servant whom I uphold,
my chosen one with whom I am pleased,
Upon whom I have put my spirit;
he shall bring forth justice to the nations,
Not crying out, not shouting,
not making his voice heard in the street.
A bruised reed he shall not break,
and a smoldering wick he shall not quench,
Until he establishes justice on the earth;
the coastlands will wait for his teaching.

I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of
justice,
I have grasped you by the hand;
I formed you, and set you
as a covenant of the people,
a light for the nations,
To open the eyes of the blind,
to bring out prisoners from confinement,
and from the dungeon, those who live in
darkness.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 43: 1-3

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.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Job:

Job 19 : 1, 23 – 26

Job answered and said:

Oh, would that my words were written down!

Would that they were inscribed in a record:

That with 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 Lamentations

Lamentations 3: 17-26

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.
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 Proverbs
Proverbs 9:10-12, 15, 17,18, 20, 25-31

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 rises while it is still night,
and distributes food to her household.
She is girt about with strength,
and sturdy are her arms.
She enjoys the success of her dealings;
at night her lamp is undimmed.
She reaches out her hands to the poor,
and extends her arms to the needy.
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;
“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.
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

Sir 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 upon 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.

A reading from the book of Wisdom
Wisdom 3: 1-9 (short form follows)

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

Wisdom 3: 1-6,9

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.
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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

Wisdom 4: 7-15

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.