

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for everything 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 time to gather them;

A time to embrace, and a time to be free 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 sow;

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 that God has appointed
for the sons of men to be busied about.

He has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into their hearts,
without man's ever discovering,

from beginning to end, the work which God has done.

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 in the eyes of 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 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 the Proverbs

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

The 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 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 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 pleases 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 reaches 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 Lamentations

My soul is deprived of peace,
I have forgotten what happiness is;
I tell myself that 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, I will hope in Him.

Good is the Lord to whom one 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