

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 a time to gather them;

a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.

A time to seek and 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 of 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.

Old Testament—Ezekiel 34: 11-15

A reading from the Book of Ezekiel.

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will look after and tend my sheep.

As a shepherd that tends his flock
When he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so I will tend my sheep.

I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark.

I will lead them out from among the peoples and gather them from the foreign lands; I will bring them back to their own country and pasture them upon the mountains of Israel in the land's ravines and all its inhabited places.

In good pastures will I pasture them, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing ground. There they shall lie down on good grazing ground, and in rich pastures shall they be pastured on the mountain of Israel.

I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord God.

The lost I will seek out, the stray I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the Lord GOD:

O my people, I will open your graves

and have you rise from them,

and bring you back to the land of Israel.

Then you shall know that I am the LORD,

when I open your graves

and have you rise from them.

O my people!

I will put my spirit in you that you may live,

and I will settle you upon your land;

thus you shall know that I am the LORD.

I have promised, and **I** will do it, says the LORD.

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 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 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

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 obtains wool and flax and works with skillful hands.

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

She is clothed with strength and dignity.

She opens her mouth in wisdom and on her tongue is kindly counsel.

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

Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting:

the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Give her a reward for her labors,

and let her works praise her at the city gates.

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 is 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 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.

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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.