

A reading from the book of Job (19:1, 23-27)

Job answered 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!

As for me, I know that my vindicator lives,
and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust.
This will happen when my skin has been stripped off,
and from my flesh I will see God:
I will see for myself,
my own eyes, not another's, will behold him:
my inmost being is consumed with longing.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom (3:1-6, 9)

The souls of the righteous 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 to others, indeed, they seem 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 the elect.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom (31: 10, 17, 20, 25-31)

Who can find a woman of worth?

Far beyond jewels is her value.

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

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

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.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes (3:1-11)

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under the heavens.
A time to give birth, 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.

What profit have workers from their toil?

I have seen the business
that God has given to mortals to be busied about.
God has made everything appropriate to its time,
but has put the timeless into their hearts so they cannot find out,
from beginning to end, the work which God has done.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the prophet 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 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:

“Indeed, this is our God; we looked to him, and he saved us!

This is the LORD to whom we looked;

let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

The word of the Lord.