

# Year One

January 1



**Genesis 1:1–2:3** (NRSV)

*Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath*

*(Gen 2:4b–9; Job 38:4–11; Jn 1:1–5)*

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup> the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

<sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

<sup>4</sup> And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

<sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the dome and separated the waters that

were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them

be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars.

<sup>17</sup> God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”

<sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created humankind in his image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and

over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”<sup>29</sup> God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.<sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.<sup>31</sup> God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

**2** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude.<sup>2</sup> And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.<sup>3</sup> So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

**Matthew 1:1–17** (NRSV)

*The Genealogy of  
Jesus the Messiah*  
(*Ruth 4:18–22; 1 Chr 2:1–15;*  
*Lk 3:23–38*)

<sup>1</sup> An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,<sup>3</sup> and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram,<sup>4</sup> and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon,<sup>5</sup> and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse,<sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of King David.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,<sup>7</sup> and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph,<sup>8</sup> and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah,<sup>9</sup> and Uzziah the father

of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup> and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup> and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup> And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup> and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup> and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup> and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

<sup>17</sup> So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the

deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

### **Psalm 1:1-6 (NRSV)**

#### *The Two Ways*

- <sup>1</sup> Happy are those  
who do not follow the  
advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that  
sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of  
scoffers;
- <sup>2</sup> but their delight is in the  
law of the LORD,  
and on his law they  
meditate day and  
night.
- <sup>3</sup> They are like trees  
planted by streams of  
water,  
which yield their fruit in its  
season,  
and their leaves do not  
wither.  
In all that they do, they  
prosper.
- <sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the  
wind drives away.
- <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will  
not stand in the  
judgment,





nor sinners in the  
congregation of the  
righteous;

### **Proverbs 1:1–6 (NRSV)**

The proverbs of Solomon son  
of David, king of Israel:

#### *Prologue*

- <sup>2</sup> For learning about wisdom  
and instruction,  
for understanding words  
of insight,  
<sup>3</sup> for gaining instruction in  
wise dealing,  
righteousness, justice,  
and equity;  
<sup>4</sup> to teach shrewdness to the  
simple,  
knowledge and prudence  
to the young—  
<sup>5</sup> let the wise also hear and  
gain in learning,  
and the discerning  
acquire skill,  
<sup>6</sup> to understand a proverb  
and a figure,  
the words of the wise  
and their riddles.

## **January 2**



### **Genesis 2:4–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> These are the generations  
of the heavens and the earth  
when they were created.

#### *Another Account of the Creation (Gen 1:26–30)*

In the day that the LORD  
God made the earth and the  
heavens, <sup>5</sup> when no plant of  
the field was yet in the earth  
and no herb of the field had  
yet sprung up—for the LORD  
God had not caused it to rain  
upon the earth, and there was  
no one to till the ground; <sup>6</sup> but  
a stream would rise from the  
earth, and water the whole  
face of the ground— <sup>7</sup> then the  
LORD God formed man from  
the dust of the ground, and  
breathed into his nostrils the  
breath of life; and the man  
became a living being. <sup>8</sup> And  
the LORD God planted a garden  
in Eden, in the east; and there  
he put the man whom he had  
formed. <sup>9</sup> Out of the ground  
the LORD God made to grow  
every tree that is pleasant to

the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. <sup>11</sup> The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; <sup>12</sup> and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. <sup>13</sup> The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man

should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."

<sup>19</sup> So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.

<sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> Then the man said,  
"This at last is bone of my  
bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called  
Woman,  
for out of Man this one  
was taken."

<sup>24</sup> Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they

become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

**Matthew 1:18–25** (NRSV)

*The Birth of Jesus the Messiah*  
(Lk 2:1–7)

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

<sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

**Psalms 1:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

**Proverbs 1:7–9** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;**  
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

*Warnings against Evil Companions*

<sup>8</sup> Hear, my child, your father’s instruction,  
and do not reject your mother’s teaching;  
<sup>9</sup> for they are a fair garland for your head,  
and pendants for your neck.

# January 3



## Genesis 3:1–24 (NRSV)

### *The First Sin and Its Punishment (Rom 5:12–21)*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’”<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden;<sup>3</sup> but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’”<sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die;<sup>5</sup> for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her

husband, who was with her, and he ate.<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.<sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”<sup>10</sup> He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”<sup>11</sup> He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.”<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.”<sup>14</sup> The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done  
this,  
cursed are you among all  
animals  
and among all wild  
creatures;  
upon your belly you shall  
go,  
and dust you shall eat  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between  
you and the woman,  
and between your  
offspring and hers;  
he will strike your head,  
and you will strike his  
heel.”

<sup>16</sup> To the woman he said,  
“I will greatly increase your  
pangs in childbearing;  
in pain you shall bring  
forth children,  
yet your desire shall be for  
your husband,  
and he shall rule over  
you.”

<sup>17</sup> And to the man he said,  
“Because you have  
listened to the voice of  
your wife,  
and have eaten of the  
tree  
about which I commanded  
you,  
‘You shall not eat of it,’

cursed is the ground  
because of you;  
in toil you shall eat of it  
all the days of your life;  
<sup>18</sup> thorns and thistles it shall  
bring forth for you;  
and you shall eat the  
plants of the field.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread  
until you return to the  
ground,  
for out of it you were  
taken;  
you are dust,  
and to dust you shall  
return.”

<sup>20</sup> The man named his wife  
Eve, because she was the  
mother of all living. <sup>21</sup> And the  
LORD God made garments of  
skins for the man and for his  
wife, and clothed them.

<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God said,  
“See, the man has become like  
one of us, knowing good and  
evil; and now, he might reach  
out his hand and take also  
from the tree of life, and eat,  
and live forever”—

<sup>23</sup> therefore the LORD God sent  
him forth from the garden of  
Eden, to till the ground from  
which he was taken. <sup>24</sup> He  
drove out the man; and at the

east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

**Matthew 2:1–12** (NRSV)

*The Visit of the Wise Men*

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler

who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**Psalms 2:1-6** (NRSV)

*God’s Promise to His Anointed*  
(Acts 4:23–31)

1 Why do the nations  
conspire,  
and the peoples plot in  
vain?  
2 The kings of the earth set  
themselves,  
and the rulers take  
counsel together,  
against the LORD and his  
anointed, saying,  
3 “Let us burst their bonds  
asunder,  
and cast their cords from  
us.”  
4 He who sits in the heavens  
laughs;  
the LORD has them in  
derision.  
5 Then he will speak to them  
in his wrath,  
and terrify them in his  
fury, saying,  
6 “I have set my king on  
Zion, my holy hill.”

**Proverbs 1:10–19 (NRSV)**

10 My child, if sinners entice  
you,  
do not consent.  
11 If they say, “Come with us,  
let us lie in wait for  
blood;  
let us wantonly ambush  
the innocent;

12 like Sheol let us swallow  
them alive  
and whole, like those  
who go down to the  
Pit.  
13 We shall find all kinds of  
costly things;  
we shall fill our houses  
with booty.  
14 Throw in your lot among  
us;  
we will all have one  
purse”—  
15 my child, do not walk in  
their way,  
keep your foot from their  
paths;  
16 for their feet run to evil,  
and they hurry to shed  
blood.  
17 For in vain is the net baited  
while the bird is looking  
on;  
18 yet they lie in wait—to kill  
themselves!  
and set an ambush—for  
their own lives!  
19 Such is the end of all who  
are greedy for gain; it  
takes away the life of  
its possessors.

# January 4



## Genesis 4:1–26 (NRSV)

### *Cain Murders Abel*

(Lk 11:51; Heb 11:4; 12:24)

Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have produced a man with the help of the LORD.”<sup>2</sup> Next she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground.<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground,<sup>4</sup> and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering,<sup>5</sup> but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.<sup>6</sup> The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen?<sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

<sup>8</sup> Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let us go out to the field.” And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him.<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?”<sup>10</sup> And the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen; your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground!<sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.<sup>12</sup> When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”<sup>13</sup> Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear!<sup>14</sup> Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me.”<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to him, “Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance.” And the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one



who came upon him would kill him. <sup>16</sup> Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

*Beginnings of Civilization*

<sup>17</sup> Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and named it Enoch after his son Enoch. <sup>18</sup> To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael the father of Methushael, and Methushael the father of Lamech. <sup>19</sup> Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. <sup>20</sup> Adah bore Jabal; he was the ancestor of those who live in tents and have livestock. <sup>21</sup> His brother's name was Jubal; he was the ancestor of all those who play the lyre and pipe. <sup>22</sup> Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

<sup>23</sup> Lamech said to his wives:  
"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
you wives of Lamech,  
listen to what I say:

I have killed a man for wounding me,  
a young man for striking me.

<sup>24</sup> If Cain is avenged sevenfold,  
truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

<sup>25</sup> Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel, because Cain killed him." <sup>26</sup> To Seth also a son was born, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to invoke the name of the LORD.

**Matthew 2:13–23** (NRSV)

*The Escape to Egypt*

<sup>13</sup> Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

<sup>14</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to

fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

*The Massacre of the Infants*

<sup>16</sup>When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.

<sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup> “A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

*The Return from Egypt*

(Lk 2:39)

<sup>19</sup>When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup>“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for

those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” <sup>21</sup>Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

**Psalm 2:7-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> I will tell of the decree of the LORD:  
He said to me, “You are my son;  
today I have begotten you.  
<sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.  
<sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron,  
and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

10 Now therefore, O kings, be  
wise;  
be warned, O rulers of  
the earth.  
11 Serve the LORD with fear,  
with trembling <sup>12</sup> kiss his  
feet,  
or he will be angry, and  
you will perish in the  
way;  
for his wrath is quickly  
kindled.  
Happy are all who take  
refuge in him.

**Proverbs 1:20–23 (NRSV)**

*The Call of Wisdom*

20 Wisdom cries out in the  
street;  
in the squares she raises  
her voice.  
21 At the busiest corner she  
cries out;  
at the entrance of the  
city gates she speaks:  
22 “How long, O simple ones,  
will you love being  
simple?  
How long will scoffers  
delight in their scoffing  
and fools hate  
knowledge?  
23 Give heed to my reproof;  
I will pour out my thoughts  
to you;

I will make my words  
known to you.

**January 5**



**Genesis 5:1–32 (NRSV)**

*Adam’s Descendants to Noah  
and His Sons  
(1 Chr 1:1–4; Lk 3:36–38)*

This is the list of the  
descendants of Adam. When  
God created humankind, he  
made them in the likeness of  
God. <sup>2</sup> Male and female he  
created them, and he blessed  
them and named them  
“Humankind” when they were  
created.

<sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived  
one hundred thirty years, he  
became the father of a son in  
his likeness, according to his  
image, and named him Seth.  
<sup>4</sup> The days of Adam after he  
became the father of Seth  
were eight hundred years; and  
he had other sons and  
daughters. <sup>5</sup> Thus all the days  
that Adam lived were nine

hundred thirty years; and he died.

<sup>6</sup> When Seth had lived one hundred five years, he became the father of Enosh. <sup>7</sup> Seth lived after the birth of Enosh eight hundred seven years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup> Thus all the days of Seth were nine hundred twelve years; and he died.

<sup>9</sup> When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan. <sup>10</sup> Enosh lived after the birth of Kenan eight hundred fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup> Thus all the days of Enosh were nine hundred five years; and he died.

<sup>12</sup> When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup> Kenan lived after the birth of Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup> Thus all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

<sup>15</sup> When Mahalalel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared.

<sup>16</sup> Mahalalel lived after the birth of Jared eight hundred

thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup> Thus all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred ninety-five years; and he died.

<sup>18</sup> When Jared had lived one hundred sixty-two years he became the father of Enoch. <sup>19</sup> Jared lived after the birth of Enoch eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup> Thus all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty-two years; and he died.

<sup>21</sup> When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methuselah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup> Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years.

<sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him.

<sup>25</sup> When Methuselah had lived one hundred eighty-seven years, he became the father of Lamech.

<sup>26</sup> Methuselah lived after the birth of Lamech seven hundred eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>27</sup> Thus all the days of

Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years; and he died.

<sup>28</sup> When Lamech had lived one hundred eighty-two years, he became the father of a son; <sup>29</sup> he named him Noah, saying, “Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands.” <sup>30</sup> Lamech lived after the birth of Noah five hundred ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>31</sup> Thus all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy-seven years; and he died.

<sup>32</sup> After Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

### **Matthew 3:1–6** (NRSV)

#### *The Proclamation of John the Baptist*

(Mk 1:2–8; Lk 3:1–20)

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying  
out in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the  
Lord,  
make his paths straight.’”

<sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

<sup>5</sup> Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

### **Proverbs 1:24–28** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> Because I have called and you refused,  
have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,

<sup>25</sup> and because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof,

<sup>26</sup> I also will laugh at your calamity;  
I will mock when panic strikes you,

<sup>27</sup> when panic strikes you like a storm,  
and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,

when distress and  
anguish come upon  
you.

<sup>28</sup> Then they will call upon  
me, but I will not  
answer;  
they will seek me  
diligently, but will not  
find me.

## January 6



### Genesis 6:1–22 (NRSV)

#### *The Wickedness of Humankind*

<sup>1</sup> When people began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> the sons of God saw that they were fair; and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, “My spirit shall not abide in mortals forever, for they are flesh; their days shall be one hundred twenty years.” <sup>4</sup> The Nephilim [giants] were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of

God went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. <sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, “I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” <sup>8</sup> But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD.

#### *Noah Pleases God*

(*Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20*)

<sup>9</sup> These are the descendants of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. <sup>10</sup> And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.

<sup>12</sup> And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth. <sup>13</sup> And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth. <sup>14</sup> Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. <sup>15</sup> This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. <sup>16</sup> Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. <sup>17</sup> For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. <sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. <sup>19</sup> And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall

bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. <sup>20</sup> Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind shall come in to you, to keep them alive. <sup>21</sup> Also take with you every kind of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them." <sup>22</sup> Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

### **Matthew 3:7–17 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruit worthy of repentance. <sup>9</sup> Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not

bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

### *The Baptism of Jesus*

*(Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–22; Jn 1:29–34)*

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.

<sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

### **Psalm 3:6-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> I am not afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.  
<sup>7</sup> Rise up, O LORD!  
Deliver me, O my God!  
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek; you break the teeth of the wicked.  
<sup>8</sup> Deliverance belongs to the LORD;  
may your blessing be on your people! *Selah*

### **Proverbs 1:29–33 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD,  
<sup>30</sup> would have none of my counsel, and despised all my reproof,  
<sup>31</sup> therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way and be sated with their own devices.



<sup>32</sup> For waywardness kills the simple,  
and the complacency of fools destroys them;  
<sup>33</sup> but those who listen to me will be secure  
and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.”

## January 7



### Genesis 7:1–24 (NRSV)

#### *The Great Flood* (Lk 17:26–27)

<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. <sup>2</sup> Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; <sup>3</sup> and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of

all the earth. <sup>4</sup> For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.”

<sup>5</sup> And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

<sup>6</sup> Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came on the earth.

<sup>7</sup> And Noah with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. <sup>8</sup> Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, <sup>9</sup> two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah.

<sup>10</sup> And after seven days the waters of the flood came on the earth.

<sup>11</sup> In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. <sup>12</sup> The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup> On the very same

day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons entered the ark, <sup>14</sup> they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature. <sup>15</sup> They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup> And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup> The flood continued forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. <sup>19</sup> The waters swelled so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered; <sup>20</sup> the waters swelled above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.

<sup>21</sup> And all flesh died that

moved on the earth, birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all human beings; <sup>22</sup> everything on dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. <sup>23</sup> He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, human beings and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. <sup>24</sup> And the waters swelled on the earth for one hundred fifty days.

**Matthew 4:1-11** (NRSV)

*The Temptation of Jesus*  
(Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13)

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup> But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by  
bread alone,

but by every word that  
comes from the mouth  
of God.' ”

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him  
to the holy city and placed him  
on the pinnacle of the temple,  
<sup>6</sup> saying to him, “If you are the  
Son of God, throw yourself  
down; for it is written,

‘He will command his  
angels concerning you,’  
and ‘On their hands they  
will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash  
your foot against a  
stone.’ ”

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, “**Again it is  
written, ‘Do not put the Lord  
your God to the test.’ ”**

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him  
to a very high mountain and  
showed him all the kingdoms  
of the world and their  
splendor; <sup>9</sup> and he said to him,  
“All these I will give you, if you  
will fall down and worship  
me.” <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him,

**“Away with you, Satan! for it is  
written,**

**‘Worship the Lord your  
God,  
and serve only him.’ ”**

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and  
suddenly angels came and  
waited on him.

### **Psalm 4:1-3 (NRSV)**

#### *Confident Plea for Deliverance from Enemies*

To the leader: with stringed  
instruments. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Answer me when I call, O  
God of my right!

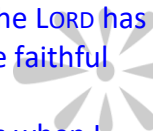
You gave me room when  
I was in distress.

Be gracious to me, and  
hear my prayer.

<sup>2</sup> How long, you people,  
shall my honor suffer  
shame?

How long will you love  
vain words, and seek  
after lies? *Selah*

<sup>3</sup> **But know that the LORD has  
set apart the faithful  
for himself;  
the LORD hears when I  
call to him.**



### **Proverbs 2:1–5 (NRSV)**

#### *The Value of Wisdom*

<sup>1</sup> My child, if you accept my  
words

and treasure up my  
commandments within  
you,

<sup>2</sup> making your ear attentive  
to wisdom

and inclining your heart  
to understanding;

<sup>3</sup> if you indeed cry out for  
insight,

and raise your voice for understanding;  
<sup>4</sup> if you seek it like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasures—  
<sup>5</sup> then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

## January 8



**Genesis 8:1–9:19** (NRSV)

### *The Flood Subsides*

<sup>1</sup> But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; <sup>2</sup> the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, <sup>3</sup> and the waters gradually receded from the earth. At the end of one hundred fifty days the waters had abated; <sup>4</sup> and in the

seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup> The waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

<sup>6</sup> At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made <sup>7</sup> and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; <sup>9</sup> but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. <sup>10</sup> He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; <sup>11</sup> and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. <sup>12</sup> Then he waited another

seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him anymore.

<sup>13</sup> In the six hundred first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying. <sup>14</sup> In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

<sup>15</sup> Then God said to Noah,

<sup>16</sup> “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you.

<sup>17</sup> Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” <sup>18</sup> So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives. <sup>19</sup> And every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families.

### *God’s Promise to Noah*

<sup>20</sup> Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup> And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, for the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done.

<sup>22</sup> As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”


### *The Covenant with Noah*

**9** God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup> The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. <sup>3</sup> Every moving thing that lives shall be food

for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. <sup>4</sup> Only, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. <sup>5</sup> For your own lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning: from every animal I will require it and from human beings, each one for the blood of another, I will require a reckoning for human life.

<sup>6</sup> Whoever sheds the blood of a human,  
by a human shall that person's blood be shed;  
for in his own image  
God made humankind.

<sup>7</sup> And you, be fruitful and multiply, abound on the earth and multiply in it."



<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never

again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." <sup>12</sup> God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: <sup>13</sup> I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup> When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." <sup>17</sup> God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

### *Noah and His Sons*

<sup>18</sup> The sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan.

<sup>19</sup> These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled.

**Matthew 4:12-22 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Begins His  
Ministry in Galilee  
(Mk 1:14–15; Lk 4:14–15)*

<sup>12</sup> Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. <sup>13</sup> He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup> “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea,  
across the Jordan,  
Galilee of the  
Gentiles—  
<sup>16</sup> the people who sat in  
darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those who sat in  
the region and shadow  
of death  
light has dawned.”

<sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.**”

*Jesus Calls the First Disciples  
(Mk 1:16–20; Lk 5:1–11)*

<sup>18</sup> As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> And he said to them, “**Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.**” <sup>20</sup> Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup> As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

**Psalm 4:4-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> When you are disturbed,  
do not sin;  
ponder it on your beds,  
and be silent. *Selah*  
<sup>5</sup> Offer right sacrifices,  
and put your trust in the  
LORD.  
<sup>6</sup> There are many who say,  
“O that we might see  
some good!  
Let the light of your face  
shine on us, O LORD!”

7 You have put gladness in  
my heart  
more than when their  
grain and wine abound.

8 I will both lie down and  
sleep in peace;  
for you alone, O LORD,  
make me lie down in  
safety.

### Proverbs 2:6–15 (NRSV)

6 For the LORD gives wisdom;  
from his mouth come  
knowledge and  
understanding;

7 he stores up sound  
wisdom for the  
upright;

he is a shield to those  
who walk blamelessly,

8 guarding the paths of  
justice

and preserving the way  
of his faithful ones.

9 Then you will understand  
righteousness and  
justice

and equity, every good  
path;

10 for wisdom will come into  
your heart,

and knowledge will be  
pleasant to your soul;

11 prudence will watch over  
you;

and understanding will  
guard you.

12 It will save you from the  
way of evil,

from those who speak  
perversely,

13 who forsake the paths of  
uprightness

to walk in the ways of  
darkness,

14 who rejoice in doing evil  
and delight in the

perverseness of evil;

15 those whose paths are  
crooked,

and who are devious in their  
ways.

## January 9



### Genesis 9:20–10:32 (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup>Noah, a man of the soil,  
was the first to plant a  
vineyard. <sup>21</sup>He drank some of  
the wine and became drunk,  
and he lay uncovered in his  
tent. <sup>22</sup>And Ham, the father of  
Canaan, saw the nakedness of  
his father, and told his two



brothers outside. <sup>23</sup> Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. <sup>24</sup> When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, <sup>25</sup> he said,

“Cursed be Canaan;  
lowest of slaves shall he  
be to his brothers.”

<sup>26</sup> He also said,

“Blessed by the LORD my  
God be Shem;  
and let Canaan be his  
slave.

<sup>27</sup> May God make space for  
Japheth,  
and let him live in the  
tents of Shem;  
and let Canaan be his  
slave.”

<sup>28</sup> After the flood Noah  
lived three hundred fifty years.

<sup>29</sup> All the days of Noah were  
nine hundred fifty years; and  
he died.

*Nations Descended from Noah*  
(1 Chr 1:5–27)

**10** These are the  
descendants of Noah's sons,  
Shem, Ham, and Japheth;  
children were born to them  
after the flood.

<sup>2</sup> The descendants of  
Japheth: Gomer, Magog,  
Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech,  
and Tiras. <sup>3</sup> The descendants of  
Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath,  
and Togarmah. <sup>4</sup> The  
descendants of Javan: Elishah,  
Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.  
<sup>5</sup> From these the coastland  
peoples spread. These are the  
descendants of Japheth in  
their lands, with their own  
language, by their families, in  
their nations.

<sup>6</sup> The descendants of Ham:  
Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.

<sup>7</sup> The descendants of Cush:  
Seba, Havilah, Sabtah,  
Raamah, and Sabteca. The  
descendants of Raamah:  
Sheba and Dedan. <sup>8</sup> Cush  
became the father of Nimrod;  
he was the first on earth to  
become a mighty warrior. <sup>9</sup> He  
was a mighty hunter before  
the LORD; therefore it is said,  
“Like Nimrod a mighty hunter  
before the LORD.” <sup>10</sup> The  
beginning of his kingdom was  
Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of

them in the land of Shinar.

<sup>11</sup> From that land he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, and

<sup>12</sup> Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.

<sup>13</sup> Egypt became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, <sup>14</sup> Pathrusim, Casluhim, and Caphtorim, from which the Philistines come.

<sup>15</sup> Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, <sup>16</sup> and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, <sup>17</sup> the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, <sup>18</sup> the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. <sup>19</sup> And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.

<sup>20</sup> These are the descendants of Ham, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

<sup>21</sup> To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth,

children were born. <sup>22</sup> The descendants of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. <sup>23</sup> The descendants of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. <sup>24</sup> Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. <sup>25</sup> To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. <sup>26</sup> Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, <sup>27</sup> Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup> Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup> Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the descendants of Joktan. <sup>30</sup> The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar, the hill country of the east. <sup>31</sup> These are the descendants of Shem, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

<sup>32</sup> These are the families of Noah's sons, according to their genealogies, in their nations; and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

**Matthew 4:23-25** (NRSV)  
*Jesus Ministers to  
Crowds of People*  
(Mk 1:35–39; Lk 4:44; 6:17–19)

<sup>23</sup> Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them.

<sup>25</sup> And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

**Psalms 5:1-6** (NRSV)  
*Trust in God for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader: for the flutes. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Give ear to my words, O LORD;  
give heed to my sighing.  
<sup>2</sup> Listen to the sound of my cry,  
my King and my God,  
for to you I pray.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;  
in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.

<sup>4</sup> For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;  
evil will not sojourn with you.

<sup>5</sup> The boastful will not stand before your eyes;  
you hate all evildoers.

<sup>6</sup> You destroy those who speak lies;  
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.

**Proverbs 2:16–22** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> You will be saved from the loose woman,  
from the adulteress with her smooth words,

<sup>17</sup> who forsakes the partner of her youth  
and forgets her sacred covenant;

<sup>18</sup> for her way leads down to death,  
and her paths to the shades;

<sup>19</sup> those who go to her never come back,  
nor do they regain the paths of life.

<sup>20</sup> Therefore walk in the way  
of the good,  
and keep to the paths of  
the just.  
<sup>21</sup> For the upright will abide  
in the land,  
and the innocent will  
remain in it;  
<sup>22</sup> but the wicked will be cut  
off from the land,  
and the treacherous will be  
rooted out of it.

## January 10



### Genesis 11:1–26 (NRSV)

#### *The Tower of Babel*

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. <sup>2</sup> And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. <sup>3</sup> And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. <sup>4</sup> Then they said, “Come, let us build

ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” <sup>5</sup> The LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD said, “Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. <sup>7</sup> Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.” <sup>8</sup> So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. <sup>9</sup> Therefore it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

#### *Descendants of Shem*

(1 Chr 1:17–27; Lk 3:34–36)

<sup>10</sup> These are the descendants of Shem. When Shem was one hundred years

old, he became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood; <sup>11</sup> and Shem lived after the birth of Arpachshad five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>12</sup> When Arpachshad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah; <sup>13</sup> and Arpachshad lived after the birth of Shelah four hundred three years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>14</sup> When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber; <sup>15</sup> and Shelah lived after the birth of Eber four hundred three years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>16</sup> When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg; <sup>17</sup> and Eber lived after the birth of Peleg four hundred thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>18</sup> When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Reu; <sup>19</sup> and Peleg lived after the birth of Reu two hundred nine years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup> When Reu had lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug; <sup>21</sup> and Reu lived after the birth of Serug

two hundred seven years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>22</sup> When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor; <sup>23</sup> and Serug lived after the birth of Nahor two hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>24</sup> When Nahor had lived twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah; <sup>25</sup> and Nahor lived after the birth of Terah one hundred nineteen years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup> When Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

### **Matthew 5:1-12 (NRSV)**

#### *The Beatitudes*

*(Lk 6:20-26)*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

<sup>4</sup> **“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

<sup>5</sup> “Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> “Blessed are those who  
hunger and thirst for  
righteousness, for they will be  
filled.

<sup>7</sup> “Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> “Blessed are the pure in  
heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the  
peacemakers, for they will be  
called children of God.

<sup>10</sup> “Blessed are those who  
are persecuted for  
righteousness’ sake, for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when  
people revile you and  
persecute you and utter all  
kinds of evil against you falsely  
on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and  
be glad, for your reward is  
great in heaven, for in the  
same way they persecuted the  
prophets who were before  
you.

**Psalm 5:7-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> But I, through the  
abundance of your  
steadfast love,  
will enter your house,  
I will bow down toward  
your holy temple

in awe of you.

<sup>8</sup> Lead me, O LORD, in your  
righteousness  
because of my enemies;  
make your way straight  
before me.

<sup>9</sup> For there is no truth in  
their mouths;  
their hearts are  
destruction;  
their throats are open  
graves;  
they flatter with their  
tongues.

<sup>10</sup> Make them bear their  
guilt, O God;  
let them fall by their own  
counsels;  
because of their many  
transgressions cast  
them out,  
for they have rebelled  
against you.

<sup>11</sup> But let all who take refuge  
in you rejoice;  
let them ever sing for  
joy.

Spread your protection  
over them,  
so that those who love  
your name may exult in  
you.

<sup>12</sup> For you bless the  
righteous, O LORD;

you cover them with  
favor as with a shield.

**Proverbs 3:1–6** (NRSV)  
*Admonition to Trust and  
Honor God*

- 1 My child, do not forget  
my teaching,  
but let your heart keep  
my commandments;  
2 for length of days and  
years of life  
and abundant welfare  
they will give you.  
3 Do not let loyalty and  
faithfulness forsake  
you;  
bind them around your  
neck,  
write them on the tablet  
of your heart.  
4 So you will find favor and  
good repute  
in the sight of God and of  
people.  
5 Trust in the LORD with all  
your heart,  
and do not rely on your  
own insight.  
6 In all your ways  
acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight  
your paths.

## January 11



**Genesis 11:27–13:4** (NRSV)

*Descendants of Terah*

<sup>27</sup> Now these are the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot. <sup>28</sup> Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans. <sup>29</sup> Abram and Nahor took wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. <sup>30</sup> Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

<sup>31</sup> Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Haran, they settled there. <sup>32</sup> The days of Terah were two hundred five years; and Terah died in Haran.

## *The Call of Abram*

(Acts 7:2–5)

**12** Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

<sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. <sup>5</sup> Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, <sup>6</sup> Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. <sup>7</sup> Then the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, “To your

offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup> From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

### *Abram and Sarai in Egypt*

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to reside there as an alien, for the famine was severe in the land. <sup>11</sup> When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, “I know well that you are a woman beautiful in appearance; <sup>12</sup> and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife’; then they will kill me, but they will let you live. <sup>13</sup> Say you are my sister, so that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared on your account.” <sup>14</sup> When Abram entered Egypt the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. <sup>15</sup> When



the officials of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

<sup>16</sup> And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female slaves, female donkeys, and camels.

<sup>17</sup> But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. <sup>18</sup> So Pharaoh called Abram, and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?" <sup>19</sup> Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife, take her, and be gone." <sup>20</sup> And Pharaoh gave his men orders concerning him; and they set him on the way, with his wife and all that he had.

### *Abram and Lot Separate*

**13** So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb.

<sup>2</sup> Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. <sup>3</sup> He journeyed on by stages from the Negeb as far

as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, <sup>4</sup> to the place where he had made an altar at the first; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

### **Matthew 5:13-26** (NRSV) *Salt Salt and Light* (Mk 9:50; Lk 14:34-35)

<sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

### *The Law and the Prophets*

<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For

truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

### *Concerning Anger*

*(Lk 12:57–59)*

<sup>21</sup> “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire. <sup>23</sup> So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your

brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

### **Psalm 6:1-5 (NRSV)**

#### *Prayer for Recovery from Grave Illness*

To the leader: with stringed instruments; according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger, or discipline me in your wrath.
- <sup>2</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are shaking with terror.
- <sup>3</sup> My soul also is struck with terror, while you, O LORD—how long?

<sup>4</sup> Turn, O LORD, save my life;  
deliver me for the sake  
of your steadfast love.  
<sup>5</sup> For in death there is no  
remembrance of you;  
in Sheol who can give  
you praise?

**Proverbs 3:7–8 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Do not be wise in your  
own eyes;  
fear the LORD, and turn  
away from evil.  
<sup>8</sup> It will be a healing for your  
flesh  
and a refreshment for  
your body.

**January 12**



**Genesis 13:5–14:16 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Now Lot, who went with  
Abram, also had flocks and  
herds and tents, <sup>6</sup>so that the  
land could not support both of  
them living together; for their  
possessions were so great that  
they could not live together,  
<sup>7</sup>and there was strife between

the herders of Abram’s  
livestock and the herders of  
Lot’s livestock. At that time  
the Canaanites and the  
Perizzites lived in the land.  
<sup>8</sup> Then Abram said to Lot,  
“Let there be no strife  
between you and me, and  
between your herders and my  
herders; for we are kindred.  
<sup>9</sup> Is not the whole land before  
you? Separate yourself from  
me. If you take the left hand,  
then I will go to the right; or if  
you take the right hand, then I  
will go to the left.” <sup>10</sup> Lot  
looked about him, and saw  
that the plain of the Jordan  
was well watered everywhere  
like the garden of the LORD,  
like the land of Egypt, in the  
direction of Zoar; this was  
before the LORD had destroyed  
Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>11</sup> So  
Lot chose for himself all the  
plain of the Jordan, and Lot  
journeyed eastward; thus they  
separated from each other.  
<sup>12</sup> Abram settled in the land of  
Canaan, while Lot settled  
among the cities of the Plain  
and moved his tent as far as  
Sodom. <sup>13</sup> Now the people of  
Sodom were wicked, great  
sinners against the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Raise your eyes now, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; <sup>15</sup> for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. <sup>16</sup> I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth; so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. <sup>17</sup> Rise up, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." <sup>18</sup> So Abram moved his tent, and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron; and there he built an altar to the LORD.

#### *Lot's Captivity and Rescue*

**14** In the days of King Amraphel of Shinar, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim, <sup>2</sup> these kings made war with King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). <sup>3</sup> All these

joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea). <sup>4</sup> Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. <sup>5</sup> In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and subdued the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, <sup>6</sup> and the Horites in the hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the edge of the wilderness; <sup>7</sup> then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and subdued all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who lived in Hazazon-tamar. <sup>8</sup> Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out, and they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim <sup>9</sup> with King Chedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goiim, King Amraphel of Shinar, and King Arioch of Ellasar, four kings against five. <sup>10</sup> Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits; and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled,

some fell into them, and the rest fled to the hill country.

<sup>11</sup> So the enemy took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way; <sup>12</sup> they also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who lived in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

<sup>13</sup> Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner; these were allies of Abram. <sup>14</sup> When Abram heard that his nephew had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred eighteen of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. <sup>15</sup> He divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and routed them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. <sup>16</sup> Then he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his nephew Lot with his goods, and the women and the people.

**Matthew 5:27-37** (NRSV)  
*Concerning Adultery*

<sup>27</sup> "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'<sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

*Concerning Divorce*  
(Mt 19:9; Mk 10:11–12; Lk 16:18)

<sup>31</sup> "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'<sup>32</sup> But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

*Concerning Oaths*  
<sup>33</sup> "Again, you have heard that it was said to those of

ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' <sup>34</sup> But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup> And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

**Psalms 6:6-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> I am weary with my moaning;  
every night I flood my bed with tears;  
I drench my couch with my weeping.  
<sup>7</sup> My eyes waste away because of grief;  
they grow weak because of all my foes.  
<sup>8</sup> Depart from me, all you workers of evil,  
for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.  
<sup>9</sup> The LORD has heard my supplication;

the LORD accepts my prayer.

<sup>10</sup> All my enemies shall be ashamed and struck with terror;  
they shall turn back, and in a moment be put to shame.

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Honor the LORD with your substance  
and with the first fruits of all your produce;  
<sup>10</sup> then your barns will be filled with plenty,  
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

**January 13**



**Genesis 14:17-15:21 (NRSV)**

*Abram Blessed by Melchizedek*  
(Heb 7:1-2)

<sup>17</sup> After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of

Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).<sup>18</sup> And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High.<sup>19</sup> He blessed him and said,  
    "Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
    maker of heaven and earth;  
<sup>20</sup> and blessed be God Most High,  
    who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"

And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.<sup>21</sup> Then the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself."<sup>22</sup> But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD, God Most High, maker of heaven and earth,<sup>23</sup> that I would not take a thread or a sandal-thong or anything that is yours, so that you might not say, 'I have made Abram rich.'<sup>24</sup> I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. Let them take their share."

*God's Covenant with Abram*  
*(Heb 11:8–10)*

**15** After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."<sup>2</sup> But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"<sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir."<sup>4</sup> But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir."<sup>5</sup> He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be."<sup>6</sup> And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.  
<sup>7</sup> Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess."<sup>8</sup> But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall

possess it?" <sup>9</sup> He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup> He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. <sup>11</sup> And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup> As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to Abram, "Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years; <sup>14</sup> but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup> As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. <sup>16</sup> And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the

iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

<sup>17</sup> When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, <sup>19</sup> the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup> the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, <sup>21</sup> the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girdashites, and the Jebusites."

### **Matthew 5:38-48 (NRSV)**

#### *Concerning Retaliation* (Lk 6:29-31)

<sup>38</sup> "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' <sup>39</sup> But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; <sup>40</sup> and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; <sup>41</sup> and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. <sup>42</sup> Give to everyone who begs from you,



and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

*Love for Enemies*  
(Lk 6:27–28, 32–36)

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Psalm 7:1-9** (NRSV)

*Plea for Help against Persecutors*

A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush, a Benjaminite.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD my God, in you I take refuge;  
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me,  
<sup>2</sup> or like a lion they will tear me apart;  
they will drag me away, with no one to rescue.  
<sup>3</sup> O LORD my God, if I have done this,  
if there is wrong in my hands,  
<sup>4</sup> if I have repaid my ally with harm  
or plundered my foe without cause,  
<sup>5</sup> then let the enemy pursue and overtake me,  
trample my life to the ground,  
and lay my soul in the dust. *Selah*  
<sup>6</sup> Rise up, O LORD, in your anger;  
lift yourself up against the fury of my enemies;  
awake, O my God; you have appointed a judgment.  
<sup>7</sup> Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered around you,

and over it take your  
seat on high.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD judges the  
peoples;  
judge me, O LORD,  
according to my  
righteousness  
and according to the  
integrity that is in me.  
<sup>9</sup> O let the evil of the wicked  
come to an end,  
but establish the  
righteous,  
you who test the minds  
and hearts,  
O righteous God.

**Proverbs 3:11–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> My child, do not despise  
the LORD'S discipline  
or be weary of his  
reproof,  
<sup>12</sup> *for the LORD reproves the  
one he loves,  
as a father the son in  
whom he delights.*

**January  
14**



**Genesis 16:1–17:14 (NRSV)**

*The Birth of Ishmael*

<sup>1</sup> Now Sarai, Abram's wife,  
bore him no children. She had  
an Egyptian slave-girl whose  
name was Hagar, <sup>2</sup> and Sarai  
said to Abram, "You see that  
the LORD has prevented me  
from bearing children; go in to  
my slave-girl; it may be that I  
shall obtain children by her."  
And Abram listened to the  
voice of Sarai. <sup>3</sup> So, after  
Abram had lived ten years in  
the land of Canaan, Sarai,  
Abram's wife, took Hagar the  
Egyptian, her slave-girl, and  
gave her to her husband  
Abram as a wife. <sup>4</sup> He went in  
to Hagar, and she conceived;  
and when she saw that she  
had conceived, she looked  
with contempt on her  
mistress. <sup>5</sup> Then Sarai said to  
Abram, "May the wrong done  
to me be on you! I gave my  
slave-girl to your embrace,  
and when she saw that she  
had conceived, she looked on  
me with contempt. May the  
LORD judge between you and  
me!" <sup>6</sup> But Abram said to Sarai,  
"Your slave-girl is in your  
power; do to her as you  
please." Then Sarai dealt

harshly with her, and she ran away from her.

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. <sup>8</sup>And he said, "Hagar, slave-girl of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." <sup>9</sup>The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her." <sup>10</sup>The angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude." <sup>11</sup>And the angel of the LORD said to her,

"Now you have conceived and shall bear a son; you shall call him Ishmael, for the LORD has given heed to your affliction.

<sup>12</sup> He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin."

<sup>13</sup> So she named the LORD who spoke to her, "You are El-roi"; for she said, "Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?" <sup>14</sup> Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

<sup>15</sup> Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

<sup>16</sup> Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

*The Sign of the Covenant  
(Ex 12:43–13:2)*

**17** When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. <sup>2</sup> And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." <sup>3</sup> Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, <sup>4</sup> "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup> No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of

nations. <sup>6</sup> I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup> I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. <sup>8</sup> And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God.”

<sup>9</sup> God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. <sup>10</sup> This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. <sup>11</sup> You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. <sup>12</sup> Throughout your generations every male among you shall be circumcised when he is eight days old, including the slave born in your house

and the one bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring.

<sup>13</sup> Both the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money must be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup> Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

#### **Matthew 6:1-13** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup> “So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup> But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

*Concerning Prayer*

(Lk 11:2–4)

<sup>5</sup> “And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup> But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>7</sup> “When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup> “Pray then in this way:  
Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread.  
<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven  
our debtors.  
<sup>13</sup> And do not bring us to  
the time of trial,

but rescue us from the evil one.

**Psalm 7:10-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> God is my shield,  
who saves the upright in  
heart.  
<sup>11</sup> God is a righteous judge,  
and a God who has  
indignation every day.  
<sup>12</sup> If one does not repent,  
God will whet his  
sword;  
he has bent and strung  
his bow;  
<sup>13</sup> he has prepared his deadly  
weapons,  
making his arrows fiery  
shafts.  
<sup>14</sup> See how they conceive  
evil,  
and are pregnant with  
mischief,  
and bring forth lies.  
<sup>15</sup> They make a pit, digging it  
out,  
and fall into the hole that  
they have made.  
<sup>16</sup> Their mischief returns  
upon their own heads,  
and on their own heads  
their violence  
descends.

<sup>17</sup> I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness, and sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High.

**Proverbs 3:13–15 (NRSV)**

*The True Wealth*

<sup>13</sup> Happy are those who find wisdom,  
and those who get understanding,  
<sup>14</sup> for her income is better than silver,  
and her revenue better than gold.  
<sup>15</sup> She is more precious than jewels,  
and nothing you desire can compare with her.

**January  
15**



**Genesis 17:15–18:15 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but

Sarah shall be her name. <sup>16</sup> I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, “Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

<sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to God, “O that Ishmael might live in your sight!” <sup>19</sup> God said, “No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. <sup>20</sup> As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

<sup>21</sup> But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.” <sup>22</sup> And when he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

<sup>23</sup> Then Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the slaves born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. <sup>24</sup> Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. <sup>25</sup> And his son Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

<sup>26</sup> That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised; <sup>27</sup> and all the men of his house, slaves born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

*A Son Promised to Abraham  
and Sarah  
(Heb 13:2)*

**18** The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup> He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed

down to the ground. <sup>3</sup> He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup> Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. <sup>5</sup> Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." <sup>6</sup> And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." <sup>7</sup> Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup> They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he said, "There, in the tent."

<sup>10</sup> Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance

behind him. <sup>11</sup> Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?"

<sup>13</sup> The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' <sup>14</sup> Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son."

<sup>15</sup> But Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh."

### **Matthew 6:14-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; <sup>15</sup> but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

### *Concerning Fasting*

<sup>16</sup> "And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show

others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

### *Concerning Treasures*

(Lk 12:33-34)

<sup>19</sup> "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### *The Sound Eye*

(Lk 11:34-36)

<sup>22</sup> "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; <sup>23</sup> but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is



darkness, how great is the  
darkness!

*Serving Two Masters*

<sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two  
masters; for a slave will either  
hate the one and love the  
other, or be devoted to the  
one and despise the other.  
You cannot serve God and  
wealth.

**Psalm 8:1** (NRSV)

*Divine Majesty and Human  
Dignity*

To the leader: according to The  
Gittith. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your  
name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory  
above the heavens.

**Proverbs 3:16–18** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Long life is in her right  
hand;  
in her left hand are  
riches and honor.  
<sup>17</sup> Her ways are ways of  
pleasantness,  
and all her paths are  
peace.  
<sup>18</sup> She is a tree of life to those  
who lay hold of her;  
those who hold her fast are  
called happy.

## January 16



**Genesis 18:16–19:26** (NRSV)

*Judgment Pronounced on  
Sodom*

<sup>16</sup> Then the men set out  
from there, and they looked  
toward Sodom; and Abraham  
went with them to set them  
on their way. <sup>17</sup> The LORD said,  
“Shall I hide from Abraham  
what I am about to do,  
<sup>18</sup> seeing that Abraham shall  
become a great and mighty  
nation, and all the nations of  
the earth shall be blessed in  
him? <sup>19</sup> No, for I have chosen  
him, that he may charge his  
children and his household  
after him to keep the way of  
the LORD by doing  
righteousness and justice; so  
that the LORD may bring about  
for Abraham what he has  
promised him.” <sup>20</sup> Then the  
LORD said, “How great is the  
outcry against Sodom and  
Gomorrah and how very grave  
their sin! <sup>21</sup> I must go down  
and see whether they have  
done altogether according to  
the outcry that has come to  
me; and if not, I will know.”

<sup>22</sup> So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. <sup>23</sup> Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?" <sup>24</sup> Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? <sup>25</sup> Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" <sup>26</sup> And the LORD said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." <sup>27</sup> Abraham answered, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. <sup>28</sup> Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." <sup>29</sup> Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He

answered, "For the sake of forty I will not do it." <sup>30</sup> Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." <sup>31</sup> He said, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it." <sup>32</sup> Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it." <sup>33</sup> And the LORD went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

### *The Depravity of Sodom*

**19** The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed down with his face to the ground. <sup>2</sup> He said, "Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet;

then you can rise early and go on your way.” They said, “No; we will spend the night in the square.”<sup>3</sup> But he urged them strongly; so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.<sup>4</sup> But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house;<sup>5</sup> and they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them.”<sup>6</sup> Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him,<sup>7</sup> and said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly.<sup>8</sup> Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.”<sup>9</sup> But they replied, “Stand back!” And they said, “This fellow came here as an alien, and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” Then they pressed hard

against the man Lot, and came near the door to break it down.<sup>10</sup> But the men inside reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door.<sup>11</sup> And they struck with blindness the men who were at the door of the house, both small and great, so that they were unable to find the door.

*Sodom and Gomorrah  
Destroyed*

*(Mt 11:23–24; Lk 17:28–32)*

<sup>12</sup> Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city—bring them out of the place.”<sup>13</sup> For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”<sup>14</sup> So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, “Up, get out of this place; for the LORD is about to destroy the city.” But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

<sup>15</sup> When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Get up, take your wife and

your two daughters who are here, or else you will be consumed in the punishment of the city.”<sup>16</sup> But he lingered; so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and left him outside the city.<sup>17</sup> When they had brought them outside, they said, “Flee for your life; do not look back or stop anywhere in the Plain; flee to the hills, or else you will be consumed.”<sup>18</sup> And Lot said to them, “Oh, no, my lords;<sup>19</sup> your servant has found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life; but I cannot flee to the hills, for fear the disaster will overtake me and I die.”<sup>20</sup> Look, that city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!”<sup>21</sup> He said to him, “Very well, I grant you this favor too, and will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken.”<sup>22</sup> Hurry, escape there, for I can do nothing until you arrive there.” Therefore the city was

called Zoar.<sup>23</sup> The sun had risen on the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

<sup>24</sup> Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven;<sup>25</sup> and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.<sup>26</sup> But Lot’s wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

### **Matthew 6:25-7:6 (NRSV)**

*Do Not Worry*  
(Lk 12:22–31)

<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?<sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?<sup>27</sup> And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?<sup>28</sup> And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they

grow; they neither toil nor spin,<sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

<sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' <sup>32</sup> For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

<sup>34</sup> "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

### *Judging Others*

(Lk 6:37-42)

**7** "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. <sup>2</sup> For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the

measure you get. <sup>3</sup> Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your neighbor, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' while the log is in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye.

### *Profaning the Holy*

<sup>6</sup> "Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.

### **Psalm 8:2-9** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup> When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars  
that you have  
established;  
4 what are human beings  
that you are mindful of  
them,  
mortals that you care for  
them?  
5 Yet you have made them a  
little lower than God,  
and crowned them with  
glory and honor.  
6 You have given them  
dominion over the  
works of your hands;  
you have put all things  
under their feet,  
7 all sheep and oxen,  
and also the beasts of  
the field,  
8 the birds of the air, and  
the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along  
the paths of the seas.  
9 O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your  
name in all the earth!

### **Proverbs 3:19–20 (NRSV)**

#### *God's Wisdom in Creation*

19 The LORD by wisdom  
founded the earth;  
by understanding he  
established the  
heavens;

20 by his knowledge the  
deeps broke open,  
and the clouds drop  
down the dew.

## **January 17**



### **Genesis 19:27–38 (NRSV)**

27 Abraham went early in  
the morning to the place  
where he had stood before  
the LORD; 28 and he looked  
down toward Sodom and  
Gomorrah and toward all the  
land of the Plain and saw the  
smoke of the land going up  
like the smoke of a furnace.

29 So it was that, when God  
destroyed the cities of the  
Plain, God remembered  
Abraham, and sent Lot out of  
the midst of the overthrow,  
when he overthrew the cities  
in which Lot had settled.

#### *The Shameful Origin of Moab and Ammon*

30 Now Lot went up out of  
Zoar and settled in the hills

with his two daughters, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; so he lived in a cave with his two daughters.<sup>31</sup> And the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world.<sup>32</sup> Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father.”<sup>33</sup> So they made their father drink wine that night; and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; he did not know when she lay down or when she rose.<sup>34</sup> On the next day, the firstborn said to the younger, “Look, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father.”<sup>35</sup> So they made their father drink wine that night also; and the younger rose, and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she rose.<sup>36</sup> Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father.

<sup>37</sup> The firstborn bore a son,

and named him Moab; he is the ancestor of the Moabites to this day.<sup>38</sup> The younger also bore a son and named him Ben-ammi; he is the ancestor of the Ammonites to this day.

### **Matthew 7:7--14 (NRSV)**

*Ask, Search, Knock*  
(Lk 11:9–13)

<sup>7</sup> “Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.<sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.<sup>9</sup> Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone?<sup>10</sup> Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake?<sup>11</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

### *The Golden Rule*

(Lk 6:31)

<sup>12</sup> “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

*The Narrow Gate*

(Lk 13:24)

<sup>13</sup> “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

**Psalm 9:1-8** (NRSV)

*God’s Power and Justice*

To the leader: according to Muthlabben. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart;  
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.  
<sup>2</sup> I will be glad and exult in you;  
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.  
<sup>3</sup> When my enemies turned back,  
they stumbled and perished before you.  
<sup>4</sup> For you have maintained my just cause;  
you have sat on the throne giving righteous judgment.  
<sup>5</sup> You have rebuked the nations, you have destroyed the wicked;

you have blotted out their name forever and ever.

<sup>6</sup> The enemies have vanished in everlasting ruins;  
their cities you have rooted out;  
the very memory of them has perished.  
<sup>7</sup> But the LORD sits enthroned forever,  
he has established his throne for judgment.  
<sup>8</sup> He judges the world with righteousness;  
he judges the peoples with equity.

**Proverbs 3:21–26** (NRSV)

*The True Security*

<sup>21</sup> My child, do not let these escape from your sight:  
keep sound wisdom and prudence,  
<sup>22</sup> and they will be life for your soul  
and adornment for your neck.  
<sup>23</sup> Then you will walk on your way securely  
and your foot will not stumble.  
<sup>24</sup> If you sit down, you will not be afraid;



when you lie down, your  
sleep will be sweet.  
<sup>25</sup> Do not be afraid of sudden  
panic,  
or of the storm that  
strikes the wicked;  
<sup>26</sup> for the LORD will be your  
confidence  
and will keep your foot  
from being caught.

## January 18



### Genesis 20:1–21:21 (NRSV)

#### *Abraham and Sarah at Gerar*

<sup>1</sup> From there Abraham journeyed toward the region of the Negeb, and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While residing in Gerar as an alien, <sup>2</sup> Abraham said of his wife Sarah, “She is my sister.” And King Abimelech of Gerar sent and took Sarah. <sup>3</sup> But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, “You are about to die because of the woman whom you have

taken; for she is a married woman.” <sup>4</sup> Now Abimelech had not approached her; so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent people?” <sup>5</sup> Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ I did this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands.” <sup>6</sup> Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart; furthermore it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her.” <sup>7</sup> Now then, return the man’s wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all that are yours.”

<sup>8</sup> So Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants and told them all these things; and the men were very much afraid. <sup>9</sup> Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said to him, “What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought such great guilt on me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that

ought not to be done.”<sup>10</sup> And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What were you thinking of, that you did this thing?”

<sup>11</sup> Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.”<sup>12</sup> Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.<sup>13</sup> And when God caused me to wander from my father’s house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, He is my brother.’ ”

<sup>14</sup> Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sarah to him.

<sup>15</sup> Abimelech said, “My land is before you; settle where it pleases you.”<sup>16</sup> To Sarah he said, “Look, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; it is your exoneration before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.”<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, and also

healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children.<sup>18</sup> For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

*The Birth of Isaac*  
(Heb 11:11)

**21** The LORD dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as he had promised.<sup>2</sup> Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him.<sup>3</sup> Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him.<sup>4</sup> And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.<sup>5</sup> Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.<sup>6</sup> Now Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.”<sup>7</sup> And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

## *Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away*

*(Gal 4:21–30)*

<sup>8</sup>The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. <sup>9</sup>But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. <sup>10</sup>So she said to Abraham, “Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.” <sup>11</sup>The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. <sup>12</sup>But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. <sup>13</sup>As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring.” <sup>14</sup>So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered

about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

<sup>15</sup>When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup>Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, “Do not let me look on the death of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. <sup>17</sup>And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. <sup>18</sup>Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.” <sup>19</sup>Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

<sup>20</sup>God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. <sup>21</sup>He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

**Matthew 7:15-23 (NRSV)**

*A Tree and Its Fruit*

(Mt 12:33; Lk 6:43-45)

<sup>15</sup> “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus you will know them by their fruits.

*Concerning Self-Deception*

(Lk 6:46; 13:26-27)

<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?’ <sup>23</sup> Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew

you; go away from me, you evildoers.’

**Psalms 9:9-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. <sup>10</sup> And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you. <sup>11</sup> Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion. Declare his deeds among the peoples. <sup>12</sup> For he who avenges blood is mindful of them; he does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

**Proverbs 3:27-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. <sup>28</sup> Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it”—when you have it with you.

<sup>29</sup> Do not plan harm against  
your neighbor  
who lives trustingly  
beside you.

<sup>30</sup> Do not quarrel with  
anyone without cause,  
when no harm has been  
done to you.

<sup>31</sup> Do not envy the violent  
and do not choose any of  
their ways;

<sup>32</sup> for the perverse are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
but the upright are in his  
confidence.

not deal falsely with me or  
with my offspring or with my  
posterity, but as I have dealt  
loyally with you, you will deal  
with me and with the land  
where you have resided as an  
alien.” <sup>24</sup> And Abraham said, “I  
swear it.”

<sup>25</sup> When Abraham  
complained to Abimelech  
about a well of water that  
Abimelech’s servants had  
seized, <sup>26</sup> Abimelech said, “I do  
not know who has done this;  
you did not tell me, and I have  
not heard of it until today.”

<sup>27</sup> So Abraham took sheep and  
oxen and gave them to  
Abimelech, and the two men  
made a covenant. <sup>28</sup> Abraham  
set apart seven ewe lambs of  
the flock. <sup>29</sup> And Abimelech  
said to Abraham, “What is the  
meaning of these seven ewe  
lambs that you have set  
apart?” <sup>30</sup> He said, “These  
seven ewe lambs you shall  
accept from my hand, in order  
that you may be a witness for  
me that I dug this well.”

<sup>31</sup> Therefore that place was  
called Beer-sheba; because  
there both of them swore an  
oath. <sup>32</sup> When they had made  
a covenant at Beer-sheba,

## January 19



### Genesis 21:22–22:24 (NRSV)

#### *Abraham and Abimelech Make a Covenant*

<sup>22</sup> At that time Abimelech,  
with Phicol the commander of  
his army, said to Abraham,  
“God is with you in all that you  
do; <sup>23</sup> now therefore swear to  
me here by God that you will

Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, left and returned to the land of the Philistines.<sup>33</sup> Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.<sup>34</sup> And Abraham resided as an alien many days in the land of the Philistines.

*The Command to Sacrifice  
Isaac  
(Heb 11:17–19)*

**22** After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”<sup>2</sup> He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.”<sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him.<sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away.

<sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.”<sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.<sup>7</sup> Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”<sup>8</sup> Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them walked on together.

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.<sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.<sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”<sup>12</sup> He said, “Do not lay

your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

<sup>13</sup> And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called that place “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

<sup>15</sup> The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, <sup>18</sup> and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.” <sup>19</sup> So Abraham

returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba.

### *The Children of Nahor*

<sup>20</sup> Now after these things it was told Abraham, “Milcah also has borne children, to your brother Nahor: <sup>21</sup> Uz the firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, <sup>22</sup> Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.”

<sup>23</sup> Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother.

<sup>24</sup> Moreover, his concubine, whose name was Reumah, bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

### **Matthew 7:24-29** (NRSV) *Hearers and Doers* (Lk 6:47-49)

<sup>24</sup> “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been

founded on rock.<sup>26</sup> And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.<sup>27</sup> The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

<sup>28</sup> Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching,<sup>29</sup> for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

**Psalm 9:13-18 (NRSV)**

- <sup>13</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD.  
See what I suffer from  
those who hate me;  
you are the one who lifts  
me up from the gates  
of death,  
<sup>14</sup> so that I may recount all  
your praises,  
and, in the gates of  
daughter Zion,  
rejoice in your  
deliverance.  
<sup>15</sup> The nations have sunk in  
the pit that they made;  
in the net that they hid  
has their own foot  
been caught.

- <sup>16</sup> The LORD has made himself  
known, he has  
executed judgment;  
the wicked are snared in  
the work of their own  
hands. *Higgaion. Selah*  
<sup>17</sup> The wicked shall depart to  
Sheol,  
all the nations that  
forget God.  
<sup>18</sup> For the needy shall not  
always be forgotten,  
nor the hope of the poor  
perish forever.

**Proverbs 3:33–35 (NRSV)**

- <sup>33</sup> The LORD’s curse is on the  
house of the wicked,  
but he blesses the abode  
of the righteous.  
<sup>34</sup> Toward the scorners he is  
scornful,  
but to the humble he  
shows favor.  
<sup>35</sup> The wise will inherit honor,  
but stubborn fools,  
disgrace.



# January 20



## Genesis 23:1–20 (NRSV)

### *Sarah's Death and Burial*

<sup>1</sup> Sarah lived one hundred twenty-seven years; this was the length of Sarah's life. <sup>2</sup> And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan; and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. <sup>3</sup> Abraham rose up from beside his dead, and said to the Hittites, <sup>4</sup> "I am a stranger and an alien residing among you; give me property among you for a burying place, so that I may bury my dead out of my sight." <sup>5</sup> The Hittites answered Abraham, <sup>6</sup> "Hear us, my lord; you are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places; none of us will withhold from you any burial ground for burying your dead." <sup>7</sup> Abraham rose and bowed to the Hittites, the people of the land. <sup>8</sup> He said to them, "If you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me Ephron son of Zohar, <sup>9</sup> so that he may give me the

cave of Machpelah, which he owns; it is at the end of his field. For the full price let him give it to me in your presence as a possession for a burying place." <sup>10</sup> Now Ephron was sitting among the Hittites; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the Hittites, of all who went in at the gate of his city, <sup>11</sup> "No, my lord, hear me; I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it; in the presence of my people I give it to you; bury your dead." <sup>12</sup> Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. <sup>13</sup> He said to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, "If you only will listen to me! I will give the price of the field; accept it from me, so that I may bury my dead there." <sup>14</sup> Ephron answered Abraham, <sup>15</sup> "My lord, listen to me; a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver—what is that between you and me? Bury your dead." <sup>16</sup> Abraham agreed with Ephron; and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver that he had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels

of silver, according to the weights current among the merchants.

<sup>17</sup> So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field, throughout its whole area, passed <sup>18</sup> to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites, in the presence of all who went in at the gate of his city. <sup>19</sup> After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. <sup>20</sup> The field and the cave that is in it passed from the Hittites into Abraham's possession as a burying place.

**Matthew 8:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Cleanses a Leper*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; <sup>2</sup> and there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." <sup>3</sup> He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I do choose. Be made clean!"

Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. <sup>4</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

**Psalm 9:19-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Rise up, O LORD! Do not let mortals prevail;  
let the nations be judged before you.  
<sup>20</sup> Put them in fear, O LORD;  
let the nations know that they are only human.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 4:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Parental Advice*

<sup>1</sup> Listen, children, to a father's instruction,  
and be attentive, that you may gain insight;  
<sup>2</sup> for I give you good precepts:  
do not forsake my teaching.  
<sup>3</sup> When I was a son with my father,  
tender, and my mother's favorite,  
<sup>4</sup> he taught me, and said to me,

“Let your heart hold fast  
my words;  
keep my  
commandments, and  
live.

<sup>5</sup> Get wisdom; get insight:  
do not forget, nor turn  
away  
from the words of my  
mouth.

<sup>6</sup> Do not forsake her, and  
she will keep you;  
love her, and she will  
guard you.

## January 21



**Genesis 24:1–51** (NRSV)

### *The Marriage of Isaac and Rebekah*

<sup>1</sup> Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. <sup>2</sup> Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his house, who had charge of all that he had, “Put your hand under my thigh <sup>3</sup> and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth,

that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, <sup>4</sup> but will go to my country and to my kindred and get a wife for my son Isaac.”

<sup>5</sup> The servant said to him, “Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land; must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?” <sup>6</sup> Abraham said to him, “See to it that you do not take my son back there. <sup>7</sup> The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and swore to me, ‘To your offspring I will give this land,’ he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. <sup>8</sup> But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you must not take my son back there.” <sup>9</sup> So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning this matter.

<sup>10</sup> Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, taking all kinds of

choice gifts from his master; and he set out and went to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor. <sup>11</sup> He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water; it was toward evening, the time when women go out to draw water. <sup>12</sup> And he said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. <sup>13</sup> I am standing here by the spring of water, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. <sup>14</sup> Let the girl to whom I shall say, 'Please offer your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master."

<sup>15</sup> Before he had finished speaking, there was Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, coming out with her water jar on her shoulder. <sup>16</sup> The girl was very fair to look upon, a virgin,

whom no man had known. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up. <sup>17</sup> Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me sip a little water from your jar." <sup>18</sup> "Drink, my lord," she said, and quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. <sup>19</sup> When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." <sup>20</sup> So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. <sup>21</sup> The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful.

<sup>22</sup> When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold nose-ring weighing a half shekel, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels, <sup>23</sup> and said, "Tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?" <sup>24</sup> She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." <sup>25</sup> She added, "We

have plenty of straw and fodder and a place to spend the night.”<sup>26</sup> The man bowed his head and worshiped the LORD<sup>27</sup> and said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the way to the house of my master’s kin.”

<sup>28</sup> Then the girl ran and told her mother’s household about these things.<sup>29</sup> Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban; and Laban ran out to the man, to the spring.<sup>30</sup> As soon as he had seen the nose-ring, and the bracelets on his sister’s arms, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, “Thus the man spoke to me,” he went to the man; and there he was, standing by the camels at the spring.<sup>31</sup> He said, “Come in, O blessed of the LORD. Why do you stand outside when I have prepared the house and a place for the camels?”<sup>32</sup> So the man came into the house; and Laban unloaded the camels, and gave him straw and fodder for the camels, and water to wash his

feet and the feet of the men who were with him.<sup>33</sup> Then food was set before him to eat; but he said, “I will not eat until I have told my errand.” He said, “Speak on.”

<sup>34</sup> So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant.”<sup>35</sup> The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become wealthy; he has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and donkeys.<sup>36</sup> And Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and he has given him all that he has.<sup>37</sup> My master made me swear, saying, ‘You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live;’<sup>38</sup> but you shall go to my father’s house, to my kindred, and get a wife for my son.’<sup>39</sup> I said to my master, ‘Perhaps the woman will not follow me.’<sup>40</sup> But he said to me, ‘The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with you and make your way successful. You shall get a wife for my son from my kindred, from my father’s house.’<sup>41</sup> Then you will be free from my oath, when

you come to my kindred; even if they will not give her to you, you will be free from my oath.'

<sup>42</sup> "I came today to the spring, and said, 'O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, if now you will only make successful the way I am going!

<sup>43</sup> I am standing here by the spring of water; let the young woman who comes out to draw, to whom I shall say, "Please give me a little water from your jar to drink," <sup>44</sup> and who will say to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also"—let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.'

<sup>45</sup> "Before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah coming out with her water jar on her shoulder; and she went down to the spring, and drew. I said to her, 'Please let me drink.'<sup>46</sup> She quickly let down her jar from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels.' So I drank, and she also watered the camels.

<sup>47</sup> Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah

bore to him.' So I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her arms. <sup>48</sup> Then I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to obtain the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. <sup>49</sup> Now then, if you will deal loyally and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so that I may turn either to the right hand or to the left."

<sup>50</sup> Then Laban and Bethuel answered, "The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you anything bad or good. <sup>51</sup> Look, Rebekah is before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has spoken."

### **Matthew 8:5-17 (NRSV)**

#### *Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant*

<sup>5</sup> When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him <sup>6</sup> and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress."<sup>7</sup> And he said to him, "I will come and cure

him.” <sup>8</sup> The centurion answered, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup> For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.”

<sup>10</sup> When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, “Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. <sup>11</sup> I tell you,

many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,

<sup>12</sup> while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” <sup>13</sup> And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; let it be done for you according to your faith.” And the servant was healed in that hour.

*Jesus Heals Many at Peter’s House*

<sup>14</sup> When Jesus entered Peter’s house, he saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever;

<sup>15</sup> he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she got up and began to serve him.

<sup>16</sup> That evening they brought to him many who were possessed with demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and cured all who were sick. <sup>17</sup> This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah, “He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.”

#### **Psalm 10:1-6 (NRSV)**

##### *Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies*

- <sup>1</sup> Why, O LORD, do you stand far off?  
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?
- <sup>2</sup> In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor—  
let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.
- <sup>3</sup> For the wicked boast of the desires of their heart,

those greedy for gain  
curse and renounce  
the LORD.

4 In the pride of their  
countenance the  
wicked say, "God will  
not seek it out";  
all their thoughts are,  
"There is no God."

5 Their ways prosper at all  
times;  
your judgments are on  
high, out of their sight;  
as for their foes, they  
scoff at them.

6 They think in their heart,  
"We shall not be  
moved;  
throughout all  
generations we shall  
not meet adversity."

#### **Proverbs 4:7–10 (NRSV)**

7 The beginning of wisdom is  
this: Get wisdom,  
and whatever else you  
get, get insight.

8 Prize her highly, and she  
will exalt you;  
she will honor you if you  
embrace her.

9 She will place on your  
head a fair garland;  
she will bestow on you a  
beautiful crown."

#### *Admonition to Keep to the Right Path*

10 Hear, my child, and accept  
my words,  
that the years of your life  
may be many.

## **January 22**



#### **Genesis 24:52–25:28 (NRSV)**

<sup>52</sup>When Abraham's  
servant heard their words, he  
bowed himself to the ground  
before the LORD. <sup>53</sup>And the  
servant brought out jewelry of  
silver and of gold, and  
garments, and gave them to  
Rebekah; he also gave to her  
brother and to her mother  
costly ornaments. <sup>54</sup>Then he  
and the men who were with  
him ate and drank, and they  
spent the night there. When  
they rose in the morning, he  
said, "Send me back to my  
master." <sup>55</sup>Her brother and  
her mother said, "Let the girl  
remain with us a while, at  
least ten days; after that she  
may go." <sup>56</sup>But he said to



them, "Do not delay me, since the LORD has made my journey successful; let me go that I may go to my master." <sup>57</sup> They said, "We will call the girl, and ask her." <sup>58</sup> And they called Rebekah, and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" She said, "I will." <sup>59</sup> So they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse along with Abraham's servant and his men. <sup>60</sup> And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"May you, our sister,  
become  
thousands of myriads;  
may your offspring gain  
possession  
of the gates of their  
foes."

<sup>61</sup> Then Rebekah and her maids rose up, mounted the camels, and followed the man; thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

<sup>62</sup> Now Isaac had come from Beer-lahai-roi, and was settled in the Negeb. <sup>63</sup> Isaac went out in the evening to walk in the field; and looking up, he saw camels coming.

<sup>64</sup> And Rebekah looked up, and when she saw Isaac, she slipped quickly from the

camel, <sup>65</sup> and said to the servant, "Who is the man over there, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself.

<sup>66</sup> And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

<sup>67</sup> Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. He took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

*Abraham Marries Keturah*  
(1 Chr 1:32–33)

**25** Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. <sup>2</sup> She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. <sup>3</sup> Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. <sup>4</sup> The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. <sup>5</sup> Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. <sup>6</sup> But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, while he was still living, and he sent

them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country.

### *The Death of Abraham*

<sup>7</sup>This is the length of Abraham's life, one hundred seventy-five years. <sup>8</sup>Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. <sup>9</sup>His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, <sup>10</sup>the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with his wife Sarah. <sup>11</sup>After the death of Abraham God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi.

### *Ishmael's Descendants*

*(1 Chr 1:29–31)*

<sup>12</sup>These are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to Abraham. <sup>13</sup>These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, <sup>14</sup>Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

<sup>15</sup>Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

<sup>16</sup>These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. <sup>17</sup>(This is the length of the life of Ishmael, one hundred thirty-seven years; he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.)

<sup>18</sup>They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria; he settled down alongside of all his people.

### *The Birth and Youth of Esau and Jacob*

*(Rom 9:10–12)*

<sup>19</sup>These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, <sup>20</sup>and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. <sup>21</sup>Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. <sup>22</sup>The children struggled together within her;

and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the LORD.

<sup>23</sup> And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger."

<sup>24</sup> When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. <sup>25</sup> The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. <sup>26</sup> Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

<sup>27</sup> When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. <sup>28</sup> Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

### **Matthew 8:18-27 (NRSV)**

*Would-Be Followers of Jesus*

<sup>18</sup> Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave

orders to go over to the other side. <sup>19</sup> A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>20</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

<sup>21</sup> Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>22</sup> But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

### *Jesus Stills the Storm*

<sup>23</sup> And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup> A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.

<sup>25</sup> And they went and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" <sup>26</sup> And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. <sup>27</sup> They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

**Psalm 10:7-15** (NRSV)

7 Their mouths are filled  
with cursing and deceit  
and oppression;  
under their tongues are  
mischief and iniquity.

8 They sit in ambush in the  
villages;  
in hiding places they  
murder the innocent.  
Their eyes stealthily watch  
for the helpless;  
9 they lurk in secret like a  
lion in its covert;  
they lurk that they may  
seize the poor;  
they seize the poor and  
drag them off in their  
net.

10 They stoop, they crouch,  
and the helpless fall by  
their might.

11 They think in their heart,  
“God has forgotten,  
he has hidden his face,  
he will never see it.”

12 Rise up, O LORD; O God, lift  
up your hand;  
do not forget the  
oppressed.

13 Why do the wicked  
renounce God,  
and say in their hearts,  
“You will not call us to  
account”?

14 But you do see! Indeed  
you note trouble and  
grief,  
that you may take it into  
your hands;  
the helpless commit  
themselves to you;  
you have been the  
helper of the orphan.

15 Break the arm of the  
wicked and evildoers;  
seek out their  
wickedness until you  
find none.

**Proverbs 4:11–13** (NRSV)

11 I have taught you the way  
of wisdom;  
I have led you in the  
paths of uprightness.

12 When you walk, your step  
will not be hampered;  
and if you run, you will  
not stumble.

13 Keep hold of instruction;  
do not let go;  
guard her, for she is your life.



# January 23



**Genesis 25:29–26:16** (NRSV)

*Esau Sells His Birthright*  
(Heb 12:16)

<sup>29</sup> Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. <sup>30</sup> Esau said to Jacob, “Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!” (Therefore he was called Edom.) <sup>31</sup> Jacob said, “First sell me your birthright.” <sup>32</sup> Esau said, “I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?” <sup>33</sup> Jacob said, “Swear to me first.” So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

*Isaac and Abimelech*

**26** Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar, to King Abimelech of the Philistines. <sup>2</sup> The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to

Egypt; settle in the land that I shall show you. <sup>3</sup> Reside in this land as an alien, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfill the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. <sup>4</sup> I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and will give to your offspring all these lands; and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring, <sup>5</sup> because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

<sup>6</sup> So Isaac settled in Gerar. <sup>7</sup> When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, “She is my sister”; for he was afraid to say, “My wife,” thinking, “or else the men of the place might kill me for the sake of Rebekah, because she is attractive in appearance.” <sup>8</sup> When Isaac had been there a long time, King Abimelech of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw him fondling his wife Rebekah. <sup>9</sup> So Abimelech called for Isaac, and said, “So she is your wife! Why

then did you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac said to him, “Because I thought I might die because of her.”<sup>10</sup> Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.”<sup>11</sup> So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, “Whoever touches this man or his wife shall be put to death.”

<sup>12</sup> Isaac sowed seed in that land, and in the same year reaped a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him,<sup>13</sup> and the man became rich; he prospered more and more until he became very wealthy.<sup>14</sup> He had possessions of flocks and herds, and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him.<sup>15</sup> (Now the Philistines had stopped up and filled with earth all the wells that his father’s servants had dug in the days of his father Abraham.)<sup>16</sup> And Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us; you have become too powerful for us.”

**Matthew 8:28-34** (NRSV)

*Jesus Heals the Gadarene  
Demoniacs*

<sup>28</sup> When he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demoniacs coming out of the tombs met him. They were so fierce that no one could pass that way.<sup>29</sup> Suddenly they shouted, “What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”<sup>30</sup> Now a large herd of swine was feeding at some distance from them.<sup>31</sup> The demons begged him, “If you cast us out, send us into the herd of swine.”<sup>32</sup> And he said to them, “Go!” So they came out and entered the swine; and suddenly, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water.<sup>33</sup> The swineherds ran off, and on going into the town, they told the whole story about what had happened to the demoniacs.<sup>34</sup> Then the whole town came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood.

**Psalm 10:16** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> The LORD is king forever  
and ever;  
the nations shall perish  
from his land.

**Proverbs 4:14–19** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Do not enter the path of  
the wicked,  
and do not walk in the  
way of evildoers.  
<sup>15</sup> Avoid it; do not go on it;  
turn away from it and  
pass on.  
<sup>16</sup> For they cannot sleep  
unless they have done  
wrong;  
they are robbed of sleep  
unless they have made  
someone stumble.  
<sup>17</sup> For they eat the bread of  
wickedness  
and drink the wine of  
violence.

<sup>18</sup> **But the path of the  
righteous is like the  
light of dawn,  
which shines brighter  
and brighter until full  
day.**

<sup>19</sup> The way of the wicked is  
like deep darkness;  
they do not know what  
they stumble over.

## January 24



**Genesis 26:17–35** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> So Isaac departed from  
there and camped in the valley  
of Gerar and settled there.

<sup>18</sup> Isaac dug again the wells of  
water that had been dug in  
the days of his father  
Abraham; for the Philistines  
had stopped them up after the  
death of Abraham; and he  
gave them the names that his  
father had given them. <sup>19</sup> But  
when Isaac's servants dug in  
the valley and found there a  
well of spring water, <sup>20</sup> the  
herders of Gerar quarreled  
with Isaac's herders, saying,  
"The water is ours." So he  
called the well Esek, because  
they contended with him.

<sup>21</sup> Then they dug another well,  
and they quarreled over that  
one also; so he called it Sitnah.

<sup>22</sup> He moved from there and  
dug another well, and they did  
not quarrel over it; so he  
called it Rehoboth, saying,  
"Now the LORD has made room  
for us, and we shall be fruitful  
in the land."

<sup>23</sup> From there he went up to Beer-sheba. <sup>24</sup> And that very night the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you and make your offspring numerous for my servant Abraham's sake."

<sup>25</sup> So he built an altar there, called on the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

<sup>26</sup> Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army.

<sup>27</sup> Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?"

<sup>28</sup> They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; so we say, let there be an oath between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you <sup>29</sup> so that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD." <sup>30</sup> So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.

<sup>31</sup> In the morning they rose early and exchanged oaths; and Isaac set them on their way, and they departed from him in peace. <sup>32</sup> That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water!" <sup>33</sup> He called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba to this day.

#### *Esau's Hittite Wives*

<sup>34</sup> When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite; <sup>35</sup> and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

#### **Matthew 9:1-8 (NRSV)**

And after getting into a boat he crossed the sea and came to his own town.

#### *Jesus Heals a Paralytic*

(Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26)

<sup>2</sup> And just then some people were carrying a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." <sup>3</sup> Then some of the




scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.”  
<sup>4</sup> But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?”<sup>5</sup> For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk’?<sup>6</sup> But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Stand up, take your bed and go to your home.”<sup>7</sup> And he stood up and went to his home.<sup>8</sup> When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

**Psalms 10:17-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> O LORD, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear  
<sup>18</sup> to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed, so that those from earth may strike terror no more.

**Proverbs 4:20–27 (NRSV)**



<sup>20</sup> My child, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings.  
<sup>21</sup> Do not let them escape from your sight; keep them within your heart.  
<sup>22</sup> For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh.  
<sup>23</sup> Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.  
<sup>24</sup> Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you.  
<sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you.  
<sup>26</sup> Keep straight the path of your feet, and all your ways will be sure.  
<sup>27</sup> Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.

# January 25



## Genesis 27:1–45 (NRSV)

### *Isaac Blesses Jacob*

When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called his elder son Esau and said to him, “My son”; and he answered, “Here I am.”<sup>2</sup> He said, “See, I am old; I do not know the day of my death.<sup>3</sup> Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field, and hunt game for me.<sup>4</sup> Then prepare for me savory food, such as I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may bless you before I die.”

<sup>5</sup> Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it,<sup>6</sup> Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “I heard your father say to your brother Esau,<sup>7</sup> ‘Bring me game, and prepare for me savory food to eat, that I may bless you before the LORD before I die.’<sup>8</sup> Now therefore, my son, obey my word as I

command you.<sup>9</sup> Go to the flock, and get me two choice kids, so that I may prepare from them savory food for your father, such as he likes;<sup>10</sup> and you shall take it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before he dies.”

<sup>11</sup> But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, “Look, my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a man of smooth skin.

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be mocking him, and bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.”<sup>13</sup> His mother said to him, “Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my word, and go, get them for me.”<sup>14</sup> So he went and got them and brought them to his mother; and his mother prepared savory food, such as his father loved.<sup>15</sup> Then Rebekah took the best garments of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob;<sup>16</sup> and she put the skins of the kids on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.<sup>17</sup> Then she handed the savory food, and the bread that she had prepared, to her son Jacob.

<sup>18</sup> So he went in to his father, and said, "My father"; and he said, "Here I am; who are you, my son?" <sup>19</sup> Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, so that you may bless me." <sup>20</sup> But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" He answered, "Because the LORD your God granted me success." <sup>21</sup> Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not." <sup>22</sup> So Jacob went up to his father Isaac, who felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." <sup>23</sup> He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. <sup>24</sup> He said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He answered, "I am." <sup>25</sup> Then he said, "Bring it to me, that I may eat of my son's game and bless you." So he brought it to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. <sup>26</sup> Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near and

kiss me, my son." <sup>27</sup> So he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him, and said,

"Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the LORD has blessed.

<sup>28</sup> May God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.

<sup>29</sup> Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

*Esau's Lost Blessing*  
(Heb 12:17)

<sup>30</sup> As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of his father Isaac, his brother Esau came in from his hunting. <sup>31</sup> He also prepared savory food, and

brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father sit up and eat of his son's game, so that you may bless me." <sup>32</sup> His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your firstborn son, Esau." <sup>33</sup> Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him?—yes, and blessed he shall be!" <sup>34</sup> When Esau heard his father's words, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, me also, father!" <sup>35</sup> But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing." <sup>36</sup> Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright; and look, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" <sup>37</sup> Isaac answered Esau, "I have already made him your lord, and I have given him all his brothers as servants, and with grain and wine I have

sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?" <sup>38</sup> Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me, me also, father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

<sup>39</sup> Then his father Isaac answered him:

"See, away from the fatness of the earth shall your home be, and away from the dew of heaven on high.

<sup>40</sup> By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you break loose, you shall break his yoke from your neck."

#### *Jacob Escapes Esau's Fury*

<sup>41</sup> Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

<sup>42</sup> But the words of her elder son Esau were told to Rebekah; so she sent and called her younger son Jacob and said to him, "Your brother

Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you.<sup>43</sup> Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran,<sup>44</sup> and stay with him a while, until your brother's fury turns away—<sup>45</sup> until your brother's anger against you turns away, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send, and bring you back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

**Matthew 9:9-17 (NRSV)**

*The Call of Matthew*  
(Mk 2:13–17; Lk 5:27–32)

<sup>9</sup> As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

<sup>10</sup> And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples.<sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"<sup>12</sup> But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those

who are sick.<sup>13</sup> Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

*The Question about Fasting*  
(Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39)

<sup>14</sup> Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"<sup>15</sup> And Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.<sup>16</sup> No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made.<sup>17</sup> Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."

**Psalm 11:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Song of Trust in God*  
To the leader. Of David.

1 In the LORD I take refuge;  
how can you say to me,  
“Flee like a bird to the  
mountains;  
2 for look, the wicked bend  
the bow,  
they have fitted their  
arrow to the string,  
to shoot in the dark at  
the upright in heart.  
3 If the foundations are  
destroyed,  
what can the righteous  
do?”  
4 The LORD is in his holy  
temple;  
the LORD’s throne is in  
heaven.  
His eyes behold, his gaze  
examines humankind.  
5 The LORD tests the  
righteous and the  
wicked,  
and his soul hates the  
lover of violence.  
6 On the wicked he will rain  
coals of fire and sulfur;  
a scorching wind shall be  
the portion of their  
cup.

**Proverbs 5:1–6** (NRSV)  
*Warning against Impurity and  
Infidelity*

**5** My child, be attentive to  
my wisdom;  
incline your ear to my  
understanding,  
2 so that you may hold on to  
prudence,  
and your lips may guard  
knowledge.  
3 For the lips of a loose  
woman drip honey,  
and her speech is  
smoother than oil;  
4 but in the end she is bitter  
as wormwood,  
sharp as a two-edged  
sword.  
5 Her feet go down to death;  
her steps follow the path  
to Sheol.  
6 She does not keep straight  
to the path of life; her  
ways wander, and she  
does not know it.

## January 26



**Genesis 27:46–28:22** (NRSV)

<sup>46</sup> Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women such as these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?”

**28** Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, “You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. <sup>2</sup> Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother’s father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother’s brother. <sup>3</sup> May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and numerous, that you may become a company of peoples. <sup>4</sup> May he give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien—land that God gave to Abraham.” <sup>5</sup> Thus Isaac sent

Jacob away; and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob’s and Esau’s mother.

### *Esau Marries Ishmael’s Daughter*

<sup>6</sup> Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he charged him, “You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women,” <sup>7</sup> and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and gone to Paddan-aram. <sup>8</sup> So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please his father Isaac, <sup>9</sup> Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath daughter of Abraham’s son Ishmael, and sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

### *Jacob’s Dream at Bethel*

<sup>10</sup> Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. <sup>11</sup> He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of

the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place.<sup>12</sup> And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.<sup>13</sup> And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring;<sup>14</sup> and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring.<sup>15</sup> Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."<sup>16</sup> Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!"<sup>17</sup> And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the

house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

<sup>18</sup> So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it.<sup>19</sup> He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

<sup>20</sup> Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear,<sup>21</sup> so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God,<sup>22</sup> and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you."

**Matthew 9:18-26** (NRSV)

*A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed*

(Mk 5:21–43; Lk 8:40–56)

<sup>18</sup> While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."



<sup>19</sup> And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. <sup>20</sup> Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, <sup>21</sup> for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” <sup>22</sup> Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “**Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.**” And instantly the woman was made well. <sup>23</sup> When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, <sup>24</sup> he said, “**Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.**” And they laughed at him. <sup>25</sup> But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. <sup>26</sup> And the report of this spread throughout that district.

**Psalms 11:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> **For the LORD is righteous;  
he loves righteous deeds;  
the upright shall behold  
his face.**

**Proverbs 5:7–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> And now, my child, listen to me,  
and do not depart from the words of my mouth.  
<sup>8</sup> Keep your way far from her,  
and do not go near the door of her house;  
<sup>9</sup> or you will give your honor to others,  
and your years to the merciless,  
<sup>10</sup> and strangers will take their fill of your wealth,  
and your labors will go to the house of an alien;  
<sup>11</sup> and at the end of your life you will groan,  
when your flesh and body are consumed,  
<sup>12</sup> and you say, “Oh, how I hated discipline,  
and my heart despised reproof!  
<sup>13</sup> I did not listen to the voice of my teachers  
or incline my ear to my instructors.  
<sup>14</sup> Now I am at the point of utter ruin  
in the public assembly.”

# January 27



## Genesis 29:1–35 (NRSV)

### *Jacob Meets Rachel*

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the people of the east. <sup>2</sup> As he looked, he saw a well in the field and three flocks of sheep lying there beside it; for out of that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the well's mouth was large, <sup>3</sup> and when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well, and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

<sup>4</sup> Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said, "We are from Haran." <sup>5</sup> He said to them, "Do you know Laban son of Nahor?" They said, "We do." <sup>6</sup> He said to them, "Is it well with him?" "Yes," they replied, "and here is his daughter Rachel, coming with the sheep." <sup>7</sup> He said, "Look, it is still broad daylight; it is not time for the animals to be

gathered together. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them." <sup>8</sup> But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

<sup>9</sup> While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she kept them. <sup>10</sup> Now when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of his mother's brother Laban, and the sheep of his mother's brother Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of his mother's brother Laban.

<sup>11</sup> Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and wept aloud. <sup>12</sup> And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father.

<sup>13</sup> When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things, <sup>14</sup> and Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone

and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

*Jacob Marries Laban's Daughters*

<sup>15</sup> Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?"

<sup>16</sup> Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

<sup>17</sup> Leah's eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. <sup>18</sup> Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."

<sup>19</sup> Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." <sup>20</sup> So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

<sup>21</sup> Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." <sup>22</sup> So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. <sup>23</sup> But in the evening

he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. <sup>24</sup> (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) <sup>25</sup> When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" <sup>26</sup> Laban said, "This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn.

<sup>27</sup> Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years."

<sup>28</sup> Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife. <sup>29</sup> (Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her maid.) <sup>30</sup> So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. He served Laban for another seven years.

<sup>31</sup> When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. <sup>32</sup> Leah conceived and bore a son, and she named him Reuben; for she said, "Because the LORD has looked

on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me.”

<sup>33</sup> She conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also”; and she named him Simeon. <sup>34</sup> Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, “Now this time my husband will be joined to me, because I have borne him three sons”; therefore he was named Levi. <sup>35</sup> She conceived again and bore a son, and said, “This time I will praise the LORD”; therefore she named him Judah; then she ceased bearing.

**Matthew 9:27-38 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals Two Blind Men*

<sup>27</sup> As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying loudly, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

<sup>28</sup> When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, “**Do you believe that I am able to do this?**” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.” <sup>29</sup> Then he touched their eyes and said, “**According to your faith let it be done to you.**” <sup>30</sup> And their

eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly ordered them, “**See that no one knows of this.**”

<sup>31</sup> But they went away and spread the news about him throughout that district.

*Jesus Heals One Who Was Mute*

<sup>32</sup> After they had gone away, a demoniac who was mute was brought to him.

<sup>33</sup> And when the demon had been cast out, the one who had been mute spoke; and the crowds were amazed and said, “Never has anything like this been seen in Israel.” <sup>34</sup> But the Pharisees said, “By the ruler of the demons he casts out the demons.”

*The Harvest Is Great, the Laborers Few*  
(Lk 10:2-3)

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

<sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples,  
“The harvest is plentiful, but  
the laborers are few;  
<sup>38</sup> therefore ask the Lord of the  
harvest to send out laborers  
into his harvest.”

**Psalm 12:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Help in Evil Times*

To the leader: according to The  
Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Help, O LORD, for there is  
no longer anyone who  
is godly;  
the faithful have  
disappeared from  
humankind.  
<sup>2</sup> They utter lies to each  
other;  
with flattering lips and a  
double heart they  
speak.  
<sup>3</sup> May the LORD cut off all  
flattering lips,  
the tongue that makes  
great boasts,  
<sup>4</sup> those who say, “With our  
tongues we will prevail;  
our lips are our own—  
who is our master?”  
<sup>5</sup> “Because the poor are  
despoiled, because the  
needy groan,  
I will now rise up,” says  
the LORD;

“I will place them in the  
safety for which they  
long.”

**Proverbs 5:15–21 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Drink water from your own  
cistern,  
flowing water from your  
own well.  
<sup>16</sup> Should your springs be  
scattered abroad,  
streams of water in the  
streets?  
<sup>17</sup> Let them be for yourself  
alone,  
and not for sharing with  
strangers.  
<sup>18</sup> Let your fountain be  
blessed,  
and rejoice in the wife of  
your youth,  
a lovely deer, a graceful  
doe.  
May her breasts satisfy  
you at all times;  
may you be intoxicated  
always by her love.  
<sup>20</sup> Why should you be  
intoxicated, my son, by  
another woman  
and embrace the bosom  
of an adulteress?  
<sup>21</sup> For human ways are under  
the eyes of the LORD,

and he examines all their paths.

## January 28



### Genesis 30:1–24 (NRSV)

When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister; and she said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I shall die!”<sup>2</sup> Jacob became very angry with Rachel and said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?”<sup>3</sup> Then she said, “Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, that she may bear upon my knees and that I too may have children through her.”<sup>4</sup> So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife; and Jacob went in to her.<sup>5</sup> And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son.<sup>6</sup> Then Rachel said, “God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son”; therefore she named him Dan.<sup>7</sup> Rachel’s maid Bilhah conceived again

and bore Jacob a second son.

<sup>8</sup> Then Rachel said, “With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed”; so she named him Naphtali.

<sup>9</sup> When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife.

<sup>10</sup> Then Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son.<sup>11</sup> And Leah said, “Good fortune!” so she named him Gad.<sup>12</sup> Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.<sup>13</sup> And Leah said, “Happy am I! For the women will call me happy”; so she named him Asher.

<sup>14</sup> In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, “Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes.”

<sup>15</sup> But she said to her, “Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son’s mandrakes also?” Rachel said, “Then he may lie with you tonight for your son’s mandrakes.”<sup>16</sup> When Jacob came from the field in the

evening, Leah went out to meet him, and said, "You must come in to me; for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. <sup>17</sup> And God heeded Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. <sup>18</sup> Leah said, "God has given me my hire because I gave my maid to my husband"; so she named him Issachar. <sup>19</sup> And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. <sup>20</sup> Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good dowry; now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons"; so she named him Zebulun. <sup>21</sup> Afterwards she bore a daughter, and named her Dinah.

<sup>22</sup> Then God remembered Rachel, and God heeded her and opened her womb. <sup>23</sup> She conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach"; <sup>24</sup> and she named him Joseph, saying, "May the LORD add to me another son!"

**Matthew 10:1--4** (NRSV)

*The Twelve Apostles*  
(Mk 3:13–19a; Lk 6:12–16)

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

**Psalm 12:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> The promises of the LORD  
are promises that are  
pure,  
silver refined in a furnace  
on the ground,  
purified seven times.  
<sup>7</sup> You, O LORD, will protect  
us;  
you will guard us from  
this generation forever.  
<sup>8</sup> On every side the wicked  
prowl,  
as vileness is exalted  
among humankind.



**Proverbs 5:22–23 (NRSV)**

- <sup>22</sup> The iniquities of the wicked ensnare them, and they are caught in the toils of their sin.
- <sup>23</sup> They die for lack of discipline, and because of their great folly they are lost.

**January 29**



**Genesis 30:25–31:16 (NRSV)**

*Jacob Prospers at Laban's Expense*

<sup>25</sup> When Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country. <sup>26</sup> Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know very well the service I have given you." <sup>27</sup> But Laban said to him, "If you will allow me to say so, I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you; <sup>28</sup> name your wages, and I will

give it." <sup>29</sup> Jacob said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you, and how your cattle have fared with me. <sup>30</sup> For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly; and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. But now when shall I provide for my own household also?" <sup>31</sup> He said, "What shall I give you?" Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything; if you will do this for me, I will again feed your flock and keep it: <sup>32</sup> let me pass through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep and every black lamb, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and such shall be my wages. <sup>33</sup> So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come to look into my wages with you. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, shall be counted stolen." <sup>34</sup> Laban said, "Good! Let it be as you have said." <sup>35</sup> But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that



were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in charge of his sons; <sup>36</sup> and he set a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob was pasturing the rest of Laban's flock.

<sup>37</sup> Then Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane, and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white of the rods. <sup>38</sup> He set the rods that he had peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs, that is, the watering places, where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred when they came to drink, <sup>39</sup> the flocks bred in front of the rods, and so the flocks produced young that were striped, speckled, and spotted. <sup>40</sup> Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and the completely black animals in the flock of Laban; and he put his own droves apart, and did not put them with Laban's flock. <sup>41</sup> Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob laid the rods in the troughs before the eyes

of the flock, that they might breed among the rods, <sup>42</sup> but for the feebler of the flock he did not lay them there; so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. <sup>43</sup> Thus the man grew exceedingly rich, and had large flocks, and male and female slaves, and camels and donkeys.

*Jacob Flees with  
Family and Flocks*

**31** Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, "Jacob has taken all that was our father's; he has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father." <sup>2</sup> And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him as favorably as he did before. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your ancestors and to your kindred, and I will be with you." <sup>4</sup> So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was, <sup>5</sup> and said to them, "I see that your father does not regard me as favorably as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. <sup>6</sup> You know that I have served your father with all my strength;

<sup>7</sup> yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not permit him to harm me. <sup>8</sup> If he said, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore speckled; and if he said, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore striped. <sup>9</sup> Thus God has taken away the livestock of your father, and given them to me.

<sup>10</sup> During the mating of the flock I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats that leaped upon the flock were striped, speckled, and mottled. <sup>11</sup> Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am!' <sup>12</sup> And he said, 'Look up and see that all the goats that leap on the flock are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. <sup>13</sup> I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and return to the land of your birth.' " <sup>14</sup> Then Rachel and Leah answered him, "Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house?

<sup>15</sup> Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has been using up the money given for us. <sup>16</sup> All the property that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children; now then, do whatever God has said to you."

**Matthew 10:5-23 (NRSV)**

*The Mission of the Twelve*  
(Mk 6:6b—13; Lk 9:1—6)

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' <sup>8</sup> Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. <sup>9</sup> Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, <sup>10</sup> no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. <sup>11</sup> Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay

there until you leave. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup> If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

#### *Coming Persecutions*

*(Mk 13:9–13; Lk 21:12–17)*

<sup>16</sup> “See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

<sup>17</sup> Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; <sup>20</sup> for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through

you. <sup>21</sup> Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; <sup>22</sup> and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

#### **Psalm 13:1-4 (NRSV)**

##### *Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?
- <sup>2</sup> How long must I bear pain in my soul,  
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?  
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
- <sup>3</sup> Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!  
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,
- <sup>4</sup> and my enemy will say, “I have prevailed”;

my foes will rejoice  
because I am shaken.

**Proverbs 6:1–5 (NRSV)**

*Practical Admonitions*

- <sup>1</sup> My child, if you have  
    given your pledge to  
    your neighbor,  
    if you have bound  
    yourself to another,  
<sup>2</sup> you are snared by the  
    utterance of your lips,  
    caught by the words of  
    your mouth.  
<sup>3</sup> So do this, my child, and  
    save yourself,  
    for you have come into  
    your neighbor's power:  
    go, hurry, and plead with  
    your neighbor.  
<sup>4</sup> Give your eyes no sleep  
    and your eyelids no  
    slumber;  
<sup>5</sup> save yourself like a gazelle  
    from the hunter,  
    like a bird from the hand  
    of the fowler.

**January 30**



**Genesis 31:17–55 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> So Jacob arose, and set his children and his wives on camels; <sup>18</sup> and he drove away all his livestock, all the property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

<sup>19</sup> Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father's household gods. <sup>20</sup> And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. <sup>21</sup> So he fled with all that he had; starting out he crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

*Laban Overtakes Jacob*

<sup>22</sup> On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled. <sup>23</sup> So he took his kinsfolk with him and pursued him for seven days until he caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead. <sup>24</sup> But God came to

Laban the Aramean in a dream by night, and said to him, "Take heed that you say not a word to Jacob, either good or bad."

<sup>25</sup> Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsfolk camped in the hill country of Gilead. <sup>26</sup> Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done? You have deceived me, and carried away my daughters like captives of the sword. <sup>27</sup> Why did you flee secretly and deceive me and not tell me? I would have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre. <sup>28</sup> And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? What you have done is foolish. <sup>29</sup> It is in my power to do you harm; but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Take heed that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.' <sup>30</sup> Even though you had to go because you longed greatly for your father's house, why did you steal my gods?" <sup>31</sup> Jacob answered Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that

you would take your daughters from me by force.

<sup>32</sup> But anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsfolk, point out what I have that is yours, and take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the gods.

<sup>33</sup> So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two maids, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent, and entered Rachel's. <sup>34</sup> Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. Laban felt all about in the tent, but did not find them. <sup>35</sup> And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me." So he searched, but did not find the household gods.

<sup>36</sup> Then Jacob became angry, and upbraided Laban. Jacob said to Laban, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me?" <sup>37</sup> Although you have felt about through all my goods, what have you found of all

your household goods? Set it here before my kinsfolk and your kinsfolk, so that they may decide between us two.

<sup>38</sup> These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks.

<sup>39</sup> That which was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it myself; of my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. <sup>40</sup> It was like this with me: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. <sup>41</sup> These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. <sup>42</sup> If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night.”

### *Laban and Jacob Make a Covenant*

<sup>43</sup> Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, “The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do today about these daughters of mine, or about their children whom they have borne? <sup>44</sup> Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I; and let it be a witness between you and me.”

<sup>45</sup> So Jacob took a stone, and set it up as a pillar. <sup>46</sup> And Jacob said to his kinsfolk, “Gather stones,” and they took stones, and made a heap; and they ate there by the heap. <sup>47</sup> Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. <sup>48</sup> Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me today.” Therefore he called it Galeed, <sup>49</sup> and the pillar Mizpah, for he said, “The LORD watch between you and me, when we are absent one from the other. <sup>50</sup> If you ill-treat my daughters, or if you take wives in addition to my daughters, though no one else is with us, remember that God

is witness between you and me.”

<sup>51</sup> Then Laban said to Jacob, “See this heap and see the pillar, which I have set between you and me. <sup>52</sup> This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. <sup>53</sup> May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor”—the God of their father—“judge between us.” So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac, <sup>54</sup> and Jacob offered a sacrifice on the height and called his kinsfolk to eat bread; and they ate bread and tarried all night in the hill country.

<sup>55</sup> Early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them; then he departed and returned home.

**Matthew 10:24-39** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> “A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup> it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the

master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

*Whom to Fear*

(Lk 12:2–7)

<sup>26</sup> “So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup> What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup> Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup> And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup> So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup> “Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup> but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

*Not Peace, but a Sword*

(Lk 12:51–53; 14:26–27)

<sup>34</sup> “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

<sup>35</sup> For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

<sup>36</sup> and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

<sup>37</sup> Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;

<sup>38</sup> and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup> Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

**Psalm 13:5-6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup> I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

**Proverbs 6:6–11** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Go to the ant, you lazybones; consider its ways, and be wise.

<sup>7</sup> Without having any chief or officer or ruler,

<sup>8</sup> it prepares its food in summer, and gathers its sustenance in harvest.

<sup>9</sup> How long will you lie there, O lazybones?

When will you rise from your sleep?

<sup>10</sup> A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,

<sup>11</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want, like an armed warrior.



# January 31



## Genesis 32:1–12 (NRSV)

Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him; <sup>2</sup>and when Jacob saw them he said, “This is God’s camp!” So he called that place Mahanaim.

### *Jacob Sends Presents to Appease Esau*

<sup>3</sup>Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, <sup>4</sup>instructing them, “Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, ‘I have lived with Laban as an alien, and stayed until now; <sup>5</sup>and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.’ ”

<sup>6</sup>The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with

him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, <sup>8</sup>thinking, “If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape.”

<sup>9</sup>And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,’ <sup>10</sup>I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies.

<sup>11</sup>Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. <sup>12</sup>Yet you have said, ‘I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number.’ ”

## Matthew 10:40 – 11:6 (NRSV)

*Rewards*  
(Mk 9:41)

<sup>40</sup> “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; <sup>42</sup> and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

**11** Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.

### *Messengers from John the Baptist*

(Lk 7:18–23)

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what

you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

### **Psalm 14:1-6** (NRSV)

#### *Denunciation of Godlessness* (Ps 53:1–6)

To the leader. Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Fools say in their hearts,  
“There is no God.”  
They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds;  
there is no one who does good.
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise,  
who seek after God.
- <sup>3</sup> They have all gone astray,  
they are all alike perverse;  
there is no one who does good,  
no, not one.
- <sup>4</sup> Have they no knowledge,  
all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread,  
and do not call upon the LORD?

5 There they shall be in great  
terror,  
for God is with the  
company of the  
righteous.  
6 You would confound the  
plans of the poor,  
but the LORD is their  
refuge.

**Proverbs 6:12–15 (NRSV)**

12 A scoundrel and a villain  
goes around with  
crooked speech,  
13 winking the eyes, shuffling  
the feet,  
pointing the fingers,  
14 with perverted mind  
devising evil,  
continually sowing  
discord;  
15 on such a one calamity will  
descend suddenly;  
in a moment, damage beyond  
repair.

## February 1



**Genesis 32:13-33:20 (NRSV)**

13 Jacob stayed where he  
was for the night. Then he  
selected these gifts from his  
possessions to present to his  
brother, Esau: <sup>14</sup> 200 female  
goats, 20 male goats, 200  
ewes, 20 rams, <sup>15</sup> 30 female  
camels with their young, 40  
cows, 10 bulls, 20 female  
donkeys, and 10 male  
donkeys. <sup>16</sup> He divided these  
animals into herds and  
assigned each to different  
servants. Then he told his  
servants, “Go ahead of me  
with the animals, but keep  
some distance between the  
herds.”

<sup>17</sup> He gave these  
instructions to the men  
leading the first group: “When  
my brother, Esau, meets you,  
he will ask, ‘Whose servants  
are you? Where are you  
going? Who owns these  
animals?’ <sup>18</sup> You must reply,  
‘They belong to your servant  
Jacob, but they are a gift for

his master Esau. Look, he is coming right behind us.’ ”

<sup>19</sup> Jacob gave the same instructions to the second and third herdsmen and to all who followed behind the herds: “You must say the same thing to Esau when you meet him.

<sup>20</sup> And be sure to say, ‘Look, your servant Jacob is right behind us.’ ”

Jacob thought, “I will try to appease him by sending gifts ahead of me. When I see him in person, perhaps he will be friendly to me.” <sup>21</sup> So the gifts were sent on ahead, while Jacob himself spent that night in the camp.

### *Jacob Wrestles with God*

<sup>22</sup> During the night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two servant wives, and his eleven sons and crossed the Jabbok River with them.

<sup>23</sup> After taking them to the other side, he sent over all his possessions.

<sup>24</sup> This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break.

<sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he would not win the match, he

touched Jacob’s hip and wrenched it out of its socket.

<sup>26</sup> Then the man said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!”

But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

<sup>27</sup> “What is your name?” the man asked.

He replied, “Jacob.”

<sup>28</sup> “Your name will no longer be Jacob,” the man told him. “From now on you will be called <sup>a</sup>Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won.”

<sup>29</sup> “Please tell me your name,” Jacob said.

“Why do you want to know my name?” the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there.

<sup>30</sup> Jacob named the place Peniel (which means “face of God”), for he said, “I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared.” <sup>31</sup> The sun was rising as Jacob left <sup>b</sup>Peniel, and he was limping because of the injury to his hip. <sup>32</sup> (Even today the people

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<sup>a</sup> That is *The one who strives with God or God strives*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>b</sup> That is *the Face of God*

of Israel don't eat the tendon near the hip socket because of what happened that night when the man strained the tendon of Jacob's hip.)

*Jacob and Esau Make Peace*

**33** Then Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming with his 400 men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and his two servant wives. <sup>2</sup> He put the servant wives and their children at the front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. <sup>3</sup> Then Jacob went on ahead. As he approached his brother, he bowed to the ground seven times before him. <sup>4</sup> Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. And they both wept.

<sup>5</sup> Then Esau looked at the women and children and asked, "Who are these people with you?"

"These are the children God has graciously given to me, your servant," Jacob replied. <sup>6</sup> Then the servant wives came forward with their children and bowed before him. <sup>7</sup> Next came Leah with

her children, and they bowed before him. Finally, Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed before him.

<sup>8</sup> "And what were all the flocks and herds I met as I came?" Esau asked.

Jacob replied, "They are a gift, my lord, to ensure your friendship."

<sup>9</sup> "My brother, I have plenty," Esau answered. "Keep what you have for yourself."

<sup>10</sup> But Jacob insisted, "No, if I have found favor with you, please accept this gift from me. And what a relief to see your friendly smile. It is like seeing the face of God!

<sup>11</sup> Please take this gift I have brought you, for God has been very gracious to me. I have more than enough." And because Jacob insisted, Esau finally accepted the gift.

<sup>12</sup> "Well," Esau said, "let's be going. I will lead the way."

<sup>13</sup> But Jacob replied, "You can see, my lord, that some of the children are very young, and the flocks and herds have their young, too. If they are driven too hard, even for one day, all the animals could die.

<sup>14</sup> Please, my lord, go ahead of

your servant. We will follow slowly, at a pace that is comfortable for the livestock and the children. I will meet you at Seir.”

<sup>15</sup> “All right,” Esau said, “but at least let me assign some of my men to guide and protect you.”

Jacob responded, “That’s not necessary. It’s enough that you’ve received me warmly, my lord!”

<sup>16</sup> So Esau turned around and started back to Seir that same day. <sup>17</sup> Jacob, on the other hand, traveled on to Succoth. There he built himself a house and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place was named Succoth (which means “shelters”).

<sup>18</sup> Later, having traveled all the way from Paddan-aram, Jacob arrived safely at the town of Shechem, in the land of Canaan. There he set up camp outside the town.

<sup>19</sup> Jacob bought the plot of land where he camped from the family of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for 100 pieces of silver. <sup>20</sup> And there he built an altar and named it El-Elohe-Israel.

### **Matthew 11:7-19** (NRSV)

*Jesus Praises John the Baptist*  
(Lk 7:24–35)

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “**What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind?**” <sup>8</sup> **What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces.** <sup>9</sup> **What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.** <sup>10</sup> **This is the one about whom it is written,**

**‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’**

<sup>11</sup> **Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.** <sup>12</sup> **From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.** <sup>13</sup> **For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John came;** <sup>14</sup> **and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to**

come. <sup>15</sup> Let anyone with ears listen!

<sup>16</sup> “But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup> ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

<sup>18</sup> For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; <sup>19</sup> the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

**Psalms 14:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

**Proverbs 6:16–19** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> There are six things that the LORD hates,

seven that are an abomination to him: <sup>17</sup> haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup> a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that hurry to run to evil, <sup>19</sup> a lying witness who testifies falsely, and one who sows discord in a family.

**February 2**



**Genesis 34:1-31** (NRSV)

*Revenge against Shechem*  
One day Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah, went to visit some of the young women who lived in the area. <sup>2</sup> But when the local prince, Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, saw Dinah, he seized her and raped her. <sup>3</sup> But then he fell in love with her, and he tried to win her affection with

tender words. <sup>4</sup> He said to his father, Hamor, “Get me this young girl. I want to marry her.”

<sup>5</sup> Soon Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled his daughter, Dinah. But since his sons were out in the fields herding his livestock, he said nothing until they returned.

<sup>6</sup> Hamor, Shechem’s father, came to discuss the matter with Jacob. <sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Jacob’s sons had come in from the field as soon as they heard what had happened. They were shocked and furious that their sister had been raped. Shechem had done a disgraceful thing against Jacob’s family, something that should never be done.

<sup>8</sup> Hamor tried to speak with Jacob and his sons. “My son Shechem is truly in love with your daughter,” he said. “Please let him marry her. <sup>9</sup> In fact, let’s arrange other marriages, too. You give us your daughters for our sons, and we will give you our daughters for your sons. <sup>10</sup> And you may live among us; the land is open to you! Settle here and trade with us. And

feel free to buy property in the area.”

<sup>11</sup> Then Shechem himself spoke to Dinah’s father and brothers. “Please be kind to me, and let me marry her,” he begged. “I will give you whatever you ask. <sup>12</sup> No matter what dowry or gift you demand, I will gladly pay it— just give me the girl as my wife.”

<sup>13</sup> But since Shechem had defiled their sister, Dinah, Jacob’s sons responded deceitfully to Shechem and his father, Hamor. <sup>14</sup> They said to them, “We couldn’t possibly allow this, because you’re not circumcised. It would be a disgrace for our sister to marry a man like you! <sup>15</sup> But here is a solution. If every man among you will be circumcised like we are, <sup>16</sup> then we will give you our daughters, and we’ll take your daughters for ourselves. We will live among you and become one people. <sup>17</sup> But if you don’t agree to be circumcised, we will take her and be on our way.”

<sup>18</sup> Hamor and his son Shechem agreed to their proposal. <sup>19</sup> Shechem wasted



no time in acting on this request, for he wanted Jacob's daughter desperately. Shechem was a highly respected member of his family,<sup>20</sup> and he went with his father, Hamor, to present this proposal to the leaders at the town gate.

<sup>21</sup> "These men are our friends," they said. "Let's invite them to live here among us and trade freely. Look, the land is large enough to hold them. We can take their daughters as wives and let them marry ours."<sup>22</sup> But they will consider staying here and becoming one people with us only if all of our men are circumcised, just as they are.

<sup>23</sup> But if we do this, all their livestock and possessions will eventually be ours. Come, let's agree to their terms and let them settle here among us."

<sup>24</sup> So all the men in the town council agreed with Hamor and Shechem, and every male in the town was circumcised.<sup>25</sup> But three days later, when their wounds were still sore, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's full brothers, took

their swords and entered the town without opposition. Then they slaughtered every male there,<sup>26</sup> including Hamor and his son Shechem. They killed them with their swords, then took Dinah from Shechem's house and returned to their camp.

<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile, the rest of Jacob's sons arrived. Finding the men slaughtered, they plundered the town because their sister had been defiled there.<sup>28</sup> They seized all the flocks and herds and donkeys—everything they could lay their hands on, both inside the town and outside in the fields.<sup>29</sup> They looted all their wealth and plundered their houses. They also took all their little children and wives and led them away as captives.

<sup>30</sup> Afterward Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have ruined me! You've made me stink among all the people of this land—among all the Canaanites and Perizzites. We are so few that they will join forces and crush us. I will be ruined, and my entire household will be wiped out!"

<sup>31</sup> “But why should we let him treat our sister like a prostitute?” they retorted angrily.

**Matthew 11:20-30** (NRSV)  
*Woes to Unrepentant Cities*  
(Gen 19:12–14; Lk 10:13–15)

<sup>20</sup> Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent. <sup>21</sup> “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>22</sup> But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. <sup>23</sup> And you, Capernaum,

will you be exalted to heaven?

No, you will be brought down to Hades.

For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. <sup>24</sup> But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you.”

*Jesus Thanks His Father*  
(Lk 10:21–22)

<sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup> yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup> All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup> “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

**Psalm 15:1-5** (NRSV)

*Who Shall Abide in God’s Sanctuary?*

A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, who may abide in your tent?  
Who may dwell on your holy hill?

2 Those who walk  
blamelessly, and do  
what is right,  
and speak the truth from  
their heart;  
3 who do not slander with  
their tongue,  
and do no evil to their  
friends,  
nor take up a reproach  
against their  
neighbors;  
4 in whose eyes the wicked  
are despised,  
but who honor those  
who fear the LORD;  
who stand by their oath  
even to their hurt;  
5 who do not lend money at  
interest,  
and do not take a bribe  
against the innocent.  
Those who do these things  
shall never be moved.

**Proverbs 6:20–26 (NRSV)**

20 My child, keep your  
father's  
commandment,  
and do not forsake your  
mother's teaching.  
21 Bind them upon your heart  
always;  
tie them around your  
neck.

22 When you walk, they will  
lead you;  
when you lie down, they  
will watch over you;  
and when you awake,  
they will talk with you.  
23 For the commandment is a  
lamp and the teaching  
a light,  
and the reproofs of  
discipline are the way  
of life,  
24 to preserve you from the  
wife of another,  
from the smooth tongue  
of the adulteress.  
25 Do not desire her beauty in  
your heart,  
and do not let her  
capture you with her  
eyelashes;  
26 for a prostitute's fee is  
only a loaf of bread,  
but the wife of another  
stalks a man's very life.

## February 3



**Genesis 35:1-36:8** (NRSV)

### *Jacob's Return to Bethel*

Then God said to Jacob, "Get ready and move to Bethel and settle there. Build an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother, Esau."

<sup>2</sup> So Jacob told everyone in his household, "Get rid of all your pagan idols, purify yourselves, and put on clean clothing." <sup>3</sup> We are now going to Bethel, where I will build an altar to the God who answered my prayers when I was in distress. He has been with me wherever I have gone."

<sup>4</sup> So they gave Jacob all their pagan idols and earrings, and he buried them under the great tree near Shechem. <sup>5</sup> As they set out, a terror from God spread over the people in all the towns of that area, so no one attacked Jacob's family.

<sup>6</sup> Eventually, Jacob and his household arrived at Luz (also called Bethel) in Canaan.

<sup>7</sup> Jacob built an altar there and

named the place El-bethel (which means "God of Bethel"), because God had appeared to him there when he was fleeing from his brother, Esau.

<sup>8</sup> Soon after this, Rebekah's old nurse, Deborah, died. She was buried beneath the oak tree in the valley below Bethel. Ever since, the tree has been called Allon-bacuth (which means "oak of weeping").

<sup>9</sup> Now that Jacob had returned from Paddan-aram, God appeared to him again at Bethel. God blessed him, <sup>10</sup> saying, "Your name is Jacob, but you will not be called Jacob any longer. From now on your name will be Israel." So God renamed him Israel.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, "I am El-Shaddai—'God Almighty.' Be fruitful and multiply. You will become a great nation, even many nations. Kings will be among your descendants!

<sup>12</sup> And I will give you the land I once gave to Abraham and Isaac. Yes, I will give it to you and your descendants after you." <sup>13</sup> Then God went up

from the place where he had spoken to Jacob.

<sup>14</sup> Jacob set up a stone pillar to mark the place where God had spoken to him. Then he poured wine over it as an offering to God and anointed the pillar with olive oil. <sup>15</sup> And Jacob named the place Bethel (which means “house of God”), because God had spoken to him there.

*The Deaths of Rachel and Isaac*

<sup>16</sup> Leaving Bethel, Jacob and his clan moved on toward Ephrath. But Rachel went into labor while they were still some distance away. Her labor pains were intense. <sup>17</sup> After a very hard delivery, the midwife finally exclaimed, “Don’t be afraid—you have another son!” <sup>18</sup> Rachel was about to die, but with her last breath she named the baby Ben-oni (which means “son of my sorrow”). The baby’s father, however, called him Benjamin (which means “son of my right hand”). <sup>19</sup> So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is,

Bethlehem). <sup>20</sup> Jacob set up a stone monument over Rachel’s grave, and it can be seen there to this day.

<sup>21</sup> Then Jacob [Israel] traveled on and camped beyond Migdal-eder. <sup>22</sup> While he was living there, Reuben had intercourse with Bilhah [Rachel’s servant], his father’s concubine, and Jacob soon heard about it.

These are the names of the twelve sons of Jacob:

<sup>23</sup> The sons of Leah were Reuben (Jacob’s oldest son), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

<sup>24</sup> The sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.

<sup>25</sup> The sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s servant, were Dan and Naphtali.

<sup>26</sup> The sons of Zilpah, Leah’s servant, were Gad and Asher.

These are the names of the sons who were born to Jacob at Paddan-aram.

<sup>27</sup> So Jacob returned to his father, Isaac, in Mamre, which is near Kiriath-arba (now called Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had both lived as foreigners. <sup>28</sup> Isaac

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<sup>c</sup> See Matthew 2:16-18

lived for 180 years. <sup>29</sup> Then he breathed his last and died at a ripe old age, joining his ancestors in death. And his sons, Esau and Jacob, buried him.

### *Descendants of Esau*

**36** This is the account of the descendants of Esau (also known as Edom). <sup>2</sup> Esau married two young women from Canaan: Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite; and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite. <sup>3</sup> He also married his cousin Basemath, who was the daughter of Ishmael and the sister of Nebaioth. <sup>4</sup> Adah gave birth to a son named Eliphaz for Esau. Basemath gave birth to a son named Reuel. <sup>5</sup> Oholibamah gave birth to sons named Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. All these sons were born to Esau in the land of Canaan.

<sup>6</sup> Esau took his wives, his children, and his entire household, along with his livestock and cattle—all the wealth he had acquired in the land of Canaan—and moved away from his brother, Jacob.

<sup>7</sup> There was not enough land to support them both because of all the livestock and possessions they had acquired. <sup>8</sup> So Esau (also known as Edom) settled in the hill country of Seir.

### **Matthew 12:1-8** (NRSV) *Plucking Grain on the Sabbath* (Mk 2:23–28; Lk 6:1–5)

<sup>1</sup> At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. <sup>2</sup> When the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath.” <sup>3</sup> He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry?”

<sup>4</sup> He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests. <sup>5</sup> Or have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple break the sabbath and yet are guiltless? <sup>6</sup> I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. <sup>7</sup> But if you had

known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.<sup>8</sup> For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath."

**Psalms 16:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Song of Trust and*

*Security in God*

A <sup>d</sup>Miktam of David.

- 1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
- 2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord;  
I have no good apart from you."
- 3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,  
in whom is all my delight.
- 4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;

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<sup>d</sup> A Hebrew word of unknown meaning found in the headings of Psalms 16 and 56–60. In modern Hebrew, the word has come to mean "epigram" (a brief, interesting, memorable, and sometimes surprising or satirical statement), and numerous collections of Hebrew epigrams have used that word in their titles.

their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out  
or take their names upon my lips.

**Proverbs 6:27–35 (NRSV)**

- 27 Can fire be carried in the bosom  
without burning one's clothes?
- 28 Or can one walk on hot coals  
without scorching the feet?
- 29 So is he who sleeps with his neighbor's wife;  
no one who touches her will go unpunished.
- 30 Thieves are not despised who steal only  
to satisfy their appetite when they are hungry.
- 31 Yet if they are caught, they will pay sevenfold;  
they will forfeit all the goods of their house.
- 32 But he who commits adultery has no sense;  
he who does it destroys himself.
- 33 He will get wounds and dishonor,  
and his disgrace will not be wiped away.

- <sup>34</sup> For jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he shows no restraint when he takes revenge.
- <sup>35</sup> He will accept no compensation, and refuses a bribe no matter how great.

## February 4



### Genesis 36:9-43 (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> This is the account of Esau's descendants, the Edomites, who lived in the hill country of Seir.

- <sup>10</sup> These are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz, the son of Esau's wife Adah; and Reuel, the son of Esau's wife Basemath.
- <sup>11</sup> The descendants of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.
- <sup>12</sup> Timna, the concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz, gave birth to a son named Amalek. These are the

descendants of Esau's wife Adah.

- <sup>13</sup> The descendants of Reuel were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These are the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.
- <sup>14</sup> Esau also had sons through Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon. Their names were Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.
- <sup>15</sup> These are the descendants of Esau who became the leaders of various clans: The descendants of Esau's oldest son, Eliphaz, became the leaders of the clans of Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, <sup>16</sup> Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. These are the clan leaders in the land of Edom who descended from Eliphaz. All these were descendants of Esau's wife Adah.
- <sup>17</sup> The descendants of Esau's son Reuel became the leaders of the clans of Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These are the clan leaders in the land of Edom who descended



from Reuel. All these were descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.

<sup>18</sup> The descendants of Esau and his wife Oholibamah became the leaders of the clans of Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These are the clan leaders who descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

<sup>19</sup> These are the clans descended from Esau (also known as Edom), identified by their clan leaders.

#### *Original Peoples of Edom*

<sup>20</sup> These are the names of the tribes that descended from Seir the Horite. They lived in the land of Edom: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, <sup>21</sup> Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the Horite clan leaders, the descendants of Seir, who lived in the land of Edom.

<sup>22</sup> The descendants of Lotan were Hori and Hemam. Lotan's sister was named Timna.

<sup>23</sup> The descendants of Shobal were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

<sup>24</sup> The descendants of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah. (This is the Anah who discovered the hot springs in the wilderness while he was grazing his father's donkeys.)

<sup>25</sup> The descendants of Anah were his son, Dishon, and his daughter, Oholibamah.

<sup>26</sup> The descendants of Dishon were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.

<sup>27</sup> The descendants of Ezer were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.

<sup>28</sup> The descendants of Dishan were Uz and Aran.

<sup>29</sup> So these were the leaders of the Horite clans: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, <sup>30</sup> Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. The Horite clans are named after their clan leaders, who lived in the land of Seir.

#### *Rulers of Edom*

<sup>31</sup> These are the kings who ruled in the land of Edom before any king ruled over the Israelites:

<sup>32</sup> Bela son of Beor, who ruled in Edom from his city of Dinhabah.

- <sup>33</sup> When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah became king in his place.
- <sup>34</sup> When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites became king in his place.
- <sup>35</sup> When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad became king in his place and ruled from the city of Avith. He was the one who defeated the Midianites in the land of Moab.
- <sup>36</sup> When Hadad died, Samlah from the city of Masrekah became king in his place.
- <sup>37</sup> When Samlah died, Shaul from the city of Rehoboth-on-the-River became king in his place.
- <sup>38</sup> When Shaul died, Baal-hanan son of Acbor became king in his place.
- <sup>39</sup> When Baal-hanan son of Acbor died, Hadad became king in his place and ruled from the city of Pau. His wife was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred and granddaughter of Mezahab.

<sup>40</sup> These are the names of the leaders of the clans descended from Esau, who

lived in the places named for them: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, <sup>41</sup> Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, <sup>42</sup> Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, <sup>43</sup> Magdiel, and Iram. These are the leaders of the clans of Edom, listed according to their settlements in the land they occupied. They all descended from Esau, the ancestor of the Edomites.

**Matthew 12:9-21** (NRSV)

*The Man with  
a Withered Hand*  
(Mk 3:1-6; Lk 6:6-11)

<sup>9</sup> He left that place and entered their synagogue; <sup>10</sup> a man was there with a withered hand, and they asked him, "Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. <sup>11</sup> He said to them, "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out?" <sup>12</sup> How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." <sup>13</sup> Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored, as sound as the other. <sup>14</sup> But the Pharisees went out and conspired

against him, how to destroy him.

*God's Chosen Servant*

<sup>15</sup> When Jesus became aware of this, he departed. Many crowds followed him, and he cured all of them, <sup>16</sup> and he ordered them not to make him known. <sup>17</sup> This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

<sup>18</sup> "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him,

and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

<sup>19</sup> He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.

<sup>20</sup> He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick until he brings justice to victory.

<sup>21</sup> And in his name the Gentiles will hope."

**Psalm 16:5-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

<sup>6</sup> The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

<sup>7</sup> I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

<sup>8</sup> I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

**Proverbs 7:1-5 (NRSV)**

*The False Attractions of Adultery*

<sup>1</sup> My child, keep my words and store up my commandments with you;

<sup>2</sup> keep my commandments and live, keep my teachings as the apple of your eye;

<sup>3</sup> bind them on your fingers, write them on the tablet of your heart.

<sup>4</sup> Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"

and call insight your  
intimate friend,  
<sup>5</sup> that they may keep you  
from the loose woman,  
from the adulteress  
with her smooth  
words.

## February 5



**Genesis 37:1-36** (NRSV)

### *Joseph's Dreams*

So Jacob settled again in the land of Canaan, where his father had lived as a foreigner.

<sup>2</sup>This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father's flocks. He worked for his half brothers, the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing.

<sup>3</sup>Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one

day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe. <sup>4</sup>But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn't say a kind word to him.

<sup>5</sup>One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. <sup>6</sup>"Listen to this dream," he said. <sup>7</sup>"We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!"

<sup>8</sup>His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them.

<sup>9</sup>Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. "Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"

<sup>10</sup>This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father

scolded him. "What kind of dream is that?" he asked. "Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?"<sup>11</sup> But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant.

<sup>12</sup> Soon after this, Joseph's brothers went to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem.

<sup>13</sup> When they had been gone for some time, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are pasturing the sheep at Shechem. Get ready, and I will send you to them."

"I'm ready to go," Joseph replied.

<sup>14</sup> "Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are getting along," Jacob said. "Then come back and bring me a report." So Jacob sent him on his way, and Joseph traveled to Shechem from their home in the valley of Hebron.

<sup>15</sup> When he arrived there, a man from the area noticed him wandering around the countryside. "What are you looking for?" he asked.

<sup>16</sup> "I'm looking for my brothers," Joseph replied. "Do you know where they are pasturing their sheep?"

<sup>17</sup> "Yes," the man told him. "They have moved on from here, but I heard them say, 'Let's go on to Dothan.'" So Joseph followed his brothers to Dothan and found them there.

### *Joseph Sold into Slavery*

<sup>18</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him.<sup>19</sup> "Here comes the dreamer!" they said.<sup>20</sup> "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!"

<sup>21</sup> But when Reuben heard of their scheme, he came to Joseph's rescue. "Let's not kill him," he said.<sup>22</sup> "Why should we shed any blood? Let's just throw him into this empty cistern here in the wilderness. Then he'll die without our laying a hand on him." Reuben was secretly planning to

rescue Joseph and return him to his father.

<sup>23</sup> So when Joseph arrived, his brothers ripped off the beautiful robe he was wearing.

<sup>24</sup> Then they grabbed him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it.

<sup>25</sup> Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels in the distance coming toward them. It was a group of Ishmaelite traders taking a load of gum, balm, and aromatic resin from Gilead down to Egypt.

<sup>26</sup> Judah said to his brothers, “What will we gain by killing our brother? We’d have to cover up the crime.

<sup>27</sup> Instead of hurting him, let’s sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother—our own flesh and blood!” And his brothers agreed. <sup>28</sup> So when the Ishmaelites, who were Midianite traders, came by, Joseph’s brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver. And the traders took him to Egypt.

<sup>29</sup> Some time later, Reuben returned to get Joseph out of the cistern. When he discovered that Joseph was missing, he tore his clothes in grief. <sup>30</sup> Then he went back to his brothers and lamented, “The boy is gone! What will I do now?”

<sup>31</sup> Then the brothers killed a young goat and dipped Joseph’s robe in its blood.

<sup>32</sup> They sent the beautiful robe to their father with this message: “Look at what we found. Doesn’t this robe belong to your son?”

<sup>33</sup> Their father recognized it immediately. “Yes,” he said, “it is my son’s robe. A wild animal must have eaten him. Joseph has clearly been torn to pieces!” <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob tore his clothes and dressed himself in burlap. He mourned deeply for his son for a long time. <sup>35</sup> His family all tried to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. “I will go to my grave mourning for my son,” he would say, and then he would weep.

<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, the Midianite traders arrived in Egypt, where they sold Joseph

to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Potiphar was captain of the palace guard.

**Matthew 12:22-32** (NRSV)

*Jesus and Beelzebul*

(Mk 3:19b—30; Lk 11:14—23)

<sup>22</sup> Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see.

<sup>23</sup> All the crowds were amazed and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” <sup>24</sup> But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, that this fellow casts out the demons.”

<sup>25</sup> He knew what they were thinking and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. <sup>26</sup> If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?

<sup>27</sup> If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. <sup>28</sup> But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out

demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. <sup>29</sup> Or how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property, without first tying up the strong man? Then indeed the house can be plundered.

<sup>30</sup> Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

<sup>31</sup> Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

<sup>32</sup> Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

**Psalm 16:9-11** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

<sup>10</sup> For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.

<sup>11</sup> You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy;



in your right hand are  
pleasures forevermore.

**Proverbs 7:6–23 (NRSV)**

6 For at the window of my  
house  
I looked out through my  
lattice,  
7 and I saw among the  
simple ones,  
I observed among the  
youths,  
a young man without  
sense,  
8 passing along the street  
near her corner,  
taking the road to her  
house  
9 in the twilight, in the  
evening,  
at the time of night and  
darkness.  
10 Then a woman comes  
toward him,  
decked out like a  
prostitute, wily of  
heart.  
11 She is loud and wayward;  
her feet do not stay at  
home;  
12 now in the street, now in  
the squares,  
and at every corner she  
lies in wait.

13 She seizes him and kisses  
him,  
and with impudent face  
she says to him:  
14 “I had to offer sacrifices,  
and today I have paid my  
vows;  
15 so now I have come out to  
meet you,  
to seek you eagerly, and I  
have found you!  
16 I have decked my couch  
with coverings,  
colored spreads of  
Egyptian linen;  
17 I have perfumed my bed  
with myrrh,  
aloes, and cinnamon.  
18 Come, let us take our fill of  
love until morning;  
let us delight ourselves  
with love.  
19 For my husband is not at  
home;  
he has gone on a long  
journey.  
20 He took a bag of money  
with him;  
he will not come home  
until full moon.”  
21 With much seductive  
speech she persuades  
him;  
with her smooth talk she  
compels him.



<sup>22</sup> Right away he follows her,  
and goes like an ox to  
the slaughter,  
or bounds like a stag  
toward the trap  
<sup>23</sup> until an arrow pierces its  
entrails.  
He is like a bird rushing  
into a snare, not  
knowing that it will  
cost him his life.

## February 6



### Genesis 38:1-1-30 (NRSV)

#### *Judah and Tamar*

About this time, Judah left home and moved to Adullam, where he stayed with a man named Hirah. <sup>2</sup> There he saw a Canaanite woman, the daughter of Shua, and he married her. When he slept with her, <sup>3</sup> she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and he named the boy Er. <sup>4</sup> Then she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son, and she named him Onan. <sup>5</sup> And when she

gave birth to a third son, she named him Shelah. At the time of Shelah's birth, they were living at Kezib.

<sup>6</sup> In the course of time, Judah arranged for his firstborn son, Er, to marry a young woman named Tamar. <sup>7</sup> But Er was a wicked man in the LORD's sight, so the LORD took his life. <sup>8</sup> Then Judah said to Er's brother Onan, "Go and marry Tamar, as our law requires of the brother of a man who has died. You must produce an heir for your brother."

<sup>9</sup> But Onan was not willing to have a child who would not be his own heir. So whenever he had intercourse with his brother's wife, he spilled the semen on the ground. This prevented her from having a child who would belong to his brother. <sup>10</sup> But the LORD considered it evil for Onan to deny a child to his dead brother. So the LORD took Onan's life, too.

<sup>11</sup> Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Go back to your parents' home and remain a widow until my son Shelah is old

enough to marry you.” (But Judah didn’t really intend to do this because he was afraid Shelah would also die, like his two brothers.) So Tamar went back to live in her father’s home.

<sup>2</sup> Some years later Judah’s wife died. After the time of mourning was over, Judah and his friend Hirah the Adullamite went up to Timnah to supervise the shearing of his sheep. <sup>13</sup> Someone told Tamar, “Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”

<sup>14</sup> Tamar was aware that Shelah had grown up, but no arrangements had been made for her to come and marry him. So she changed out of her widow’s clothing and covered herself with a veil to disguise herself. Then she sat beside the road at the entrance to the village of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. <sup>15</sup> Judah noticed her and thought she was a prostitute, since she had covered her face. <sup>16</sup> So he stopped and propositioned her. “Let me have sex with you,” he said, not realizing

that she was his own daughter-in-law.

“How much will you pay to have sex with me?” Tamar asked.

<sup>17</sup> “I’ll send you a young goat from my flock,” Judah promised.

“But what will you give me to guarantee that you will send the goat?” she asked.

<sup>18</sup> “What kind of guarantee do you want?” he replied.

She answered, “Leave me your identification seal and its cord and the walking stick you are carrying.” So Judah gave them to her. Then he had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant. <sup>19</sup> Afterward she went back home, took off her veil, and put on her widow’s clothing as usual.

<sup>20</sup> Later Judah asked his friend Hirah the Adullamite to take the young goat to the woman and to pick up the things he had given her as his guarantee. But Hirah couldn’t find her. <sup>21</sup> So he asked the men who lived there, “Where can I find the shrine prostitute who was sitting beside the road at the entrance to Enaim?”

“We’ve never had a shrine prostitute here,” they replied.

<sup>22</sup> So Hirah returned to Judah and told him, “I couldn’t find her anywhere, and the men of the village claim they’ve never had a shrine prostitute there.”

<sup>23</sup> “Then let her keep the things I gave her,” Judah said. “I sent the young goat as we agreed, but you couldn’t find her. We’d be the laughingstock of the village if we went back again to look for her.”

<sup>24</sup> About three months later, Judah was told, “Tamar, your daughter-in-law, has acted like a prostitute. And now, because of this, she’s pregnant.”

“Bring her out, and let her be burned!” Judah demanded.

<sup>25</sup> But as they were taking her out to kill her, she sent this message to her father-in-law: “The man who owns these things made me pregnant. Look closely. Whose seal and cord and walking stick are these?”

<sup>26</sup> Judah recognized them immediately and said, “She is more righteous than I am,

because I didn’t arrange for her to marry my son Shelah.” And Judah never slept with Tamar again.

<sup>27</sup> When the time came for Tamar to give birth, it was discovered that she was carrying twins. <sup>28</sup> While she was in labor, one of the babies reached out his hand. The midwife grabbed it and tied a scarlet string around the child’s wrist, announcing, “This one came out first.” <sup>29</sup> But then he pulled back his hand, and out came his brother! “What!” the midwife exclaimed. “How did you break out first?” So he was named <sup>e</sup>Perez. <sup>30</sup> Then the baby with the scarlet string on his wrist was born, and he was named Zerah.

### *A Tree and Its Fruit*

*(Mt 7:15–20)*

<sup>33</sup> “Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are

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<sup>e</sup> That is *A breach*

evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

<sup>35</sup> The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. <sup>36</sup> I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; <sup>37</sup> for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

*The Sign of Jonah*

(Lk 11:29–32)

<sup>38</sup> Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.” <sup>39</sup> But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup> The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something

greater than Jonah is here!

<sup>42</sup> The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here!

*The Return of  
the Unclean Spirit*

(Lk 11:24–26)

<sup>43</sup> “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none.

<sup>44</sup> Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. <sup>45</sup> Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So will it be also with this evil generation.”

**Psalm 17:1-5** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from  
Persecutors*

A Prayer of David.

<sup>1</sup> Hear a just cause, O LORD;  
attend to my cry;  
give ear to my prayer  
from lips free of deceit.  
<sup>2</sup> From you let my  
vindication come;  
let your eyes see the  
right.  
<sup>3</sup> If you try my heart, if you  
visit me by night,  
if you test me, you will  
find no wickedness in  
me;  
my mouth does not  
transgress.  
<sup>4</sup> As for what others do, by  
the word of your lips  
I have avoided the ways  
of the violent.  
<sup>5</sup> My steps have held fast to  
your paths;  
my feet have not slipped.

**Proverbs 7:24–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> And now, my children,  
listen to me,  
and be attentive to the  
words of my mouth.  
<sup>25</sup> Do not let your hearts turn  
aside to her ways;  
do not stray into her  
paths.  
<sup>26</sup> for many are those she has  
laid low,

and numerous are her  
victims.

<sup>27</sup> Her house is the way to  
Sheol, going down to  
the chambers of death.

## February 7



**Genesis 39:1-23 (NRSV)**

*Joseph in Potiphar's House*

When Joseph was taken to  
Egypt by the Ishmaelite  
traders, he was purchased by  
Potiphar, an Egyptian officer.  
Potiphar was captain of the  
guard for Pharaoh, the king of  
Egypt.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD was with  
Joseph, so he succeeded in  
everything he did as he served  
in the home of his Egyptian  
master. <sup>3</sup>Potiphar noticed this  
and realized that the LORD was  
with Joseph, giving him  
success in everything he did.

<sup>4</sup>This pleased Potiphar, so he  
soon made Joseph his  
personal attendant. He put  
him in charge of his entire  
household and everything he

owned. <sup>5</sup> From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the LORD began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished. <sup>6</sup> So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat!

Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, <sup>7</sup> and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded.

<sup>8</sup> But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. <sup>9</sup> No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God."

<sup>10</sup> She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after

day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. <sup>11</sup> One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. <sup>12</sup> She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.

<sup>13</sup> When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, <sup>14</sup> she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed. <sup>15</sup> When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me."

<sup>16</sup> She kept the cloak with her until her husband came home. <sup>17</sup> Then she told him her story. "That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me," she said. <sup>18</sup> "But when I screamed, he ran outside, leaving his cloak with me!"

### *Joseph Put in Prison*

<sup>19</sup> Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her.

<sup>20</sup> So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained. <sup>21</sup> But

the LORD was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the LORD

made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. <sup>22</sup> Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison.

<sup>23</sup> The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The LORD was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.

### **Matthew 12:46 – 13:9** (NRSV)

#### *The True Kindred of Jesus*

(Mk 3:31–35; Lk 8:19–21)

<sup>46</sup> While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers were standing outside, wanting to speak to him. <sup>47</sup> Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." <sup>48</sup> But to the one who had told him this, Jesus

replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?"

<sup>49</sup> And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!" <sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."



#### *The Parable of the Sower* (Mk 4:1–9, 13–20; Lk 8:4–8, 11–15)

**13** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup> Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup> And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. <sup>5</sup> Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup> Other seeds

fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.<sup>9</sup> Let anyone with ears listen!”

**Psalms 17:6-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me, hear my words.  
<sup>7</sup> Wondrously show your steadfast love, O savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand.  
<sup>8</sup> Guard me as the apple of the eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings, from the wicked who despoil me, my deadly enemies who surround me.  
<sup>10</sup> They close their hearts to pity; with their mouths they speak arrogantly.  
<sup>11</sup> They track me down; now they surround me; they set their eyes to cast me to the ground.  
<sup>12</sup> They are like a lion eager to tear,

like a young lion lurking in ambush.

<sup>13</sup> Rise up, O LORD, confront them, overthrow them!

By your sword deliver my life from the wicked,

<sup>14</sup> from mortals—by your hand, O LORD—from mortals whose portion in life is in this world.

May their bellies be filled with what you have stored up for them; may their children have more than enough; may they leave something over to their little ones.

<sup>15</sup> As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake I shall be satisfied, beholding your likeness.

**Proverbs 8:1-11 (NRSV)**

*The Gifts of Wisdom*

<sup>1</sup> Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?



<sup>2</sup> On the heights, beside the  
way,  
at the crossroads she  
takes her stand;  
<sup>3</sup> beside the gates in front of  
the town,  
at the entrance of the  
portals she cries out:  
<sup>4</sup> “To you, O people, I call,  
and my cry is to all that  
live.  
<sup>5</sup> O simple ones, learn  
prudence;  
acquire intelligence, you  
who lack it.  
<sup>6</sup> Hear, for I will speak noble  
things,  
and from my lips will  
come what is right;  
<sup>7</sup> for my mouth will utter  
truth;  
wickedness is an  
abomination to my  
lips.  
<sup>8</sup> All the words of my mouth  
are righteous;  
there is nothing twisted  
or crooked in them.  
<sup>9</sup> They are all straight to one  
who understands

and right to those who  
find knowledge.  
<sup>10</sup> Take my instruction  
instead of silver,  
and knowledge rather  
than choice gold;  
<sup>11</sup> for wisdom is better than  
jewels,  
and all that you may  
desire cannot compare  
with her.

## February 8



### Genesis 40:1-41:16 (NRSV)

*Joseph Interprets Two Dreams*  
Sometime later, Pharaoh’s  
chief cup-bearer and chief  
baker offended their royal  
master. <sup>2</sup> Pharaoh became  
angry with these two officials,  
<sup>3</sup> and he put them in the  
prison where Joseph was, in  
the palace of the captain of  
the guard. <sup>4</sup> They remained in  
prison for quite some time,  
and the captain of the guard

assigned them to Joseph, who looked after them.

<sup>5</sup> While they were in prison, Pharaoh's cup-bearer and baker each had a dream one night, and each dream had its own meaning. <sup>6</sup> When Joseph saw them the next morning, he noticed that they both looked upset. <sup>7</sup> "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked them.

<sup>8</sup> And they replied, "We both had dreams last night, but no one can tell us what they mean."

"Interpreting dreams is God's business," Joseph replied. "Go ahead and tell me your dreams."

<sup>9</sup> So the chief cup-bearer told Joseph his dream first. "In my dream," he said, "I saw a grapevine in front of me.

<sup>10</sup> The vine had three branches that began to bud and blossom, and soon it produced clusters of ripe grapes. <sup>11</sup> I was holding Pharaoh's wine cup in my hand, so I took a cluster of grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."

<sup>12</sup> "This is what the dream means," Joseph said. "The

three branches represent three days. <sup>13</sup> Within three days Pharaoh will lift you up and restore you to your position as his chief cup-bearer. <sup>14</sup> And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. <sup>15</sup> For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it."

<sup>16</sup> When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given the first dream such a positive interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I had a dream, too. In my dream there were three baskets of white pastries stacked on my head. <sup>17</sup> The top basket contained all kinds of pastries for Pharaoh, but the birds came and ate them from the basket on my head."

<sup>18</sup> "This is what the dream means," Joseph told him. "The three baskets also represent three days. <sup>19</sup> Three days from now Pharaoh will lift you up and impale your body on a pole. Then birds will come and peck away at your flesh."

<sup>20</sup> Pharaoh's birthday came three days later, and he prepared a banquet for all his officials and staff. He summoned his chief cup-bearer and chief baker to join the other officials. <sup>21</sup> He then restored the chief cup-bearer to his former position, so he could again hand Pharaoh his cup. <sup>22</sup> But Pharaoh impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had predicted when he interpreted his dream. <sup>23</sup> Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought.

### *Pharaoh's Dreams*

**41** Two full years later, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing on the bank of the Nile River. <sup>2</sup> In his dream he saw seven fat, healthy cows come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. <sup>3</sup> Then he saw seven more cows come up behind them from the Nile, but these were scrawny and thin. These cows stood beside the fat cows on the riverbank. <sup>4</sup> Then the scrawny, thin cows ate the seven healthy, fat cows! At

this point in the dream, Pharaoh woke up.

<sup>5</sup> But he fell asleep again and had a second dream. This time he saw seven heads of grain, plump and beautiful, growing on a single stalk. <sup>6</sup> Then seven more heads of grain appeared, but these were shriveled and withered by the east wind. <sup>7</sup> And these thin heads swallowed up the seven plump, well-formed heads! Then Pharaoh woke up again and realized it was a dream.

<sup>8</sup> The next morning Pharaoh was very disturbed by the dreams. So he called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. When Pharaoh told them his dreams, not one of them could tell him what they meant.

<sup>9</sup> Finally, the king's chief cup-bearer spoke up. "Today I have been reminded of my failure," he told Pharaoh.

<sup>10</sup> "Some time ago, you were angry with the chief baker and me, and you imprisoned us in the palace of the captain of the guard. <sup>11</sup> One night the chief baker and I each had a dream, and each dream had

its own meaning. <sup>12</sup> There was a young Hebrew man with us in the prison who was a slave of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he told us what each of our dreams meant. <sup>13</sup> And everything happened just as he had predicted. I was restored to my position as cup-bearer, and the chief baker was executed and impaled on a pole.”

<sup>14</sup> Pharaoh sent for Joseph at once, and he was quickly brought from the prison. After he shaved and changed his clothes, he went in and stood before Pharaoh. <sup>15</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream last night, and no one here can tell me what it means. But I have heard that when you hear about a dream you can interpret it.”

<sup>16</sup> “It is beyond my power to do this,” Joseph replied. “But God can tell you what it means and set you at ease.”

### **Matthew 13:10-23** (NRSV)

*The Purpose of the Parables*  
(Mk 4:10–12; Lk 8:9–10)

<sup>10</sup> Then the disciples came and asked him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?”

<sup>11</sup> He answered, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. <sup>12</sup> For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>13</sup> The reason I speak to them in parables is that ‘seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.’ <sup>14</sup> With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

‘You will indeed listen, but never understand,  
and you will indeed look,  
but never perceive.

<sup>15</sup> For this people’s heart has grown dull,  
and their ears are hard of hearing,  
and they have shut their eyes;  
so that they might not look  
with their eyes,  
and listen with their ears,  
and understand with their heart and turn—  
and I would heal them.’

<sup>16</sup> But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for

they hear. <sup>17</sup> Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

*The Parable of the Sower Explained*

<sup>18</sup> “Hear then the parable of the sower. <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup> As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup> yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. <sup>22</sup> As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>23</sup> But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the

word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

**Psalm 18:1-3** (NRSV)

*Royal Thanksgiving for Victory*  
(2 Sam 22:1–51)

To the leader. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who addressed the words of this song to the LORD on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said:

- <sup>1</sup> I love you, O LORD, my strength.
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- <sup>3</sup> I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, so I shall be saved from my enemies.

**Proverbs 8:12–13** (NRSV)

- <sup>12</sup> I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I attain knowledge and discretion.
- <sup>13</sup> The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.



Pride and arrogance and  
the way of evil  
and perverted speech I  
hate.

## February 9



### Genesis 41:17--52 (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> So Pharaoh told Joseph his dream. “In my dream,” he said, “I was standing on the bank of the Nile River, <sup>18</sup> and I saw seven fat, healthy cows come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. <sup>19</sup> But then I saw seven sick-looking cows, scrawny and thin, come up after them. I’ve never seen such sorry-looking animals in all the land of Egypt. <sup>20</sup> These thin, scrawny cows ate the seven fat cows. <sup>21</sup> But afterward you wouldn’t have known it, for they were still as thin and scrawny as before! Then I woke up.

<sup>22</sup> “In my dream I also saw seven heads of grain, full and beautiful, growing on a single stalk. <sup>23</sup> Then seven more heads of grain appeared, but these were blighted, shriveled,

and withered by the east wind. <sup>24</sup> And the shriveled heads swallowed the seven healthy heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but no one could tell me what they mean.”

<sup>25</sup> Joseph responded, “Both of Pharaoh’s dreams mean the same thing. God is telling Pharaoh in advance what he is about to do. <sup>26</sup> The seven healthy cows and the seven healthy heads of grain both represent seven years of prosperity. <sup>27</sup> The seven thin, scrawny cows that came up later and the seven thin heads of grain, withered by the east wind, represent seven years of famine.

<sup>28</sup> “This will happen just as I have described it, for God has revealed to Pharaoh in advance what he is about to do. <sup>29</sup> The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout the land of Egypt. <sup>30</sup> But afterward there will be seven years of famine so great that all the prosperity will be forgotten in Egypt. Famine will destroy the land. <sup>31</sup> This famine will be so severe that even the memory of the good

years will be erased. <sup>32</sup> As for having two similar dreams, it means that these events have been decreed by God, and he will soon make them happen.

<sup>33</sup> “Therefore, Pharaoh should find an intelligent and wise man and put him in charge of the entire land of Egypt. <sup>34</sup> Then Pharaoh should appoint supervisors over the land and let them collect one-fifth of all the crops during the seven good years. <sup>35</sup> Have them gather all the food produced in the good years that are just ahead and bring it to Pharaoh’s storehouses. Store it away, and guard it so there will be food in the cities.

<sup>36</sup> That way there will be enough to eat when the seven years of famine come to the land of Egypt. Otherwise this famine will destroy the land.”

#### *Joseph Made Ruler of Egypt*

<sup>37</sup> Joseph’s suggestions were well received by Pharaoh and his officials. <sup>38</sup> So Pharaoh asked his officials, “Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously filled with the spirit of God?” <sup>39</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since

God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, clearly no one else is as intelligent or wise as you are. <sup>40</sup> You will be in charge of my court, and all my people will take orders from you. Only I, sitting on my throne, will have a rank higher than yours.”

<sup>41</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the entire land of Egypt.”

<sup>42</sup> Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand and placed it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in fine linen clothing and hung a gold chain around his neck. <sup>43</sup> Then he had Joseph ride in the chariot reserved for his second-in-command. And wherever Joseph went, the command was shouted, “Kneel down!” So Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of all Egypt. <sup>44</sup> And Pharaoh said to him, “I am Pharaoh, but no one will lift a hand or foot in the entire land of Egypt without your approval.”

<sup>45</sup> Then Pharaoh gave Joseph a new Egyptian name, Zaphenath-paneah. He also gave him a wife, whose name was Asenath. She was the

daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On. So Joseph took charge of the entire land of Egypt. <sup>46</sup> He was thirty years old when he began serving in the court of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. And when Joseph left Pharaoh's presence, he inspected the entire land of Egypt.

<sup>47</sup> As predicted, for seven years the land produced bumper crops. <sup>48</sup> During those years, Joseph gathered all the crops grown in Egypt and stored the grain from the surrounding fields in the cities.

<sup>49</sup> He piled up huge amounts of grain like sand on the seashore. Finally, he stopped keeping records because there was too much to measure.

<sup>50</sup> During this time, before the first of the famine years, two sons were born to Joseph and his wife, Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On. <sup>51</sup> Joseph named his older son Manasseh, for he said, "God has made me forget all my troubles and everyone in my father's family."

<sup>52</sup> Joseph named his second son Ephraim, for he said, "God

has made me fruitful in this land of my grief."

**Matthew 13:24-33** (NRSV)

*The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat*

<sup>24</sup> He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;

<sup>25</sup> but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.

<sup>26</sup> So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.

<sup>27</sup> And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field?

Where, then, did these weeds come from?' <sup>28</sup> He answered,

'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?'

<sup>29</sup> But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I

will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them



in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

*The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

(Mk 4:30–32; Lk 13:18–19)

<sup>31</sup> He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; <sup>32</sup> it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

*The Parable of the Yeast*

(Lk 13:20–21)

<sup>33</sup> He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

**Psalms 18:4–15** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> The cords of death encompassed me;  
the torrents of perdition assailed me;  
<sup>5</sup> the cords of Sheol entangled me;

the snares of death confronted me.  
<sup>6</sup> In my distress I called upon the LORD;  
to my God I cried for help.  
From his temple he heard my voice,  
and my cry to him reached his ears.  
<sup>7</sup> Then the earth reeled and rocked;  
the foundations also of the mountains trembled  
and quaked, because he was angry.  
<sup>8</sup> Smoke went up from his nostrils,  
and devouring fire from his mouth;  
glowing coals flamed forth from him.  
<sup>9</sup> He bowed the heavens, and came down;  
thick darkness was under his feet.  
<sup>10</sup> He rode on a cherub, and flew;  
he came swiftly upon the wings of the wind.  
<sup>11</sup> He made darkness his covering around him,  
his canopy thick clouds dark with water.

12 Out of the brightness  
before him  
there broke through his  
clouds  
hailstones and coals of  
fire.  
13 The LORD also thundered in  
the heavens,  
and the Most High  
uttered his voice.  
14 And he sent out his  
arrows, and scattered  
them;  
he flashed forth  
lightnings, and routed  
them.  
15 Then the channels of the  
sea were seen,  
and the foundations of  
the world were laid  
bare  
at your rebuke, O LORD,  
at the blast of the breath  
of your nostrils.

**Proverbs 8:14–26 (NRSV)**

14 I [wisdom] have good  
advice and sound  
wisdom;  
I have insight, I have  
strength.  
15 By me kings reign,  
and rulers decree what is  
just;  
16 by me rulers rule,

and nobles, all who  
govern rightly.

17 I love those who love me,  
and those who seek me  
diligently find me.  
18 Riches and honor are with  
me,  
enduring wealth and  
prosperity.  
19 My fruit is better than  
gold, even fine gold,  
and my yield than choice  
silver.  
20 I walk in the way of  
righteousness,  
along the paths of  
justice,  
21 endowing with wealth  
those who love me,  
and filling their  
treasuries.

*Wisdom's Part in Creation*  
(Cp Jn 1:1–3)

22 The LORD created me at the  
beginning of his work,  
the first of his acts of  
long ago.  
23 Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the  
beginning of the earth.  
24 When there were no  
depths I was brought  
forth,



when there were no  
springs abounding with  
water.

<sup>25</sup> Before the mountains had  
been shaped,  
before the hills, I was  
brought forth—

<sup>26</sup> when he had not yet made  
earth and fields, or the  
world's first bits of soil.

## February 10



### Genesis 41:53-42:17 (NRSV)

<sup>53</sup> At last the seven years of bumper crops throughout the land of Egypt came to an end.

<sup>54</sup> Then the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had predicted. The famine also struck all the surrounding countries, but throughout Egypt there was plenty of food. <sup>55</sup> Eventually, however, the famine spread throughout the land of Egypt as well. And when the people cried out to Pharaoh for food, he told them, “Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you.” <sup>56</sup> So

with severe famine everywhere, Joseph opened up the storehouses and distributed grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout the land of Egypt. <sup>57</sup> And people from all around came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph because the famine was severe throughout the world.

### *Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt*

**42** When Jacob heard that grain was available in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why are you standing around looking at one another? <sup>2</sup> I have heard there is grain in Egypt. Go down there, and buy enough grain to keep us alive. Otherwise we’ll die.”

<sup>3</sup> So Joseph’s ten older brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain. <sup>4</sup> But Jacob wouldn’t let Joseph’s younger brother, Benjamin, go with them, for fear some harm might come to him. <sup>5</sup> So Jacob’s sons arrived in Egypt along with others to buy food, for the famine was in Canaan as well.

<sup>6</sup> Since Joseph was governor of all Egypt and in

charge of selling grain to all the people, it was to him that his brothers came. When they arrived, they bowed before him with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Joseph recognized his brothers instantly, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. “Where are you from?” he demanded.

“From the land of Canaan,” they replied. “We have come to buy food.”

<sup>8</sup> Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they didn’t recognize him. <sup>9</sup> And he remembered the dreams he’d had about them many years before. He said to them, “You are spies! You have come to see how vulnerable our land has become.”

<sup>10</sup> “No, my lord!” they exclaimed. “Your servants have simply come to buy food.

<sup>11</sup> We are all brothers—members of the same family. We are honest men, sir! We are not spies!”

<sup>12</sup> “Yes, you are!” Joseph insisted. “You have come to see how vulnerable our land has become.”

<sup>13</sup> “Sir,” they said, “there are actually twelve of us. We, your servants, are all brothers, sons of a man living in the land of Canaan. Our youngest brother is back there with our father right now, and one of our brothers is no longer with us.”

<sup>14</sup> But Joseph insisted, “As I said, you are spies! <sup>15</sup> This is how I will test your story. I swear by the life of Pharaoh that you will never leave Egypt unless your youngest brother comes here! <sup>16</sup> One of you must go and get your brother. I’ll keep the rest of you here in prison. Then we’ll find out whether or not your story is true. By the life of Pharaoh, if it turns out that you don’t have a younger brother, then I’ll know you are spies.”

<sup>17</sup> So Joseph put them all in prison for three days.

### **Matthew 13:34-46** (NRSV)

#### *The Use of Parables*

<sup>34</sup> Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. <sup>35</sup> This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

“I will open my mouth to  
speak in parables;  
I will proclaim what has  
been hidden from the  
foundation of the  
world.”

*Jesus Explains the Parable  
of the Weeds*

<sup>36</sup> Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” <sup>37</sup> He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup> the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup> Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup> and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing

of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

*Three Parables*

<sup>44</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

<sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; <sup>46</sup> on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

**Psalm 18:16-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> He reached down from on high, he took me;  
he drew me out of  
mighty waters.

<sup>17</sup> He delivered me from my  
strong enemy,  
and from those who  
hated me;  
for they were too mighty  
for me.

<sup>18</sup> They confronted me in the  
day of my calamity;  
but the LORD was my  
support.

19 He brought me out into a  
broad place;  
he delivered me,  
because he delighted  
in me.  
20 The LORD rewarded me  
according to my  
righteousness;  
according to the  
cleanness of my hands  
he recompensed me.  
21 For I have kept the ways of  
the LORD,  
and have not wickedly  
departed from my God.  
22 For all his ordinances were  
before me,  
and his statutes I did not  
put away from me.  
23 I was blameless before  
him,  
and I kept myself from  
guilt.  
24 Therefore the LORD has  
recompensed me  
according to my  
righteousness,  
according to the  
cleanness of my hands  
in his sight.

when he drew a circle on  
the face of the deep,  
28 when he made firm the  
skies above,  
when he established the  
fountains of the deep,  
29 when he assigned to the  
sea its limit,  
so that the waters might  
not transgress his  
command,  
when he marked out the  
foundations of the  
earth,  
30 then I was beside him,  
like a master worker;  
and I was daily his delight,  
rejoicing before him  
always,  
31 rejoicing in his inhabited  
world  
and delighting in the  
human race.  
32 “And now, my children,  
listen to me:  
happy are those who  
keep my ways.

**Proverbs 8:27–32 (NRSV)**

27 When he established the  
heavens, I was there,

# February 11



## Genesis 42:18-38 (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> On the third day Joseph said to them, “I am a God-fearing man. If you do as I say, you will live. <sup>19</sup> If you really are honest men, choose one of your brothers to remain in prison. The rest of you may go home with grain for your starving families. <sup>20</sup> But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. This will prove that you are telling the truth, and you will not die.” To this they agreed.

<sup>21</sup> Speaking among themselves, they said, “Clearly we are being punished because of what we did to Joseph long ago. We saw his anguish when he pleaded for his life, but we wouldn’t listen. That’s why we’re in this trouble.”

<sup>22</sup> “Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy?” Reuben asked. “But you wouldn’t listen. And now we have to answer for his blood!”

<sup>23</sup> Of course, they didn’t know that Joseph understood them, for he had been

speaking to them through an interpreter. <sup>24</sup> Now he turned away from them and began to weep. When he regained his composure, he spoke to them again. Then he chose Simeon from among them and had him tied up right before their eyes.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph then ordered his servants to fill the men’s sacks with grain, but he also gave secret instructions to return each brother’s payment at the top of his sack. He also gave them supplies for their journey home. <sup>26</sup> So the brothers loaded their donkeys with the grain and headed for home.

<sup>27</sup> But when they stopped for the night and one of them opened his sack to get grain for his donkey, he found his money in the top of his sack. <sup>28</sup> “Look!” he exclaimed to his brothers. “My money has been returned; it’s here in my sack!” Then their hearts sank. Trembling, they said to each other, “What has God done to us?”

<sup>29</sup> When the brothers came to their father, Jacob, in the land of Canaan, they told him

everything that had happened to them.<sup>30</sup> “The man who is governor of the land spoke very harshly to us,” they told him. “He accused us of being spies scouting the land.”<sup>31</sup> But we said, “We are honest men, not spies.”<sup>32</sup> We are twelve brothers, sons of one father. One brother is no longer with us, and the youngest is at home with our father in the land of Canaan.’

<sup>33</sup> “Then the man who is governor of the land told us, ‘This is how I will find out if you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers here with me, and take grain for your starving families and go on home.’<sup>34</sup> But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. Then I will know you are honest men and not spies. Then I will give you back your brother, and you may trade freely in the land.’ ”

<sup>35</sup> As they emptied out their sacks, there in each man’s sack was the bag of money he had paid for the grain! The brothers and their father were terrified when they saw the bags of money.

<sup>36</sup> Jacob exclaimed, “You are

robbing me of my children! Joseph is gone! Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin, too. Everything is going against me!”

<sup>37</sup> Then Reuben said to his father, “You may kill my two sons if I don’t bring Benjamin back to you. I’ll be responsible for him, and I promise to bring him back.”

<sup>38</sup> But Jacob replied, “My son will not go down with you. His brother Joseph is dead, and he is all I have left. If anything should happen to him on your journey, you would send this grieving, white-haired man to his grave.”

**Matthew 13:47-58** (NRSV)

<sup>47</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind;  
<sup>48</sup> when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.<sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous  
<sup>50</sup> and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there



will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

*Treasures New and Old*

<sup>51</sup> “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” <sup>52</sup> And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

<sup>53</sup> When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.

*The Rejection of  
Jesus at Nazareth*  
(Mk 6:1–6; Lk 4:16–30)

<sup>54</sup> He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? <sup>55</sup> Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?” <sup>57</sup> And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “Prophets are

not without honor except in their own country and in their own house.” <sup>58</sup> And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief.

**Psalm 18:25--36** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> With the loyal you show yourself loyal;  
with the blameless you show yourself blameless;  
<sup>26</sup> with the pure you show yourself pure;  
and with the crooked you show yourself perverse.  
<sup>27</sup> For you deliver a humble people,  
but the haughty eyes you bring down.  
<sup>28</sup> It is you who light my lamp;  
the LORD, my God, lights up my darkness.  
<sup>29</sup> By you I can crush a troop,  
and by my God I can leap over a wall.  
<sup>30</sup> This God—his way is perfect;  
the promise of the LORD proves true;  
he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.



31 For who is God except the  
LORD?  
And who is a rock  
besides our God?—  
32 the God who girded me  
with strength,  
and made my way safe.  
33 He made my feet like the  
feet of a deer,  
and set me secure on the  
heights.  
34 He trains my hands for  
war,  
so that my arms can  
bend a bow of bronze.  
35 You have given me the  
shield of your  
salvation,  
and your right hand has  
supported me;  
your help has made me  
great.  
36 You gave me a wide place  
for my steps under me,  
and my feet did not slip.

**Proverbs 8:33–36 (NRSV)**

33 Hear instruction and be  
wise,  
and do not neglect it.  
34 Happy is the one who  
listens to me,  
watching daily at my  
gates,  
waiting beside my doors.

35 For whoever finds me finds  
life  
and obtains favor from  
the LORD;  
36 but those who miss me  
injure themselves;  
all who hate me love  
death.”

## February 12



**Genesis 43:1-34 (NRSV)**

*The Brothers Return to Egypt*  
But the famine continued to  
ravage the land of Canaan.

<sup>2</sup> When the grain they had  
brought from Egypt was  
almost gone, Jacob said to his  
sons, “Go back and buy us a  
little more food.”

<sup>3</sup> But Judah said, “The man  
was serious when he warned  
us, ‘You won’t see my face  
again unless your brother is  
with you.’” <sup>4</sup> If you send  
Benjamin with us, we will go  
down and buy more food.

<sup>5</sup> But if you don’t let Benjamin  
go, we won’t go either.

Remember, the man said, ‘You won’t see my face again unless your brother is with you.’ ”

<sup>6</sup> “Why were you so cruel to me?” Jacob moaned. “Why did you tell him you had another brother?”

<sup>7</sup> “The man kept asking us questions about our family,” they replied. “He asked, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’ So we answered his questions. How could we know he would say, ‘Bring your brother down here?’”

<sup>8</sup> Judah said to his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will be on our way. Otherwise we will all die of starvation—and not only we, but you and our little ones.” <sup>9</sup> I personally guarantee his safety. You may hold me responsible if I don’t bring him back to you. Then let me bear the blame forever. <sup>10</sup> If we hadn’t wasted all this time, we could have gone and returned twice by now.”

<sup>11</sup> So their father, Jacob, finally said to them, “If it can’t be avoided, then at least do this. Pack your bags with the best products of this land.

Take them down to the man as gifts—balm, honey, gum, aromatic resin, pistachio nuts, and almonds. <sup>12</sup> Also take double the money that was put back in your sacks, as it was probably someone’s mistake. <sup>13</sup> Then take your brother, and go back to the man. <sup>14</sup> May God Almighty give you mercy as you go before the man, so that he will release Simeon and let Benjamin return. But if I must lose my children, so be it.”

<sup>15</sup> So the men packed Jacob’s gifts and double the money and headed off with Benjamin. They finally arrived in Egypt and presented themselves to Joseph. <sup>16</sup> When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the manager of his household, “These men will eat with me this noon. Take them inside the palace. Then go slaughter an animal, and prepare a big feast.” <sup>17</sup> So the man did as Joseph told him and took them into Joseph’s palace.

<sup>18</sup> The brothers were terrified when they saw that they were being taken into Joseph’s house. “It’s because

of the money someone put in our sacks last time we were here,” they said. “He plans to pretend that we stole it. Then he will seize us, make us slaves, and take our donkeys.”

### *A Feast at Joseph’s Palace*

<sup>19</sup> The brothers approached the manager of Joseph’s household and spoke to him at the entrance to the palace.

<sup>20</sup> “Sir,” they said, “we came to Egypt once before to buy food.

<sup>21</sup> But as we were returning home, we stopped for the night and opened our sacks.

Then we discovered that each man’s money—the exact amount paid—was in the top of his sack! Here it is; we have brought it back with us. <sup>22</sup> We also have additional money to buy more food. We have no idea who put our money in our sacks.”

<sup>23</sup> “Relax. Don’t be afraid,” the household manager told them. “Your God, the God of your father, must have put this treasure into your sacks. I know I received your payment.” Then he released Simeon and brought him out to them.

<sup>24</sup> The manager then led the men into Joseph’s palace. He gave them water to wash their feet and provided food for their donkeys. <sup>25</sup> They were told they would be eating there, so they prepared their gifts for Joseph’s arrival at noon.

<sup>26</sup> When Joseph came home, they gave him the gifts they had brought him, then bowed low to the ground before him. <sup>27</sup> After greeting them, he asked, “How is your father, the old man you spoke about? Is he still alive?”

<sup>28</sup> “Yes,” they replied. “Our father, your servant, is alive and well.” And they bowed low again.

<sup>29</sup> Then Joseph looked at his brother Benjamin, the son of his own mother. “Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?”

Joseph asked. “May God be gracious to you, my son.”

<sup>30</sup> Then Joseph hurried from the room because he was overcome with emotion for his brother. He went into his private room, where he broke down and wept. <sup>31</sup> After washing his face, he came

back out, keeping himself under control. Then he ordered, "Bring out the food!"

<sup>32</sup> The waiters served Joseph at his own table, and his brothers were served at a separate table. The Egyptians who ate with Joseph sat at their own table, because Egyptians despise Hebrews and refuse to eat with them.

<sup>33</sup> Joseph told each of his brothers where to sit, and to their amazement, he seated them according to age, from oldest to youngest. <sup>34</sup> And Joseph filled their plates with food from his own table, giving Benjamin five times as much as he gave the others. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

**Matthew 14:1-12 (NRSV)**

*The Death of John the Baptist*  
(Lk 9:7-9; Mk 6:14-29)

At that time Herod the ruler heard reports about Jesus; <sup>2</sup> and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and for this reason these powers are at work in him." <sup>3</sup> For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account

of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, <sup>4</sup> because John had been telling him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."

<sup>5</sup> Though Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded him as a prophet. <sup>6</sup> But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company, and she pleased Herod <sup>7</sup> so much that he promised on oath to grant her whatever she might ask. <sup>8</sup> Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." <sup>9</sup> The king was grieved, yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he commanded it to be given; <sup>10</sup> he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. <sup>11</sup> The head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, who brought it to her mother. <sup>12</sup> His disciples came and took the body and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.

**Psalm 18:37-45 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> I pursued my enemies and overtook them;

and did not turn back  
until they were  
consumed.

38 I struck them down, so  
that they were not able  
to rise;  
they fell under my feet.

39 For you girded me with  
strength for the battle;  
you made my assailants  
sink under me.

40 You made my enemies  
turn their backs to me,  
and those who hated me  
I destroyed.

41 They cried for help, but  
there was no one to  
save them;  
they cried to the LORD,  
but he did not answer  
them.

42 I beat them fine, like dust  
before the wind;  
I cast them out like the  
mire of the streets.

43 You delivered me from  
strife with the peoples;  
you made me head of  
the nations;  
people whom I had not  
known served me.

44 As soon as they heard of  
me they obeyed me;  
foreigners came cringing  
to me.

45 Foreigners lost heart,  
and came trembling out  
of their strongholds.

**Proverbs 9:1–6 (NRSV)**

*Wisdom's Feast*

1 Wisdom has built her  
house,  
she has hewn her seven  
pillars.

2 She has slaughtered her  
animals, she has mixed  
her wine,  
she has also set her  
table.

3 She has sent out her  
servant-girls, she calls  
from the highest places  
in the town,

4 "You that are simple, turn  
in here!"  
To those without sense  
she says,

5 "Come, eat of my bread  
and drink of the wine I  
have mixed.

6 Lay aside immaturity, and  
live, and walk in the  
way of insight."

# February 13



**Genesis 44:1-45:15** (NRSV)

## *Joseph's Silver Cup*

When his brothers were ready to leave, Joseph gave these instructions to his palace manager: "Fill each of their sacks with as much grain as they can carry, and put each man's money back into his sack. <sup>2</sup> Then put my personal silver cup at the top of the youngest brother's sack, along with the money for his grain." So the manager did as Joseph instructed him.

<sup>3</sup> The brothers were up at dawn and were sent on their journey with their loaded donkeys. <sup>4</sup> But when they had gone only a short distance and were barely out of the city, Joseph said to his palace manager, "Chase after them and stop them. When you catch up with them, ask them, 'Why have you repaid my kindness with such evil? <sup>5</sup> Why have you stolen my master's silver cup, which he uses to predict the future? What a wicked thing you have done!' "

<sup>6</sup> When the palace manager caught up with the men, he spoke to them as he had been instructed.

<sup>7</sup> "What are you talking about?" the brothers responded. "We are your servants and would never do such a thing! <sup>8</sup> Didn't we return the money we found in our sacks? We brought it back all the way from the land of Canaan. Why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house? <sup>9</sup> If you find his cup with any one of us, let that man die. And all the rest of us, my lord, will be your slaves."

<sup>10</sup> "That's fair," the man replied. "But only the one who stole the cup will be my slave. The rest of you may go free."

<sup>11</sup> They all quickly took their sacks from the backs of their donkeys and opened them. <sup>12</sup> The palace manager searched the brothers' sacks, from the oldest to the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack!

<sup>13</sup> When the brothers saw this, they tore their clothing in despair. Then they loaded

their donkeys again and returned to the city.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph was still in his palace when Judah and his brothers arrived, and they fell to the ground before him.

<sup>15</sup> “What have you done?” Joseph demanded. “Don’t you know that a man like me can predict the future?”

<sup>16</sup> Judah answered, “Oh, my lord, what can we say to you? How can we explain this? How can we prove our innocence? God is punishing us for our sins. My lord, we have all returned to be your slaves—all of us, not just our brother who had your cup in his sack.”

<sup>17</sup> “No,” Joseph said. “I would never do such a thing! Only the man who stole the cup will be my slave. The rest of you may go back to your father in peace.”

### *Judah Speaks for His Brothers*

<sup>18</sup> Then Judah stepped forward and said, “Please, my lord, let your servant say just one word to you. Please, do not be angry with me, even though you are as powerful as Pharaoh himself.

<sup>19</sup> “My lord, previously you asked us, your servants, ‘Do you have a father or a brother?’” <sup>20</sup> And we responded, ‘Yes, my lord, we have a father who is an old man, and his youngest son is a child of his old age. His full brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother’s children, and his father loves him very much.’

<sup>21</sup> “And you said to us, ‘Bring him here so I can see him with my own eyes.’” <sup>22</sup> But we said to you, ‘My lord, the boy cannot leave his father, for his father would die.’” <sup>23</sup> But you told us, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes with you, you will never see my face again.’

<sup>24</sup> “So we returned to your servant, our father, and told him what you had said.

<sup>25</sup> Later, when he said, ‘Go back again and buy us more food,’” <sup>26</sup> we replied, ‘We can’t go unless you let our youngest brother go with us. We’ll never get to see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’

<sup>27</sup> “Then my father said to us, ‘As you know, my wife had



two sons,<sup>28</sup> and one of them went away and never returned. Doubtless he was torn to pieces by some wild animal. I have never seen him since.<sup>29</sup> Now if you take his brother away from me, and any harm comes to him, you will send this grieving, white-haired man to his grave.'

<sup>30</sup> "And now, my lord, I cannot go back to my father without the boy. Our father's life is bound up in the boy's life.<sup>31</sup> If he sees that the boy is not with us, our father will die. We, your servants, will indeed be responsible for sending that grieving, white-haired man to his grave.<sup>32</sup> My lord, I guaranteed to my father that I would take care of the boy. I told him, 'If I don't bring him back to you, I will bear the blame forever.'

<sup>33</sup> "So please, my lord, let me stay here as a slave instead of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers.<sup>34</sup> For how can I return to my father if the boy is not with me? I couldn't bear to see the anguish this would cause my father!"

### *Joseph Reveals His Identity*

**45** Joseph could stand it no longer. There were many people in the room, and he said to his attendants, "Out, all of you!" So he was alone with his brothers when he told them who he was.<sup>2</sup> Then he broke down and wept. He wept so loudly the Egyptians could hear him, and word of it quickly carried to Pharaoh's palace.

<sup>3</sup> "I am Joseph!" he said to his brothers. "Is my father still alive?" But his brothers were speechless! They were stunned to realize that Joseph was standing there in front of them.<sup>4</sup> "Please, come closer," he said to them. So they came closer. And he said again, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt."<sup>5</sup> But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives.<sup>6</sup> This famine that has ravaged the land for two years will last five more years, and there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.<sup>7</sup> God has sent me

ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors.<sup>8</sup> So it was God who sent me here, not you! And he is the one who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt.

<sup>9</sup> “Now hurry back to my father and tell him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me master over all the land of Egypt. So come down to me immediately!

<sup>10</sup> You can live in the region of Goshen, where you can be near me with all your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and everything you own.<sup>11</sup> I will take care of you there, for there are still five years of famine ahead of us. Otherwise you, your household, and all your animals will starve.’ ”

<sup>12</sup> Then Joseph added, “Look! You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that I really am Joseph!<sup>13</sup> Go tell my father of my honored position here in Egypt. Describe for him everything you have seen, and then bring my father here

quickly.”<sup>14</sup> Weeping with joy, he embraced Benjamin, and Benjamin did the same.

<sup>15</sup> Then Joseph kissed each of his brothers and wept over them, and after that they began talking freely with him.

#### **Matthew 14:13-21** (NRSV)

*Feeding the Five Thousand*  
(Mk 6:30–44; Lk 9:10–17; Jn 6:1–14)

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

<sup>14</sup> When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.<sup>15</sup> When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to them, “**They need not go away; you give them something to eat.**”<sup>17</sup> They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.”<sup>18</sup> And he said, “**Bring them here to me.**”<sup>19</sup> Then he ordered the crowds to sit

down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

<sup>20</sup> And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. <sup>21</sup> And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

### **Psalm 18:46-50** (NRSV)

<sup>46</sup> The LORD lives! Blessed be my rock,  
and exalted be the God of my salvation,  
<sup>47</sup> the God who gave me vengeance  
and subdued peoples under me;  
<sup>48</sup> who delivered me from my enemies;  
indeed, you exalted me above my adversaries;  
you delivered me from the violent.  
<sup>49</sup> For this I will extol you, O LORD, among the nations,  
and sing praises to your name.

<sup>50</sup> Great triumphs he gives to his king,  
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,  
to David and his descendants forever.

### **Proverbs 9:7–8** (NRSV)

#### *General Maxims*

<sup>7</sup> Whoever corrects a scoffer wins abuse;  
whoever rebukes the wicked gets hurt.  
<sup>8</sup> A scoffer who is rebuked will only hate you;  
the wise, when rebuked, will love you.

## **February 14**



### **Genesis 45:16-46:7** (NRSV)

#### *Pharaoh Invites Jacob to Egypt*

<sup>16</sup> The news soon reached Pharaoh's palace: "Joseph's brothers have arrived!" Pharaoh and his officials were all delighted to hear this.

<sup>17</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'This is

what you must do: Load your pack animals, and hurry back to the land of Canaan. <sup>18</sup> Then get your father and all of your families, and return here to me. I will give you the very best land in Egypt, and you will eat from the best that the land produces.’ ”

<sup>19</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Tell your brothers, ‘Take wagons from the land of Egypt to carry your little children and your wives, and bring your father here. <sup>20</sup> Don’t worry about your personal belongings, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’ ”

<sup>21</sup> So the sons of Jacob did as they were told. Joseph provided them with wagons, as Pharaoh had commanded, and he gave them supplies for the journey. <sup>22</sup> And he gave each of them new clothes—but to Benjamin he gave five changes of clothes and 300 pieces of silver. <sup>23</sup> He also sent his father ten male donkeys loaded with the finest products of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other supplies he would need on his journey.

<sup>24</sup> So Joseph sent his brothers off, and as they left, he called after them, “Don’t quarrel about all this along the way!” <sup>25</sup> And they left Egypt and returned to their father, Jacob, in the land of Canaan.

<sup>26</sup> “Joseph is still alive!” they told him. “And he is governor of all the land of Egypt!” Jacob was stunned at the news—he couldn’t believe it. <sup>27</sup> But when they repeated to Jacob everything Joseph had told them, and when he saw the wagons Joseph had sent to carry him, their father’s spirits revived.

<sup>28</sup> Then Jacob exclaimed, “It must be true! My son Joseph is alive! I must go and see him before I die.”

### *Jacob’s Journey to Egypt*

**46** So Jacob set out for Egypt with all his possessions. And when he came to Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father, Isaac.

<sup>2</sup> During the night God spoke to him in a vision. “Jacob! Jacob!” he called.

“Here I am,” Jacob replied.

<sup>3</sup> “I am God, the God of your father,” the voice said.

“Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make your family into a great nation.<sup>4</sup> I will go with you down to Egypt, and I will bring you back again. You will die in Egypt, but Joseph will be with you to close your eyes.”

<sup>5</sup> So Jacob left Beersheba, and his sons took him to Egypt. They carried him and their little ones and their wives in the wagons Pharaoh had provided for them.<sup>6</sup> They also took all their livestock and all the personal belongings they had acquired in the land of Canaan. So Jacob and his entire family went to Egypt—<sup>7</sup> sons and grandsons, daughters and granddaughters—all his descendants.

### **Matthew 14:22-36** (NRSV)

#### *Jesus Walks on the Water*

(Mk 6:45–52; Jn 6:15–21)

<sup>22</sup> Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.<sup>23</sup> And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,<sup>24</sup> but by this

time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.

<sup>25</sup> And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea.<sup>26</sup> But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear.<sup>27</sup> But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, **“Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”**

<sup>28</sup> Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.”<sup>29</sup> He said, **“Come.”** So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.<sup>30</sup> But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”<sup>31</sup> Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, **“You of little faith, why did you doubt?”**<sup>32</sup> When they got into the boat, the wind ceased.<sup>33</sup> And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

*Jesus Heals the  
Sick in Gennesaret*  
(Mk 6:53–56)

<sup>34</sup> When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. <sup>35</sup> After the people of that place recognized him, they sent word throughout the region and brought all who were sick to him, <sup>36</sup> and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

**Psalm 19:1-6** (NRSV)

*God's Glory in Creation and  
the Law*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

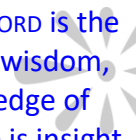
<sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
and the firmament  
proclaims his  
handiwork.  
<sup>2</sup> Day to day pours forth  
speech,  
and night to night  
declares knowledge.  
<sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are  
there words;  
their voice is not heard;  
<sup>4</sup> yet their voice goes out  
through all the earth,  
and their words to the  
end of the world.

In the heavens he has set a  
tent for the sun,  
<sup>5</sup> which comes out like a  
bridegroom from his  
wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man  
runs its course with  
joy.  
<sup>6</sup> Its rising is from the end of  
the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end  
of them;  
and nothing is hid from  
its heat.

**Proverbs 9:9–10** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Give instruction to the  
wise, and they will  
become wiser still;  
teach the righteous and  
they will gain in  
learning.

<sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom,  
and the knowledge of  
the Holy One is insight.



# February 15



## Genesis 46:8-47:12

<sup>8</sup>These are the names of the descendants of Israel—the sons of Jacob—who went to Egypt:

Reuben was Jacob's oldest son. <sup>9</sup>The sons of Reuben were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

<sup>10</sup>The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul. (Shaul's mother was a Canaanite woman.)

<sup>11</sup>The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

<sup>12</sup>The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (though Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.

<sup>13</sup>The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron.

<sup>14</sup>The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

<sup>15</sup>These were the sons of Leah and Jacob who were born in Paddan-aram, in addition to their daughter,

Dinah. The number of Jacob's descendants (male and female) through Leah was thirty-three.

<sup>16</sup>The sons of Gad were Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.

<sup>17</sup>The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Their sister was Serah. Beriah's sons were Heber and Malkiel.

<sup>18</sup>These were the sons of Zilpah, the servant given to Leah by her father, Laban. The number of Jacob's descendants through Zilpah was sixteen.

<sup>19</sup>The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.

<sup>20</sup>Joseph's sons, born in the land of Egypt, were Manasseh and Ephraim. Their mother was Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On.

<sup>21</sup>Benjamin's sons were Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.

<sup>22</sup>These were the sons of Rachel and Jacob. The number of Jacob's

descendants through  
Rachel was fourteen.

<sup>23</sup> The son of Dan was Hushim.

<sup>24</sup> The sons of Naphtali were  
Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and  
Shillem.

<sup>25</sup> These were the sons of  
Bilhah, the servant given  
to Rachel by her father,  
Laban. The number of  
Jacob's descendants  
through Bilhah was seven.

<sup>26</sup> The total number of Jacob's  
direct descendants who went  
with him to Egypt, not  
counting his sons' wives, was  
sixty-six. <sup>27</sup> In addition, Joseph  
had two sons who were born  
in Egypt. So altogether, there  
were seventy members of  
Jacob's family in the land of  
Egypt.

### *Jacob's Family Arrives in Goshen*

<sup>28</sup> As they neared their  
destination, Jacob sent Judah  
ahead to meet Joseph and get  
directions to the region of  
Goshen. And when they finally  
arrived there, <sup>29</sup> Joseph  
prepared his chariot and  
traveled to Goshen to meet his  
father, Jacob. When Joseph  
arrived, he embraced his

father and wept, holding him  
for a long time. <sup>30</sup> Finally,  
Jacob said to Joseph, "Now I  
am ready to die, since I have  
seen your face again and know  
you are still alive."

<sup>31</sup> And Joseph said to his  
brothers and to his father's  
entire family, "I will go to  
Pharaoh and tell him, 'My  
brothers and my father's  
entire family have come to me  
from the land of Canaan.

<sup>32</sup> These men are shepherds,  
and they raise livestock. They  
have brought with them their  
flocks and herds and  
everything they own.' "

<sup>33</sup> Then he said, "When  
Pharaoh calls for you and asks  
you about your occupation,  
<sup>34</sup> you must tell him, 'We, your  
servants, have raised livestock  
all our lives, as our ancestors  
have always done.' When you  
tell him this, he will let you live  
here in the region of Goshen,  
for the Egyptians despise  
shepherds."

### *Jacob Blesses Pharaoh*

**47** Then Joseph went to see  
Pharaoh and told him, "My  
father and my brothers have  
arrived from the land of



Canaan. They have come with all their flocks and herds and possessions, and they are now in the region of Goshen.”

<sup>2</sup> Joseph took five of his brothers with him and presented them to Pharaoh.

<sup>3</sup> And Pharaoh asked the brothers, “What is your occupation?”

They replied, “We, your servants, are shepherds, just like our ancestors.” <sup>4</sup> We have come to live here in Egypt for a while, for there is no pasture for our flocks in Canaan. The famine is very severe there. So please, we request permission to live in the region of Goshen.”

<sup>5</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Now that your father and brothers have joined you here, <sup>6</sup> choose any place in the entire land of Egypt for them to live. Give them the best land of Egypt. Let them live in the region of Goshen. And if any of them have special skills, put them in charge of my livestock, too.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Joseph brought in his father, Jacob, and presented him to Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

<sup>8</sup> “How old are you?” Pharaoh asked him.

<sup>9</sup> Jacob replied, “I have traveled this earth for 130 hard years. But my life has been short compared to the lives of my ancestors.” <sup>10</sup> Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh again before leaving his court.

<sup>11</sup> So Joseph assigned the best land of Egypt—the region of Rameses—to his father and his brothers, and he settled them there, just as Pharaoh had commanded. <sup>12</sup> And Joseph provided food for his father and his brothers in amounts appropriate to the number of their dependents, including the smallest children.

### **Matthew 15:1-14 (NRSV)**

#### *The Tradition of the Elders* (Mk 7:1–13)

<sup>1</sup> Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, <sup>2</sup> “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat.” <sup>3</sup> He answered them, “**And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?** <sup>4</sup> **For God said, ‘Honor your father**

and your mother,' and,  
'Whoever speaks evil of father  
or mother must surely die.'

<sup>5</sup> But you say that whoever  
tells father or mother,  
'Whatever support you might  
have had from me is given to  
God,' then that person need  
not honor the father. <sup>6</sup> So, for  
the sake of your tradition, you  
make void the word of God.

<sup>7</sup> You hypocrites! Isaiah  
prophesied rightly about you  
when he said:

<sup>8</sup> 'This people honors me  
with their lips,  
but their hearts are far  
from me;  
<sup>9</sup> in vain do they worship  
me,  
teaching human precepts  
as doctrines.' "

*Things That Defile*

(Mk 7:14–23)

<sup>10</sup> Then he called the crowd to  
him and said to them, "Listen  
and understand: <sup>11</sup> it is not  
what goes into the mouth that  
defiles a person, but it is what  
comes out of the mouth that  
defiles." <sup>12</sup> Then the disciples  
approached and said to him,  
"Do you know that the  
Pharisees took offense when  
they heard what you said?"

<sup>13</sup> He answered, "Every plant  
that my heavenly Father has  
not planted will be uprooted.

<sup>14</sup> Let them alone; they are  
blind guides of the blind. And  
if one blind person guides  
another, both will fall into a  
pit."

**Psalm 19:7-14 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is  
perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
the decrees of the LORD are  
sure,  
making wise the simple;  
<sup>8</sup> the precepts of the LORD  
are right,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the  
LORD is clear,  
enlightening the eyes;  
<sup>9</sup> the fear of the LORD is  
pure,  
enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the LORD  
are true  
and righteous altogether.  
<sup>10</sup> More to be desired are  
they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey,  
and drippings of the  
honeycomb.



- <sup>11</sup> Moreover by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.
- <sup>12</sup> But who can detect their errors?  
Clear me from hidden faults.
- <sup>13</sup> Keep back your servant also from the insolent;  
do not let them have dominion over me.  
Then I shall be blameless,  
and innocent of great transgression.
- <sup>14</sup> Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you,  
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

**Proverbs 9:11–12 (NRSV)**

- <sup>11</sup> For by me your days will be multiplied,  
and years will be added to your life.
- <sup>12</sup> If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;  
if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

## February 16



**Genesis 47:13-31**

*Joseph's Leadership in the Famine*

- <sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, the famine became so severe that all the food was used up, and people were starving throughout the lands of Egypt and Canaan.
- <sup>14</sup> By selling grain to the people, Joseph eventually collected all the money in Egypt and Canaan, and he put the money in Pharaoh's treasury. <sup>15</sup> When the people of Egypt and Canaan ran out of money, all the Egyptians came to Joseph. "Our money is gone!" they cried. "But please give us food, or we will die before your very eyes!"
- <sup>16</sup> Joseph replied, "Since your money is gone, bring me your livestock. I will give you food in exchange for your livestock." <sup>17</sup> So they brought their livestock to Joseph in exchange for food. In exchange for their horses, flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and donkeys,

Joseph provided them with food for another year.

<sup>18</sup> But that year ended, and the next year they came again and said, “We cannot hide the truth from you, my lord. Our money is gone, and all our livestock and cattle are yours. We have nothing left to give but our bodies and our land.

<sup>19</sup> Why should we die before your very eyes? Buy us and our land in exchange for food; we offer our land and ourselves as slaves for Pharaoh. Just give us grain so we may live and not die, and so the land does not become empty and desolate.”

<sup>20</sup> So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. All the Egyptians sold him their fields because the famine was so severe, and soon all the land belonged to Pharaoh.

<sup>21</sup> As for the people, he made them all slaves, from one end of Egypt to the other. <sup>22</sup> The only land he did not buy was the land belonging to the priests. They received an allotment of food directly from Pharaoh, so they didn’t need to sell their land.

<sup>23</sup> Then Joseph said to the people, “Look, today I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh. I will provide you with seed so you can plant the fields. <sup>24</sup> Then when you harvest it, one-fifth of your crop will belong to Pharaoh. You may keep the remaining four-fifths as seed for your fields and as food for you, your households, and your little ones.”

<sup>25</sup> “You have saved our lives!” they exclaimed. “May it please you, my lord, to let us be Pharaoh’s servants.”

<sup>26</sup> Joseph then issued a decree still in effect in the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh should receive one-fifth of all the crops grown on his land. Only the land belonging to the priests was not given to Pharaoh.

<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile, the people of Israel settled in the region of Goshen in Egypt. There they acquired property, and they were fruitful, and their population grew rapidly.

<sup>28</sup> Jacob lived for seventeen years after his arrival in Egypt, so he lived 147 years in all.

<sup>29</sup> As the time of his death drew near, Jacob called for his son Joseph and said to him, “Please do me this favor. Put your hand under my thigh and swear that you will treat me with unfailing love by honoring this last request: Do not bury me in Egypt. <sup>30</sup> When I die, please take my body out of Egypt and bury me with my ancestors.”

So Joseph promised, “I will do as you ask.”

<sup>31</sup> “Swear that you will do it,” Jacob insisted. So Joseph gave his oath, and Jacob bowed humbly at the head of his bed.

**Matthew 15:15-28 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.”

<sup>16</sup> Then he said, “**Are you also still without understanding?**

<sup>17</sup> **Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? <sup>18</sup> But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. <sup>19</sup> For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false**

**witness, slander. <sup>20</sup> These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”**

*The Canaanite Woman’s Faith*  
(Mk 7:24–30)

<sup>21</sup> Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup> Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” <sup>23</sup> But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.”

<sup>24</sup> He answered, “**I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**” <sup>25</sup> But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” <sup>26</sup> He answered, “**It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.**” <sup>27</sup> She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered her, “**Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.**” And her daughter was healed instantly.

**Psalm 20:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Victory*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD answer you in the  
day of trouble!  
The name of the God of  
Jacob protect you!  
2 May he send you help  
from the sanctuary,  
and give you support  
from Zion.  
3 May he remember all your  
offerings,  
and regard with favor  
your burnt sacrifices.  
*Selah*  
4 May he grant you your  
heart's desire,  
and fulfill all your plans.  
5 May we shout for joy over  
your victory,  
and in the name of our  
God set up our  
banners.

May the LORD fulfill all your  
petitions.

6 Now I know that the LORD  
will help his anointed;  
he will answer him from  
his holy heaven  
with mighty victories by  
his right hand.

**Proverbs 9:13–18 (NRSV)**

*Folly's Invitation and Promise*

13 The foolish woman is loud;

she is ignorant and  
knows nothing.

14 She sits at the door of her  
house,  
on a seat at the high  
places of the town,  
15 calling to those who pass  
by,  
who are going straight  
on their way,  
16 "You who are simple, turn  
in here!"  
And to those without  
sense she says,  
17 "Stolen water is sweet,  
and bread eaten in  
secret is pleasant."  
18 But they do not know that  
the dead are there,  
that her guests are in  
the depths of Sheol.

**February  
17**



**Genesis 48:1-22**

*Jacob Blesses*

*Manasseh and Ephraim*

One day not long after this,  
word came to Joseph, "Your

father is failing rapidly.” So Joseph went to visit his father, and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

<sup>2</sup> When Joseph arrived, Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to see you.” So Jacob gathered his strength and sat up in his bed.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me. <sup>4</sup> He said to me, ‘I will make you fruitful, and I will multiply your descendants. I will make you a multitude of nations. And I will give this land of Canaan to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.’

<sup>5</sup> “Now I am claiming as my own sons f these two boys of yours, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born here in the land of Egypt before I arrived. They will be my sons, just as Reuben and Simeon are. <sup>6</sup> But any children born to you in the future will be your own, and they will inherit land within the territories of their

brothers Ephraim and Manasseh.

<sup>7</sup> “Long ago, as I was returning from Paddan-aram, Rachel died in the land of Canaan. We were still on the way, some distance from Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). So with great sorrow I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath.”

<sup>8</sup> Then Jacob looked over at the two boys. “Are these your sons?” he asked.

<sup>9</sup> “Yes,” Joseph told him, “these are the sons God has given me here in Egypt.”

And Jacob said, “Bring them closer to me, so I can bless them.”

<sup>10</sup> Jacob was half blind because of his age and could hardly see. So Joseph brought the boys close to him, and Jacob kissed and embraced them. <sup>11</sup> Then Jacob said to Joseph, “I never thought I would see your face again, but now God has let me see your children, too!”

<sup>12</sup> Joseph moved the boys, who were at their grandfather’s knees, and he bowed with his face to the ground. <sup>13</sup> Then he positioned

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<sup>f</sup> See Numbers 10:22-23, Ezekiel 47:13-14, Joshua 16 & 17, Numbers 9:1-3, Revelation 7:4-8

the boys in front of Jacob. With his right hand he directed Ephraim toward Jacob's left hand, and with his left hand he put Manasseh at Jacob's right hand. <sup>14</sup> But Jacob crossed his arms as he reached out to lay his hands on the boys' heads. He put his right hand on the head of Ephraim, though he was the younger boy, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, though he was the firstborn. <sup>15</sup> Then he blessed Joseph and said,

“May the God before  
whom my grandfather  
Abraham  
and my father, Isaac,  
walked—

the God who has been my  
shepherd  
all my life, to this very  
day,

<sup>16</sup> the Angel who has  
redeemed me from all  
harm—  
may he bless these  
boys.

May they preserve my  
name  
and the names of  
Abraham and Isaac.  
And may their descendants  
multiply greatly

throughout the earth.”

<sup>17</sup> But Joseph was upset when he saw that his father placed his right hand on Ephraim's head. So Joseph lifted it to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. <sup>18</sup> “No, my father,” he said. “This one is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head.”

<sup>19</sup> But his father refused. “I know, my son; I know,” he replied. “Manasseh will also become a great people, but his younger brother will become even greater. And his descendants will become a multitude of nations.”

<sup>20</sup> So Jacob blessed the boys that day with this blessing: “The people of Israel will use your names when they give a blessing. They will say, ‘May God make you as prosperous as Ephraim and Manasseh.’” In this way, Jacob put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

<sup>21</sup> Then Jacob said to Joseph, “Look, I am about to die, but God will be with you and will take you back to Canaan, the land of your ancestors. <sup>22</sup> And beyond what



I have given your brothers, I am giving you an extra portion of the land that I took from the Amorites with my sword and bow.”

**Matthew 15:29-39** (NRSV)

*Jesus Cures Many People*  
(Mk 7:31-37)

<sup>29</sup> After Jesus had left that place, he passed along the Sea of Galilee, and he went up the mountain, where he sat down. <sup>30</sup> Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them, <sup>31</sup> so that the crowd was amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

*Feeding the Four Thousand*  
(Mk 8:1-10)

<sup>32</sup> Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “**I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they**

**might faint on the way.”** <sup>33</sup> The disciples said to him, “Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?” <sup>34</sup> Jesus asked them, “**How many loaves have you?**”

They said, “Seven, and a few small fish.” <sup>35</sup> Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, <sup>36</sup> he took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

<sup>37</sup> And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. <sup>38</sup> Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children. <sup>39</sup> After sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

**Psalm 20:7-9** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses,  
but our pride is in the name of the LORD our God.

<sup>8</sup> They will collapse and fall,

but we shall rise and  
stand upright.

<sup>9</sup> Give victory to the king, O  
LORD;  
answer us when we call.

### **Proverbs 10:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Wise Sayings of Solomon*

<sup>1</sup> The proverbs of Solomon.  
A wise child makes a glad  
father,  
but a foolish child is a  
mother's grief.

<sup>2</sup> Treasures gained by  
wickedness do not  
profit, but  
righteousness delivers  
from death.

## **February 18**



### **Genesis 49:1-33 (NRSV)**

*Jacob's Last Words to His Sons*

Then Jacob called together all  
his sons and said, "Gather  
around me, and I will tell you  
what will happen to each of  
you in the days to come.

<sup>2</sup> "Come and listen, you  
sons of Jacob;  
listen to Israel, your  
father.

<sup>3</sup> "Reuben, you are my  
firstborn, my strength,  
the child of my  
vigorous youth.  
You are first in rank  
and first in power.

<sup>4</sup> But you are as unruly as a  
flood,  
and you will be first no  
longer.

For you went to bed with  
my wife;  
you defiled my  
marriage couch.

<sup>5</sup> "Simeon and Levi are two  
of a kind;  
their weapons are  
instruments of  
violence.

<sup>6</sup> May I never join in their  
meetings;  
may I never be a party  
to their plans.

For in their anger they  
murdered men,  
and they crippled oxen  
just for sport.

<sup>7</sup> A curse on their anger,  
for it is fierce;  
a curse on their wrath,  
for it is cruel.

I will scatter them among  
the descendants of  
Jacob;  
I will disperse them  
throughout Israel.


<sup>8</sup> “Judah, your brothers will  
praise you.

You will grasp your  
enemies by the  
neck.

All your relatives will  
bow before you.

<sup>9</sup> Judah, my son, is a young  
lion  
that has finished eating  
its prey.

Like a lion he crouches and  
lies down;  
like a lioness—who  
dares to rouse him?

<sup>10</sup> The scepter will not  
depart from Judah,  
nor the ruler’s staff  
from his  
descendants,  
until the coming of the one  
to whom it belongs,  
the one whom all  
nations will honor.

<sup>11</sup> He ties his foal to a  
grapevine,  
the colt of his donkey  
to a choice vine.  
He washes his clothes  
in wine,

his robes in the blood  
of grapes.

<sup>12</sup> His eyes are darker than  
wine,  
and his teeth are  
whiter than milk.

<sup>13</sup> “Zebulun will settle by  
the seashore  
and will be a harbor for  
ships;  
his borders will extend  
to Sidon.

<sup>14</sup> “Issachar is a sturdy  
donkey,  
resting between two  
saddlepacks.

<sup>15</sup> When he sees how good  
the countryside is  
and how pleasant the  
land,  
he will bend his shoulder  
to the load  
and submit himself to  
hard labor.

<sup>16</sup> “Dan will govern his  
people,  
like any other tribe in  
Israel.

<sup>17</sup> Dan will be a snake  
beside the road,  
a poisonous viper  
along the path that  
bites the horse’s  
hooves

so its rider is thrown  
off.  
<sup>18</sup> I trust in you for  
salvation, O LORD!  
<sup>19</sup> "Gad will be attacked by  
marauding bands,  
but he will attack them  
when they retreat.  
<sup>20</sup> "Asher will dine on rich  
foods  
and produce food fit  
for kings.  
<sup>21</sup> "Naphtali is a doe set  
free  
that bears beautiful  
fawns.  
<sup>22</sup> "Joseph is the foal of a  
wild donkey,  
the foal of a wild  
donkey at a  
spring—  
one of the wild  
donkeys on the  
ridge.  
<sup>23</sup> Archers attacked him  
savagely;  
they shot at him and  
harassed him.  
<sup>24</sup> But his bow remained  
taut,  
and his arms were  
strengthened  
by the hands of the  
Mighty One of  
Jacob,

by the Shepherd, the  
Rock of Israel.  
<sup>25</sup> May the God of your  
father help you;  
May the Almighty bless  
you with the  
blessings of the  
heavens above,  
and blessings of the  
watery depths  
below,  
and blessings of the  
breasts and womb.  
<sup>26</sup> May my fatherly  
blessings on you  
surpass the blessings of  
my ancestors,  
reaching to the heights  
of the eternal hills.  
May these blessings rest  
on the head of Joseph,  
who is a prince among  
his brothers.  
<sup>27</sup> "Benjamin is a ravenous  
wolf,  
devouring his enemies  
in the morning  
and dividing his  
plunder in the  
evening."  
<sup>28</sup> These are the twelve  
tribes of Israel, and this is  
what their father said as he  
told his sons good-bye. He

blessed each one with an appropriate message.

### *Jacob's Death and Burial*

<sup>29</sup> Then Jacob instructed them, "Soon I will die and join my ancestors. Bury me with my father and grandfather in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. <sup>30</sup> This is the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a permanent burial site. <sup>31</sup> There Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried. There Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, are buried. And there I buried Leah. <sup>32</sup> It is the plot of land and the cave that my grandfather Abraham bought from the Hittites."

<sup>33</sup> When Jacob had finished this charge to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and joined his ancestors in death.

### **Matthew 16:1-12 (NRSV)**

*The Demand for a Sign*  
(Mk 8:11-13; Lk 12:54-56)

<sup>1</sup> The Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test Jesus they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. <sup>2</sup> He answered them, "When it is evening, you

say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' <sup>3</sup> And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. <sup>4</sup> An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." Then he left them and went away.

*The Yeast of the  
Pharisees and Sadducees*  
(Mk 8:14-21)

<sup>5</sup> When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to them, "Watch out, and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." <sup>7</sup> They said to one another, "It is because we have brought no bread." <sup>8</sup> And becoming aware of it, Jesus said, "You of little faith, why are you talking about having no bread? <sup>9</sup> Do you still not perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? <sup>10</sup> Or the seven loaves for the

four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? <sup>11</sup> How could you fail to perceive that I was not speaking about bread? Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!"

<sup>12</sup> Then they understood that he had not told them to beware of the yeast of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

### **Psalms 21:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for Victory*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> In your strength the king rejoices, O LORD,  
and in your help how greatly he exults!
- <sup>2</sup> You have given him his heart's desire,  
and have not withheld the request of his lips.  
*Selah*
- <sup>3</sup> For you meet him with rich blessings;  
you set a crown of fine gold on his head.
- <sup>4</sup> He asked you for life; you gave it to him—  
length of days forever and ever.
- <sup>5</sup> His glory is great through your help;  
splendor and majesty you bestow on him.

- <sup>6</sup> You bestow on him blessings forever;  
you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

- <sup>7</sup> For the king trusts in the LORD,  
and through the steadfast love of the Most High he shall not be moved.

### **Proverbs 10:3-4 (NRSV)**

- <sup>3</sup> The LORD does not let the righteous go hungry,  
but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.
- <sup>4</sup> A slack hand causes poverty,  
but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

## **February 19**



### **Genesis 50:1-26 (NRSV)**

Joseph threw himself on his father and wept over him and kissed him. <sup>2</sup> Then Joseph told the physicians who served him

to embalm his father's body; so Jacob was embalmed.<sup>3</sup> The embalming process took the usual forty days. And the Egyptians mourned his death for seventy days.

<sup>4</sup> When the period of mourning was over, Joseph approached Pharaoh's advisers and said, "Please do me this favor and speak to Pharaoh on my behalf.<sup>5</sup> Tell him that my father made me swear an oath. He said to me, 'Listen, I am about to die. Take my body back to the land of Canaan, and bury me in the tomb I prepared for myself.' So please allow me to go and bury my father. After his burial, I will return without delay."

<sup>6</sup> Pharaoh agreed to Joseph's request. "Go and bury your father, as he made you promise," he said.<sup>7</sup> So Joseph went up to bury his father. He was accompanied by all of Pharaoh's officials, all the senior members of Pharaoh's household, and all the senior officers of Egypt.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph also took his entire household and his brothers and their households. But they

left their little children and flocks and herds in the land of Goshen.<sup>9</sup> A great number of chariots and charioteers accompanied Joseph.

<sup>10</sup> When they arrived at the threshing floor of Atad, near the Jordan River, they held a very great and solemn memorial service, with a seven-day period of mourning for Joseph's father.<sup>11</sup> The local residents, the Canaanites, watched them mourning at the threshing floor of Atad. Then they renamed that place (which is near the Jordan) Abel-mizraim, for they said, "This is a place of deep mourning for these Egyptians."

<sup>12</sup> So Jacob's sons did as he had commanded them.<sup>13</sup> They carried his body to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre. This is the cave that Abraham had bought as a permanent burial site from Ephron the Hittite.

### *Joseph Reassures His Brothers*

<sup>14</sup> After burying Jacob, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had

accompanied him to his father's burial.<sup>15</sup> But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said.

<sup>16</sup> So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us<sup>17</sup> to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept.

<sup>18</sup> Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

<sup>19</sup> But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you?"

<sup>20</sup> You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.<sup>21</sup> No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured

them by speaking kindly to them.

### *The Death of Joseph*

<sup>22</sup> So Joseph and his brothers and their families continued to live in Egypt. Joseph lived to the age of 110.<sup>23</sup> He lived to see three generations of descendants of his son Ephraim, and he lived to see the birth of the children of Manasseh's son Makir, whom he claimed as his own.

<sup>24</sup> "Soon I will die," Joseph told his brothers, "but God will surely come to help you and lead you out of this land of Egypt. He will bring you back to the land he solemnly promised to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

<sup>25</sup> Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath, and he said, "When God comes to help you and lead you back, you must take my bones with you."<sup>26</sup> So Joseph died at the age of 110. The Egyptians embalmed him, and his body was placed in a coffin in Egypt.



**Matthew 16:13-20** (NRSV)

*Peter's Declaration about*

*Jesus*

*(Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-20)*

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, **“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”** <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup> He said to them, **“But who do you say that I am?”** <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered him, **“Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.** <sup>18</sup> **And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”** <sup>20</sup> Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

**Psalms 21:8-13** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Your hand will find out all your enemies;  
your right hand will find out those who hate you.

<sup>9</sup> You will make them like a fiery furnace when you appear.  
The LORD will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them.

<sup>10</sup> You will destroy their offspring from the earth,  
and their children from among humankind.

<sup>11</sup> If they plan evil against you,  
if they devise mischief, they will not succeed.

<sup>12</sup> For you will put them to flight;  
you will aim at their faces with your bows.

<sup>13</sup> Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength!  
We will sing and praise your power.

**Proverbs 10:5** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> A child who gathers in summer is prudent,

but a child who sleeps in  
harvest brings shame.

## February 20



### Exodus 1:1-2:10 (NRSV)

These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: <sup>2</sup> Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, <sup>3</sup> Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, <sup>4</sup> Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. <sup>5</sup> The total number of people born to Jacob was seventy. Joseph was already in Egypt. <sup>6</sup> Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and that whole generation. <sup>7</sup> But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

#### *The Israelites Are Oppressed*

<sup>8</sup> Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. <sup>9</sup> He said to his people, “Look, the Israelite people are

more numerous and more powerful than we. <sup>10</sup> Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.”

<sup>11</sup> Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. <sup>12</sup> But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. <sup>13</sup> The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, <sup>14</sup> and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

<sup>15</sup> The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, <sup>16</sup> “When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.” <sup>17</sup> But the midwives feared God; they did not do as

the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. <sup>18</sup> So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" <sup>19</sup> The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." <sup>20</sup> So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. <sup>21</sup> And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. <sup>22</sup> Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

*Birth and Youth of Moses*  
(Heb 11:23)

**2** Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. <sup>2</sup> The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. <sup>3</sup> When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and

plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. <sup>4</sup> His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

<sup>5</sup> The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. <sup>7</sup> Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" <sup>8</sup> Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. <sup>10</sup> When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him

Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

**Matthew 16:21-17:9** (NRSV)

*Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection*

(Mk 8:31–33; Lk 9:21–22)

<sup>21</sup> From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. <sup>22</sup> And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup> But he turned and said to Peter, “**Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.**”

*The Cross and Self-Denial*

(Mk 8:34–9:1; Lk 9:23–27)

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus told his disciples, “**If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.**” <sup>25</sup> **For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for**

**my sake will find it.** <sup>26</sup> **For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?**

<sup>27</sup> **“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. <sup>28</sup> Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”**

**Matthew 17:1–20:34** (NRSV)

*The Transfiguration*

(Mk 9:2–13; Lk 9:28–36;

2 Pet 1:16–18)

**17** Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. <sup>2</sup> And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>3</sup> Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. <sup>4</sup> Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for

you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”<sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!”

<sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear.

<sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “**Get up and do not be afraid.**”<sup>8</sup> And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “**Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.**”

**Psalm 22:1-18** (NRSV)

*Plea for Deliverance from Suffering and Hostility*

To the leader: according to The Deer of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

<sup>2</sup> O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;

and by night, but find no rest.

<sup>3</sup> Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

<sup>5</sup> To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

<sup>6</sup> But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people.

<sup>7</sup> All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

<sup>8</sup> “Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver— let him rescue the one in whom he delights!”

<sup>9</sup> Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother’s breast.

<sup>10</sup> On you I was cast from my birth,

and since my mother  
bore me you have  
been my God.  
11 Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near  
and there is no one to  
help.  
12 Many bulls encircle me,  
strong bulls of Bashan  
surround me;  
13 they open wide their  
mouths at me,  
like a ravening and  
roaring lion.  
14 I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out  
of joint;  
my heart is like wax;  
it is melted within my  
breast;  
15 my mouth is dried up like a  
potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to  
my jaws;  
you lay me in the dust of  
death.  
16 For dogs are all around  
me;  
a company of evildoers  
encircles me.  
My hands and feet have  
shriveled;  
17 I can count all my bones.  
They stare and gloat over  
me;

18 they divide my clothes  
among themselves,  
and for my clothing they  
cast lots.

**Proverbs 10:6-7** (NRSV)

6 Blessings are on the head  
of the righteous,  
but the mouth of the  
wicked conceals  
violence.  
7 The memory of the  
righteous is a blessing,  
but the name of the  
wicked will rot.

## February 21



**Exodus 2:11-22** (NRSV)

*Moses Flees to Midian*  
(Heb 11:24–25)

11 One day, after Moses  
had grown up, he went out to  
his people and saw their  
forced labor. He saw an  
Egyptian beating a Hebrew,  
one of his kinsfolk. 12 He  
looked this way and that, and  
seeing no one he killed the

Egyptian and hid him in the sand.<sup>13</sup> When he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrews fighting; and he said to the one who was in the wrong, “Why do you strike your fellow Hebrew?”<sup>14</sup> He answered, “Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and thought, “Surely the thing is known.”<sup>15</sup> When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses.

But Moses fled from Pharaoh. He settled in the land of Midian, and sat down by a well.<sup>16</sup> The priest of Midian had seven daughters. They came to draw water, and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock.<sup>17</sup> But some shepherds came and drove them away. Moses got up and came to their defense and watered their flock.<sup>18</sup> When they returned to their father Reuel, he said, “How is it that you have come back so soon today?”<sup>19</sup> They said, “An Egyptian helped us against the shepherds; he even drew water for us and watered the flock.”<sup>20</sup> He said to his

daughters, “Where is he? Why did you leave the man? Invite him to break bread.”<sup>21</sup> Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage.<sup>22</sup> She bore a son, and he named him Gershom; for he said, “I have been an alien residing in a foreign land.”

**Matthew 17:10-21** (NRSV)

And the disciples asked him, “Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”<sup>11</sup> He replied, “Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things;<sup>12</sup> but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands.”

<sup>13</sup> Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

*Jesus Cures a Boy  
with a Demon*

(Mk 9:14–29; Lk 9:37–43a)

<sup>14</sup> When they came to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him,<sup>15</sup> and said,

“Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; he often falls into the fire and often into the water.”<sup>16</sup> And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.”<sup>17</sup> Jesus answered, “**You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him here to me.**”<sup>18</sup> And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly.<sup>19</sup> Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”<sup>20</sup> He said to them, “**Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.**”

**Psalms 22:19-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> But you, O LORD, do not be far away!  
 O my help, come quickly to my aid!  
<sup>20</sup> Deliver my soul from the sword,

my life from the power of the dog!  
<sup>21</sup> Save me from the mouth of the lion!  
 From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.  
<sup>22</sup> I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;  
 in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:  
<sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
 All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;  
 stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!  
<sup>24</sup> For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted;  
 he did not hide his face from me,  
 but heard when I cried to him.

**Proverbs 10:8-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> The wise of heart will heed commandments,  
 but a babbling fool will come to ruin.  
<sup>9</sup> Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but



whoever follows  
perverse ways will be  
found out.

## February 22



### Exodus 2:23 – 3:22 (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> After a long time the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. <sup>24</sup> God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. <sup>25</sup> God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

*Moses at the Burning Bush*  
(Ex 6:2–7:7; 11:1–4; 12:35–36)

**3** Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of

fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. <sup>3</sup> Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.” <sup>4</sup> When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” <sup>5</sup> Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” <sup>6</sup> He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

<sup>7</sup> Then the LORD said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, <sup>8</sup> and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the

Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. <sup>9</sup>The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. <sup>10</sup>So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

<sup>11</sup>But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” <sup>12</sup>He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

#### *The Divine Name Revealed*

<sup>13</sup>But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” <sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” <sup>15</sup>God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’:

This is my name forever,  
and this my title for all  
generations.

<sup>16</sup>Go and assemble the elders of Israel, and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying: I have given heed to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt. <sup>17</sup>I declare that I will bring you up out of the misery of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ <sup>18</sup>They will listen to your voice; and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; let us now go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’ <sup>19</sup>I know, however, that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.

<sup>20</sup>So I will stretch out my hand

and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will perform in it; after that he will let you go.<sup>21</sup> I will bring this people into such favor with the Egyptians that, when you go, you will not go empty-handed;<sup>22</sup> each woman shall ask her neighbor and any woman living in the neighbor's house for jewelry of silver and of gold, and clothing, and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters; and so you shall plunder the Egyptians."

**Matthew 17:22-27** (NRSV)

*(Mk 9:30–32; Lk 9:43b–45)*

<sup>22</sup> As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands,<sup>23</sup> and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised." And they were greatly distressed.

*Jesus and the Temple Tax*

<sup>24</sup> When they reached Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the temple tax?"<sup>25</sup> He said, "Yes, he does." And when he came home, Jesus spoke of it first, asking, "What do you

think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their children or from others?"<sup>26</sup> When Peter said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the children are free."<sup>27</sup> However, so that we do not give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook; take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a coin; take that and give it to them for you and me."

**Psalm 22:25-26** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

<sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your hearts live forever!

**Proverbs 10:10** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Whoever winks the eye causes trouble, but the one who rebukes boldly makes peace.

# February 23



## **Exodus 4:1-26** (NRSV)

### *Moses' Miraculous Power*

<sup>1</sup> Then Moses answered, "But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, 'The LORD did not appear to you.'" <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." <sup>3</sup> And he said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses drew back from it. <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail"—so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand— <sup>5</sup> "so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

<sup>6</sup> Again, the LORD said to him, "Put your hand inside your cloak." He put his hand into his cloak; and when he took it out, his hand was leprous, as white as snow.

<sup>7</sup> Then God said, "Put your

hand back into your cloak"—so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body— <sup>8</sup> "If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign. <sup>9</sup> If they will not believe even these two signs or heed you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground."

<sup>10</sup> But Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." <sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to him, "Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?" <sup>12</sup> Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak."

<sup>13</sup> But he said, "O my Lord, please send someone else."

<sup>14</sup> Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, "What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that

he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. <sup>15</sup> You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. <sup>16</sup> He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. <sup>17</sup> Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.”

#### *Moses Returns to Egypt*

<sup>18</sup> Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro and said to him, “Please let me go back to my kindred in Egypt and see whether they are still living.” And Jethro said to Moses, “Go in peace.” <sup>19</sup> The LORD said to Moses in Midian, “Go back to Egypt; for all those who were seeking your life are dead.”

<sup>20</sup> So Moses took his wife and his sons, put them on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt; and Moses carried the staff of God in his hand.

<sup>21</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders that I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. <sup>22</sup> Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD: Israel is my firstborn son. <sup>23</sup> I said to you, “Let my son go that he may worship me.” But you refused to let him go; now I will kill your firstborn son.’ ”


<sup>24</sup> On the way, at a place where they spent the night, the LORD met him and tried to kill him. <sup>25</sup> But Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin, and touched Moses’ feet with it, and said, “Truly you are a bridegroom of blood to me!” <sup>26</sup> So he let him alone. It was then she said, “A bridegroom of blood by circumcision.”

#### **Matthew 18:1-14** (NRSV)

##### *True Greatness*

*(Mk 9:33–37; Lk 9:46–48)*

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” <sup>2</sup> He called a child, whom he put among them,



<sup>3</sup> and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup> Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

*Temptations to Sin*  
(Mk 9:42–48; Lk 17:1–2)

<sup>6</sup> “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. <sup>7</sup> Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

<sup>8</sup> “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup> And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for

you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.

*The Parable of the Lost Sheep*  
(Lk 15:1–7)

<sup>10</sup> “Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven. <sup>12</sup> What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?

<sup>13</sup> And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. <sup>14</sup> So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.

**Psalm 22:27–31** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.

<sup>28</sup> For dominion belongs to the LORD,

and he rules over the nations.

- <sup>29</sup> To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;  
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,  
and I shall live for him.  
<sup>30</sup> Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,  
<sup>31</sup> and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

**Proverbs 10:11-12** (NRSV)

- <sup>11</sup> The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,  
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.  
<sup>12</sup> Hatred stirs up strife,  
but love covers all offenses.

**February**  
**24**



**Exodus 4:27 – 5:21** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> The LORD said to Aaron, “Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.” So he went; and he met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. <sup>28</sup> Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him, and all the signs with which he had charged him. <sup>29</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the Israelites. <sup>30</sup> Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses, and performed the signs in the sight of the people. <sup>31</sup> The people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had given heed to the Israelites and that he had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

*Bricks without Straw*

**5** Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a

festival to me in the wilderness.’ ” <sup>2</sup> But Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD, that I should heed him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go.”

<sup>3</sup> Then they said, “The God of the Hebrews has revealed himself to us; let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD our God, or he will fall upon us with pestilence or sword.” <sup>4</sup> But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their work? Get to your labors!” <sup>5</sup> Pharaoh continued, “Now they are more numerous than the people of the land and yet you want them to stop working!”

<sup>6</sup> That same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, as well as their supervisors, <sup>7</sup> “You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. <sup>8</sup> But you shall require of them the same quantity of bricks as they have made previously; do not diminish it, for they are lazy; that is why they cry, ‘Let us go

and offer sacrifice to our God.’ ” <sup>9</sup> Let heavier work be laid on them; then they will labor at it and pay no attention to deceptive words.”

<sup>10</sup> So the taskmasters and the supervisors of the people went out and said to the people, “Thus says Pharaoh, ‘I will not give you straw. <sup>11</sup> Go and get straw yourselves, wherever you can find it; but your work will not be lessened in the least.’ ” <sup>12</sup> So the people scattered throughout the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw. <sup>13</sup> The taskmasters were urgent, saying, “Complete your work, the same daily assignment as when you were given straw.” <sup>14</sup> And the supervisors of the Israelites, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and were asked, “Why did you not finish the required quantity of bricks yesterday and today, as you did before?”

<sup>15</sup> Then the Israelite supervisors came to Pharaoh and cried, “Why do you treat your servants like this? <sup>16</sup> No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, ‘Make bricks!’ Look how your



servants are beaten! You are unjust to your own people.”

<sup>17</sup> He said, “You are lazy, lazy; that is why you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.’” <sup>18</sup> Go now, and work; for no straw shall be given you, but you shall still deliver the same number of bricks.” <sup>19</sup> The Israelite supervisors saw that they were in trouble when they were told, “You shall not lessen your daily number of bricks.” <sup>20</sup> As they left Pharaoh, they came upon Moses and Aaron who were waiting to meet them. <sup>21</sup> They said to them, “The LORD look upon you and judge! You have brought us into bad odor with Pharaoh and his officials, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

**Matthew 18:15-22 (NRSV)**

*Reproving Another Who Sins*

<sup>15</sup> “If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.

<sup>16</sup> But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every

word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup> Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

<sup>19</sup> Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

*Forgiveness*

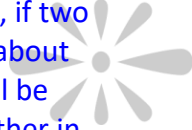
<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.”

**Psalm 23:1-6 (NRSV)**

*The Divine Shepherd*

A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.



2 He makes me lie down in  
green pastures;  
he leads me beside still  
waters;  
3 he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk  
through the darkest  
valley,  
I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—  
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before  
me  
in the presence of my  
enemies;  
you anoint my head with  
oil;  
my cup overflows.

6 *Surely goodness and mercy  
shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the  
house of the LORD  
my whole life long.*

**Proverbs 10:13-14** (NRSV)

13 On the lips of one who has  
understanding wisdom  
is found,  
but a rod is for the back  
of one who lacks sense.

14 The wise lay up  
knowledge,  
but the babbling of a fool  
brings ruin near.

**February  
25**



**Exodus 5:22 – 6:30** (NRSV)

22 Then Moses turned  
again to the LORD and said, “O  
LORD, why have you  
mistreated this people? Why  
did you ever send me? 23 Since  
I first came to Pharaoh to  
speak in your name, he has  
mistreated this people, and  
you have done nothing at all  
to deliver your people.”

*Israel's Deliverance Assured*  
(Ex 3:1–4:17)

**6** Then the LORD said to  
Moses, “Now you shall see  
what I will do to Pharaoh:  
Indeed, by a mighty hand he  
will let them go; by a mighty  
hand he will drive them out of  
his land.”

<sup>2</sup> God also spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD. <sup>3</sup> I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name 'The LORD' I did not make myself known to them. <sup>4</sup> I also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they resided as aliens. <sup>5</sup> I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are holding as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. <sup>6</sup> Say therefore to the Israelites, 'I am the LORD, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. <sup>7</sup> I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.' "

<sup>9</sup> Moses told this to the Israelites; but they would not

listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and their cruel slavery.

<sup>10</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, <sup>11</sup> "Go and tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the Israelites go out of his land." <sup>12</sup> But Moses spoke to the LORD, "The Israelites have not listened to me; how then shall Pharaoh listen to me, poor speaker that I am?" <sup>13</sup> Thus the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, and gave them orders regarding the Israelites and Pharaoh king of Egypt, charging them to free the Israelites from the land of Egypt.

*The Genealogy of  
Moses and Aaron  
(Gen 46:8–27)*

<sup>14</sup> The following are the heads of their ancestral houses: the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the families of Reuben. <sup>15</sup> The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the families of Simeon. <sup>16</sup> The following are the names of the sons of Levi according to their

genealogies: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and the length of Levi's life was one hundred thirty-seven years.<sup>17</sup> The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their families.<sup>18</sup> The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, and the length of Kohath's life was one hundred thirty-three years.<sup>19</sup> The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their genealogies.

<sup>20</sup> Amram married Jochebed his father's sister and she bore him Aaron and Moses, and the length of Amram's life was one hundred thirty-seven years.

<sup>21</sup> The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri.<sup>22</sup> The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.<sup>23</sup> Aaron married Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.<sup>24</sup> The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the families of the Korahites.<sup>25</sup> Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the ancestral

houses of the Levites by their families.

<sup>26</sup> It was this same Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, "Bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, company by company."<sup>27</sup> It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt to bring the Israelites out of Egypt, the same Moses and Aaron.

*Moses and Aaron  
Obey God's Commands*

<sup>28</sup> On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt,<sup>29</sup> he said to him, "I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I am speaking to you."<sup>30</sup> But Moses said in the LORD's presence, "Since I am a poor speaker, why would Pharaoh listen to me?"

**Matthew 18:23-35 (NRSV)**

*The Parable of the  
Unforgiving Servant*

<sup>23</sup> "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.<sup>24</sup> When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was

brought to him; <sup>25</sup> and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup> So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' <sup>27</sup> And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup> But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup> Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup> But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup> When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup> Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup> Should you not have had

mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup> And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup> So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

**Psalms 24:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Entrance into the Temple*

Of David. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,  
the world, and those who live in it;  
<sup>2</sup> for he has founded it on the seas,  
and established it on the rivers.

**Proverbs 10:15-16 (NRSV)**

- <sup>15</sup> The wealth of the rich is their fortress;  
the poverty of the poor is their ruin.  
<sup>16</sup> The wage of the righteous leads to life,  
the gain of the wicked to sin.

# February

## 26



### Exodus 7:1-25 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.

<sup>2</sup> You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his land. <sup>3</sup> But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and I will multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt.

<sup>4</sup> When Pharaoh does not listen to you, I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring my people the Israelites, company by company, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. <sup>5</sup> The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them.”

<sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. <sup>7</sup> Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh.

### *Aaron’s Miraculous Rod*

*(Ex 4:1–5)*

<sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, <sup>9</sup> “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Perform a wonder,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.’ ”

<sup>10</sup> So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the LORD had commanded; Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. <sup>11</sup> Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts.

<sup>12</sup> Each one threw down his staff, and they became snakes; but Aaron’s staff swallowed up theirs. <sup>13</sup> Still Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

### *The First Plague: Water Turned to Blood*

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. <sup>15</sup> Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him, and

take in your hand the staff that was turned into a snake.

<sup>16</sup>Say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, “Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness.” But until now you have not listened. <sup>17</sup>Thus says the LORD, “By this you shall know that I am the LORD.” See, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall be turned to blood. <sup>18</sup>The fish in the river shall die, the river itself shall stink, and the Egyptians shall be unable to drink water from the Nile.’ ” <sup>19</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt—over its rivers, its canals, and its ponds, and all its pools of water—so that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the whole land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.’ ”

<sup>20</sup>Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and of his officials he lifted up the staff and struck the water in

the river, and all the water in the river was turned into blood, <sup>21</sup>and the fish in the river died. The river stank so that the Egyptians could not drink its water, and there was blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. <sup>22</sup>But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh’s heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. <sup>23</sup>Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. <sup>24</sup>And all the Egyptians had to dig along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the river.

<sup>25</sup>Seven days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.

### **Matthew 19:1-12** (NRSV)

#### *Teaching about Divorce*

*(Mk 10:1–12)*

When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.

<sup>2</sup>Large crowds followed him, and he cured them there.

<sup>3</sup>Some Pharisees came to him, and to test him they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any

cause?" <sup>4</sup> He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' <sup>5</sup> and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? <sup>6</sup> So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." <sup>7</sup> They said to him, "Why then did Moses command us to give a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her?" <sup>8</sup> He said to them, "It was because you were so hard-hearted that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. <sup>9</sup> And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another commits adultery."  
<sup>10</sup> His disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry." <sup>11</sup> But he said to them, "Not everyone can accept this teaching, but only those to whom it is given. <sup>12</sup> For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are

eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let anyone accept this who can."

**Psalm 24:3-6** (NRSV)

- <sup>3</sup> Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?
- <sup>4</sup> Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.
- <sup>5</sup> They will receive blessing from the LORD, and vindication from the God of their salvation.
- <sup>6</sup> Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. *Selah*

**Proverbs 10:17** (NRSV)

- <sup>17</sup> Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but one who rejects a rebuke goes astray.



# February 27



## Exodus 8:1-32 (NRSV)

### *The Second Plague: Frogs*

<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. <sup>2</sup> If you refuse to let them go, I will plague your whole country with frogs. <sup>3</sup> The river shall swarm with frogs; they shall come up into your palace, into your bedchamber and your bed, and into the houses of your officials and of your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. <sup>4</sup> The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your officials.’ ” <sup>5</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, the canals, and the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.’ ” <sup>6</sup> So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. <sup>7</sup> But the magicians did the same by

their secret arts, and brought frogs up on the land of Egypt.

<sup>8</sup> Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, and said, “Pray to the LORD to take away the frogs from me and my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” <sup>9</sup> Moses said to Pharaoh, “Kindly tell me when I am to pray for you and for your officials and for your people, that the frogs may be removed from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile.” <sup>10</sup> And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “As you say! So that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God, <sup>11</sup> the frogs shall leave you and your houses and your officials and your people; they shall be left only in the Nile.” <sup>12</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs that he had brought upon Pharaoh. <sup>13</sup> And the LORD did as Moses requested: the frogs died in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. <sup>14</sup> And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank.

<sup>15</sup> But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

*The Third Plague: Gnats*

<sup>16</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats throughout the whole land of Egypt.’ ”

<sup>17</sup> And they did so; Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and gnats came on humans and animals alike; all the dust of the earth turned into gnats throughout the whole land of Egypt. <sup>18</sup> The magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, but they could not. There were gnats on both humans and animals. <sup>19</sup> And the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God!” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

*The Fourth Plague: Flies*

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise early in the

morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. <sup>21</sup> For if you will not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you, your officials, and your people, and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies; so also the land where they live. <sup>22</sup> But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people live, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I the LORD am in this land.

<sup>23</sup> Thus I will make a distinction between my people and your people. This sign shall appear tomorrow.’ ” <sup>24</sup> The LORD did so, and great swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh and into his officials’ houses; in all of Egypt the land was ruined because of the flies.

<sup>25</sup> Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” <sup>26</sup> But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so; for the

sacrifices that we offer to the LORD our God are offensive to the Egyptians. If we offer in the sight of the Egyptians sacrifices that are offensive to them, will they not stone us?

<sup>27</sup> We must go a three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as he commands us." <sup>28</sup> So Pharaoh said, "I will let you go to sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness, provided you do not go very far away. Pray for me." <sup>29</sup> Then Moses said, "As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his officials, and from his people; only do not let Pharaoh again deal falsely by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

<sup>30</sup> So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. <sup>31</sup> And the LORD did as Moses asked: he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his officials, and from his people; not one remained.

<sup>32</sup> But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and would not let the people go.

### **Matthew 19:13-15 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Blesses Little Children*

(Mk 10:13-16; Lk 18:15-17)

<sup>13</sup> Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; <sup>14</sup> but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." <sup>15</sup> And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

### **Psalm 24:7-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.

<sup>8</sup> Who is the King of glory?  
The LORD, strong and mighty,  
the LORD, mighty in battle.

<sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.

<sup>10</sup> Who is this King of glory?

The LORD of hosts,  
he is the King of glory.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 10:18** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Lying lips conceal hatred,  
and whoever utters  
slander is a fool.

**February  
28**



**Exodus 9:1-35** (NRSV)

*The Fifth Plague: Livestock  
Diseased*

<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses,  
“Go to Pharaoh, and say to  
him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the  
God of the Hebrews: Let my  
people go, so that they may  
worship me. <sup>2</sup> For if you refuse  
to let them go and still hold  
them, <sup>3</sup> the hand of the LORD  
will strike with a deadly  
pestilence your livestock in the  
field: the horses, the donkeys,  
the camels, the herds, and the  
flocks. <sup>4</sup> But the LORD will make  
a distinction between the  
livestock of Israel and the

livestock of Egypt, so that  
nothing shall die of all that  
belongs to the Israelites.’ ”

<sup>5</sup> The LORD set a time, saying,  
“Tomorrow the LORD will do  
this thing in the land.” <sup>6</sup> And  
on the next day the LORD did  
so; all the livestock of the  
Egyptians died, but of the  
livestock of the Israelites not  
one died. <sup>7</sup> Pharaoh inquired  
and found that not one of the  
livestock of the Israelites was  
dead. But the heart of Pharaoh  
was hardened, and he would  
not let the people go.

*The Sixth Plague: Boils  
(Deut 28:27)*

<sup>8</sup> Then the LORD said to  
Moses and Aaron, “Take  
handfuls of soot from the kiln,  
and let Moses throw it in the  
air in the sight of Pharaoh. <sup>9</sup> It  
shall become fine dust all over  
the land of Egypt, and shall  
cause festering boils on  
humans and animals  
throughout the whole land of  
Egypt.” <sup>10</sup> So they took soot  
from the kiln, and stood  
before Pharaoh, and Moses  
threw it in the air, and it  
caused festering boils on  
humans and animals. <sup>11</sup> The  
magicians could not stand

before Moses because of the boils, for the boils afflicted the magicians as well as all the Egyptians.<sup>12</sup> But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

*The Seventh Plague:  
Thunder and Hail*

<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews: Let my people go, so that they may worship me.’<sup>14</sup> For this time I will send all my plagues upon you yourself, and upon your officials, and upon your people, so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth.<sup>15</sup> For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth.<sup>16</sup> But this is why I have let you live: to show you my power, and to make my name resound through all the earth.<sup>17</sup> You are still exalting yourself

against my people, and will not let them go.<sup>18</sup> Tomorrow at this time I will cause the heaviest hail to fall that has ever fallen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now.<sup>19</sup> Send, therefore, and have your livestock and everything that you have in the open field brought to a secure place; every human or animal that is in the open field and is not brought under shelter will die when the hail comes down upon them.’ ”<sup>20</sup> Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried their slaves and livestock off to a secure place.<sup>21</sup> Those who did not regard the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the open field.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven so that hail may fall on the whole land of Egypt, on humans and animals and all the plants of the field in the land of Egypt.”<sup>23</sup> Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire came down on the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt;<sup>24</sup> there was hail

with fire flashing continually in the midst of it, such heavy hail as had never fallen in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. <sup>25</sup> The hail struck down everything that was in the open field throughout all the land of Egypt, both human and animal; the hail also struck down all the plants of the field, and shattered every tree in the field. <sup>26</sup> Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were, there was no hail.

<sup>27</sup> Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. <sup>28</sup> Pray to the LORD! Enough of God’s thunder and hail! I will let you go; you need stay no longer.” <sup>29</sup> Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD’s. <sup>30</sup> But as for you and your officials, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God.” <sup>31</sup> (Now the flax and the barley were ruined,

for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. <sup>32</sup> But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they are late in coming up.) <sup>33</sup> So Moses left Pharaoh, went out of the city, and stretched out his hands to the LORD; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured down on the earth. <sup>34</sup> But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned once more and hardened his heart, he and his officials. <sup>35</sup> So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

**Matthew 19:16-30** (NRSV)

*The Rich Young Man*  
(Mk 10:17-31; Lk 18:18-30)

<sup>16</sup> Then someone came to him and said, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” <sup>17</sup> And he said to him, “**Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.**” <sup>18</sup> He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “**You shall not murder; You shall not commit**

adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; <sup>19</sup> Honor your father and mother; also, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>20</sup> The young man

said to him, “I have kept all these; what do I still lack?”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup> When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup> Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>25</sup> When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astounded and said, “Then who can be saved?” <sup>26</sup> But Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.”

<sup>27</sup> Then Peter said in reply, “Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” <sup>28</sup> Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. <sup>30</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

### **Psalm 25:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Guidance and for Deliverance*

Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
- <sup>2</sup> O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.
- <sup>3</sup> Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;

let them be ashamed  
who are wantonly  
treacherous.

- <sup>4</sup> Make me to know your  
ways, O LORD;  
teach me your paths.
- <sup>5</sup> Lead me in your truth, and  
teach me,  
for you are the God of  
my salvation;  
for you I wait all day  
long.
- <sup>6</sup> Be mindful of your mercy,  
O LORD, and of your  
steadfast love,  
for they have been from  
of old.
- <sup>7</sup> Do not remember the sins  
of my youth or my  
transgressions;  
according to your  
steadfast love  
remember me,  
for your goodness' sake,  
O LORD!

**Proverbs 10:19** (NRSV)

- <sup>19</sup> When words are many,  
transgression is not  
lacking,  
but the prudent are  
restrained in speech.

## March 1



**Exodus 10:1-29** (NRSV)

*The Eighth Plague: Locusts*  
(Joel 1:2–4)

<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses,  
“Go to Pharaoh; for I have  
hardened his heart and the  
heart of his officials, in order  
that I may show these signs of  
mine among them, <sup>2</sup> and that  
you may tell your children and  
grandchildren how I have  
made fools of the Egyptians  
and what signs I have done  
among them—so that you may  
know that I am the LORD.”

<sup>3</sup> So Moses and Aaron  
went to Pharaoh, and said to  
him, “Thus says the LORD, the  
God of the Hebrews, ‘How  
long will you refuse to humble  
yourself before me? Let my  
people go, so that they may  
worship me. <sup>4</sup> For if you refuse  
to let my people go, tomorrow  
I will bring locusts into your  
country. <sup>5</sup> They shall cover the  
surface of the land, so that no  
one will be able to see the  
land. They shall devour the  
last remnant left you after the  
hail, and they shall devour



every tree of yours that grows in the field.<sup>6</sup> They shall fill your houses, and the houses of all your officials and of all the Egyptians—something that neither your parents nor your grandparents have seen, from the day they came on earth to this day.’ ” Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

<sup>7</sup> Pharaoh’s officials said to him, “How long shall this fellow be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the LORD their God; do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?”<sup>8</sup> So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, “Go, worship the LORD your God! But which ones are to go?”<sup>9</sup> Moses said, “We will go with our young and our old; we will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks and herds, because we have the LORD’s festival to celebrate.”<sup>10</sup> He said to them, “The LORD indeed will be with you, if ever I let your little ones go with you! Plainly, you have some evil purpose in mind.”<sup>11</sup> No, never! Your men may go and worship the LORD,

for that is what you are asking.” And they were driven out from Pharaoh’s presence.

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt, so that the locusts may come upon it and eat every plant in the land, all that the hail has left.”

<sup>13</sup> So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night; when morning came, the east wind had brought the locusts.<sup>14</sup> The locusts came upon all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever shall be again.<sup>15</sup> They covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was black; and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left; nothing green was left, no tree, no plant in the field, in all the land of Egypt.<sup>16</sup> Pharaoh hurriedly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you.”<sup>17</sup> Do forgive my sin just this once,

and pray to the LORD your God that at the least he remove this deadly thing from me.”

<sup>18</sup> So he went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. <sup>19</sup> The LORD changed the wind into a very strong west wind, which lifted the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not a single locust was left in all the country of Egypt. <sup>20</sup> But the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he would not let the Israelites go.

#### *The Ninth Plague: Darkness*

<sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven so that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness that can be felt.” <sup>22</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was dense darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. <sup>23</sup> People could not see one another, and for three days they could not move from where they were; but all the Israelites had light where they lived. <sup>24</sup> Then Pharaoh summoned Moses, and said, “Go, worship the LORD. Only your flocks and your herds shall remain behind. Even your

children may go with you.”

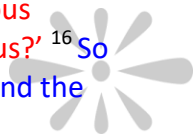
<sup>25</sup> But Moses said, “You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings to sacrifice to the LORD our God. <sup>26</sup> Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we must choose some of them for the worship of the LORD our God, and we will not know what to use to worship the LORD until we arrive there.” <sup>27</sup> But the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he was unwilling to let them go. <sup>28</sup> Then Pharaoh said to him, “Get away from me! Take care that you do not see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die.” <sup>29</sup> Moses said, “Just as you say! I will never see your face again.”

#### **Matthew 20:1-16 (NRSV)**

*The Laborers in the Vineyard*  
“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup> When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw

others standing idle in the marketplace;<sup>4</sup> and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.<sup>5</sup> When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same.<sup>6</sup> And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?'<sup>7</sup> They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'<sup>8</sup> When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.'<sup>9</sup> When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage.<sup>10</sup> Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage.<sup>11</sup> And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner,<sup>12</sup> saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them

equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'<sup>13</sup> But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?'<sup>14</sup> Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.<sup>15</sup> Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?'<sup>16</sup> So the last will be first, and the first will be last."



#### **Psalm 25:8–15 (NRSV)**

- <sup>8</sup> Good and upright is the LORD;  
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
- <sup>9</sup> He leads the humble in what is right,  
and teaches the humble his way.
- <sup>10</sup> All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,  
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.
- <sup>11</sup> For your name's sake, O LORD,

pardon my guilt, for it is  
great.

<sup>12</sup> Who are they that fear the  
LORD?

He will teach them the  
way that they should  
choose.

<sup>13</sup> They will abide in  
prosperity,  
and their children shall  
possess the land.

<sup>14</sup> The friendship of the LORD  
is for those who fear  
him,  
and he makes his  
covenant known to  
them.

<sup>15</sup> My eyes are ever toward  
the LORD,  
for he will pluck my feet  
out of the net.

**Proverbs 10:20–21 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> The tongue of the  
righteous is choice  
silver;  
the mind of the wicked is  
of little worth.

<sup>21</sup> The lips of the righteous  
feed many, but fools  
die for lack of sense.

## March 2



**Exodus 11:1- 12:13 (NRSV)**

*Warning of the Final Plague*

*(Ex 3:21–22; 12:35–36)*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go from here; indeed, when he lets you go, he will drive you away. <sup>2</sup> Tell the people that every man is to ask his neighbor and every woman is to ask her neighbor for objects of silver and gold.” <sup>3</sup> The LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, Moses himself was a man of great importance in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh’s officials and in the sight of the people.

<sup>4</sup> Moses said, “Thus says the LORD: About midnight I will go out through Egypt. <sup>5</sup> Every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the firstborn of the female slave who is behind the hand mill, and all the firstborn of the livestock. <sup>6</sup> Then there

will be a loud cry throughout the whole land of Egypt, such as has never been or will ever be again.<sup>7</sup> But not a dog shall growl at any of the Israelites—not at people, not at animals—so that you may know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.<sup>8</sup> Then all these officials of yours shall come down to me, and bow low to me, saying, ‘Leave us, you and all the people who follow you.’ After that I will leave.” And in hot anger he left Pharaoh.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, in order that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”<sup>10</sup> Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; but the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

*The First Passover Instituted*  
(Num 9:1–14; Deut 16:1–8;  
Ezek 45:21–25)

**12** The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:<sup>2</sup> This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the

year for you.<sup>3</sup> Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household.<sup>4</sup> If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it.<sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.<sup>6</sup> You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.<sup>7</sup> They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.<sup>8</sup> They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.<sup>9</sup> Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs.<sup>10</sup> You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the

morning you shall burn. <sup>11</sup> This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the LORD. <sup>12</sup> For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.

<sup>13</sup> The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

**Matthew 20:17-28** (NRSV)  
*A Third Time Jesus Foretells His  
Death and Resurrection*  
(Mk 10:32-34; Lk 18:31-34)

<sup>17</sup> While Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, <sup>18</sup> “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; <sup>19</sup> then they will hand him over to the Gentiles

to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised.”

*The Request of the Mother of  
James and John*  
(Mk 10:35-45)

<sup>20</sup> Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. <sup>21</sup> And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.”

<sup>22</sup> But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” <sup>23</sup> He said to them, “You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”

<sup>24</sup> When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. <sup>25</sup> But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and

their great ones are tyrants over them.<sup>26</sup> It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant,<sup>27</sup> and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave;<sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

**Psalms 25:16-22 (NRSV)**

- <sup>16</sup> Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
for I am lonely and afflicted.
- <sup>17</sup> Relieve the troubles of my heart,  
and bring me out of my distress.
- <sup>18</sup> Consider my affliction and my trouble,  
and forgive all my sins.
- <sup>19</sup> Consider how many are my foes,  
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
- <sup>20</sup> O guard my life, and deliver me;  
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

- <sup>21</sup> May integrity and uprightness preserve me,  
for I wait for you.
- <sup>22</sup> Redeem Israel, O God,  
out of all its troubles.

**Proverbs 10:22 (NRSV)**

- <sup>22</sup> The blessing of the LORD makes rich,  
and he adds no sorrow with it.

## March 3



**Exodus 12:14-39 (NRSV)**

- <sup>14</sup> This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.
- <sup>15</sup> Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day shall be cut off from Israel.

<sup>16</sup> On the first day you shall hold a solemn assembly, and on the seventh day a solemn assembly; no work shall be done on those days; only what everyone must eat, that alone may be prepared by you.

<sup>17</sup> You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought your companies out of the land of Egypt: you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a perpetual ordinance. <sup>18</sup> In the first month, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day, you shall eat unleavened bread. <sup>19</sup> For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether an alien or a native of the land. <sup>20</sup> You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your settlements you shall eat unleavened bread.

<sup>21</sup> Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go, select lambs for your families, and slaughter the Passover lamb. <sup>22</sup> Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the

blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood in the basin. None of you shall go outside the door of your house until morning. <sup>23</sup> For the LORD will pass through to strike down the Egyptians; when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over that door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you down.

<sup>24</sup> You shall observe this rite as a perpetual ordinance for you and your children. <sup>25</sup> When you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this observance. <sup>26</sup> And when your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this observance?'

<sup>27</sup> you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when he struck down the Egyptians but spared our houses.' " And the people bowed down and worshiped.

<sup>28</sup> The Israelites went and did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.



*The Tenth Plague: Death  
of the Firstborn*  
(Ex 11:1–10)

<sup>29</sup> At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the prisoner who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. <sup>30</sup> Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his officials and all the Egyptians; and there was a loud cry in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead. <sup>31</sup> Then he summoned Moses and Aaron in the night, and said, “Rise up, go away from my people, both you and the Israelites! Go, worship the LORD, as you said. <sup>32</sup> Take your flocks and your herds, as you said, and be gone. And bring a blessing on me too!”

*The Exodus: From  
Rameses to Succoth*

<sup>33</sup> The Egyptians urged the people to hasten their departure from the land, for they said, “We shall all be dead.” <sup>34</sup> So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading

bowls wrapped up in their cloaks on their shoulders.

<sup>35</sup> The Israelites had done as Moses told them; they had asked the Egyptians for jewelry of silver and gold, and for clothing, <sup>36</sup> and the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. And so they plundered the Egyptians.

<sup>37</sup> The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. <sup>38</sup> A mixed crowd also went up with them, and livestock in great numbers, both flocks and herds. <sup>39</sup> They baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had brought out of Egypt; it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

**Matthew 20:29-21:11** (NRSV)

*Jesus Heals Two Blind Men*  
(Mk 10:46–52; Lk 18:35–43)

<sup>29</sup> As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. <sup>30</sup> There were two blind men sitting by the

roadside. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!”<sup>31</sup> The crowd sternly ordered them to be quiet; but they shouted even more loudly, “Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!”

<sup>32</sup> Jesus stood still and called them, saying, **“What do you want me to do for you?”**

<sup>33</sup> They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.”

<sup>34</sup> Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they regained their sight and followed him.

*Jesus’ Triumphant  
Entry into Jerusalem  
(Mk 11:1–10; Lk 19:28–40;  
Jn 12:12–19)*

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples,<sup>2</sup> saying to them, **“Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.”**

<sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what

had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

<sup>5</sup> “Tell the daughter of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming  
to you,  
humble, and mounted on  
a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of  
a donkey.”

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them;

<sup>7</sup> they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them.

<sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of  
David!

Blessed is the one who  
comes in the name of  
the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest  
heaven!”

<sup>10</sup> When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” <sup>11</sup> The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

**Psalm 26:1-8** (NRSV)

*Plea for Justice and  
Declaration of Righteousness*  
Of David.

- 1 Vindicate me, O LORD,  
for I have walked in my  
integrity,  
and I have trusted in the  
LORD without wavering.
- 2 Prove me, O LORD, and try  
me;  
test my heart and mind.
- 3 For your steadfast love is  
before my eyes,  
and I walk in faithfulness  
to you.
- 4 I do not sit with the  
worthless,  
nor do I consort with  
hypocrites;
- 5 I hate the company of  
evildoers,  
and will not sit with the  
wicked.
- 6 I wash my hands in  
innocence,  
and go around your altar,  
O LORD,
- 7 singing aloud a song of  
thanksgiving,  
and telling all your  
wondrous deeds.
- 8 O LORD, I love the house in  
which you dwell,  
and the place where  
your glory abides.

**Proverbs 10:23** (NRSV)

- <sup>23</sup> Doing wrong is like sport  
to a fool,  
but wise conduct is  
pleasure to a person of  
understanding.

**March 4**



**Exodus 12:40 – 13:16** (NRSV)

- <sup>40</sup> The time that the  
Israelites had lived in Egypt  
was four hundred thirty years.
- <sup>41</sup> At the end of four hundred  
thirty years, on that very day,  
all the companies of the LORD  
went out from the land of  
Egypt. <sup>42</sup> That was for the LORD  
a night of vigil, to bring them  
out of the land of Egypt. That  
same night is a vigil to be kept  
for the LORD by all the  
Israelites throughout their  
generations.

*Directions for the Passover*  
(Gen 17:9–14; Ex 12:1–13)

- <sup>43</sup> The LORD said to Moses  
and Aaron: This is the

ordinance for the passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, <sup>44</sup> but any slave who has been purchased may eat of it after he has been circumcised; <sup>45</sup> no bound or hired servant may eat of it. <sup>46</sup> It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the animal outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones. <sup>47</sup> The whole congregation of Israel shall celebrate it. <sup>48</sup> If an alien who resides with you wants to celebrate the passover to the LORD, all his males shall be circumcised; then he may draw near to celebrate it; he shall be regarded as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it; <sup>49</sup> there shall be one law for the native and for the alien who resides among you.

<sup>50</sup> All the Israelites did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. <sup>51</sup> That very day the LORD brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, company by company.

**13** The LORD said to Moses:

<sup>2</sup> Consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the

Israelites, of human beings and animals, is mine.

*The Festival of  
Unleavened Bread*

*(Ex 12:14–20)*

<sup>3</sup> Moses said to the people, “Remember this day on which you came out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, because the LORD brought you out from there by strength of hand; no leavened bread shall be eaten.

<sup>4</sup> Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. <sup>5</sup> When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this observance in this month.

<sup>6</sup> Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a festival to the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen in your possession, and no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory. <sup>8</sup> You shall tell your child on that day, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came

out of Egypt.’<sup>9</sup> It shall serve for you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead, so that the teaching of the LORD may be on your lips; for with a strong hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt.<sup>10</sup> You shall keep this ordinance at its proper time from year to year.

*The Consecration  
of the Firstborn*

<sup>11</sup> “When the LORD has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your ancestors, and has given it to you,<sup>12</sup> you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your livestock that are males shall be the LORD’s.<sup>13</sup> But every firstborn donkey you shall redeem with a sheep; if you do not redeem it, you must break its neck. Every firstborn male among your children you shall redeem.<sup>14</sup> When in the future your child asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ you shall answer, ‘By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery.’<sup>15</sup> When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to

let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human firstborn to the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD every male that first opens the womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.’<sup>16</sup> It shall serve as a sign on your hand and as an emblem on your forehead that by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.”

**Matthew 21:12-22** (NRSV)

*Jesus Cleanses the Temple*  
(Mk 11:15–19; Lk 19:45–48;  
Jn 2:13–25)

<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.<sup>13</sup> He said to them, “It is written,

‘My house shall be called a  
house of prayer’;  
but you are making it a  
den of robbers.”

<sup>14</sup> The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them.<sup>15</sup> But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the

children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became angry<sup>16</sup> and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read,

‘Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself?’”

<sup>17</sup> He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

*Jesus Curses the Fig Tree*  
(Mk 11:12–14, 20–25)

<sup>18</sup> In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. <sup>19</sup> And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, “May no fruit ever come from you again!” And the fig tree withered at once. <sup>20</sup> When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, saying, “How did the fig tree wither at once?” <sup>21</sup> Jesus answered them, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this

mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ it will be done. <sup>22</sup> Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.”

**Psalm 26:9–12** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Do not sweep me away with sinners,  
nor my life with the bloodthirsty,  
<sup>10</sup> those in whose hands are evil devices,  
and whose right hands are full of bribes.  
<sup>11</sup> But as for me, I walk in my integrity;  
redeem me, and be gracious to me.  
<sup>12</sup> My foot stands on level ground;  
in the great congregation  
I will bless the LORD.

**Proverbs 10:24–25** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> What the wicked dread will come upon them,  
but the desire of the righteous will be granted.  
<sup>25</sup> When the tempest passes, the wicked are no more,  
but the righteous are established forever.

## March 5



**Exodus 13:17 – 14:31** (NRSV)

### *The Pillars of Cloud and Fire*

(Ex 40:34–38; Num 9:15–23;

1 Kings 8:10–11)

<sup>17</sup> When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God thought, “If the people face war, they may change their minds and return to Egypt.” <sup>18</sup> So God led the people by the roundabout way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of the land of Egypt prepared for battle. <sup>19</sup> And Moses took with him the bones of Joseph who had required a solemn oath of the Israelites, saying, “God will surely take notice of you, and then you must carry my bones with you from here.” <sup>20</sup> They set out from Succoth, and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. <sup>21</sup> The LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give

them light, so that they might travel by day and by night.

<sup>22</sup> Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

### *Crossing the Red Sea*

**14** Then the LORD said to Moses: <sup>2</sup> Tell the Israelites to turn back and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baalzephon; you shall camp opposite it, by the sea.

<sup>3</sup> Pharaoh will say of the Israelites, ‘They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has closed in on them.’ <sup>4</sup> I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them, so that I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD. And they did so.

<sup>5</sup> When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the minds of Pharaoh and his officials were changed toward the people, and they said, “What have we done, letting Israel leave our service?” <sup>6</sup> So he had his chariot made ready, and took

his army with him; <sup>7</sup> he took six hundred picked chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. <sup>8</sup> The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he pursued the Israelites, who were going out boldly.

<sup>9</sup> The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, his chariot drivers and his army; they overtook them camped by the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baalzephon.

<sup>10</sup> As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. <sup>11</sup> They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? <sup>12</sup> Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." <sup>13</sup> But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the

deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. <sup>14</sup> The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. <sup>16</sup> But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground.

<sup>17</sup> Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. <sup>18</sup> And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

<sup>19</sup> The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. <sup>20</sup> It came between the army of Egypt and the army of



Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

<sup>21</sup> Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided.

<sup>22</sup> The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

<sup>23</sup> The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers.

<sup>24</sup> At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. <sup>25</sup> He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

#### *The Pursuers Drowned*

<sup>26</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the

Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." <sup>27</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. <sup>28</sup> The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. <sup>29</sup> But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

<sup>30</sup> Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup> Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

#### **Matthew 21:23-32 (NRSV)**

#### *The Authority of Jesus Questioned*

*(Mk 11:27-33; Lk 20:1-8)*

<sup>23</sup> When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came

to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"

<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

<sup>25</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'" <sup>26</sup> But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet."

<sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

#### *The Parable of the Two Sons*

<sup>28</sup> "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

<sup>29</sup> He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup> The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he

did not go. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of his father?"

They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

<sup>32</sup> For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

#### **Psalm 27:1** (NRSV)

*Triumphant Song of Confidence*

Of David.

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

#### **Proverbs 10:26** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> Like vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so are the lazy to their employers.



# March 6



## Exodus 15:1-18 (NRSV)

### *The Song of Moses*

(Ex 14:13–14; Ps 78:12–14)

<sup>1</sup> Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is my strength and my might, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name.

<sup>4</sup> “Pharaoh’s chariots and his army he cast into the sea; his picked officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

<sup>5</sup> The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone.

<sup>6</sup> Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power—

your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy.

<sup>7</sup> In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your adversaries; you sent out your fury, it consumed them like stubble.

<sup>8</sup> At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up, the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

<sup>9</sup> The enemy said, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.’

<sup>10</sup> You blew with your wind, the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

<sup>11</sup> “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?

<sup>12</sup> You stretched out your right hand,

the earth swallowed  
them.  
13 “In your steadfast love you  
led the people whom  
you redeemed;  
you guided them by your  
strength to your holy  
abode.  
14 The peoples heard, they  
trembled;  
pangs seized the  
inhabitants of Philistia.  
15 Then the chiefs of Edom  
were dismayed;  
trembling seized the  
leaders of Moab;  
all the inhabitants of  
Canaan melted away.  
16 Terror and dread fell upon  
them;  
by the might of your  
arm, they became still  
as a stone  
until your people, O LORD,  
passed by,  
until the people whom  
you acquired passed  
by.  
17 You brought them in and  
planted them on the  
mountain of your own  
possession,  
the place, O LORD, that  
you made your abode,

the sanctuary, O LORD,  
that your hands have  
established.

18 The LORD will reign forever  
and ever.”

**Matthew 21:33-46** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the  
Wicked Tenants*

(Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19)

33 “Listen to another  
parable. There was a  
landowner who planted a  
vineyard, put a fence around  
it, dug a wine press in it, and  
built a watchtower. Then he  
leased it to tenants and went  
to another country. 34 When  
the harvest time had come, he  
sent his slaves to the tenants  
to collect his produce. 35 But  
the tenants seized his slaves  
and beat one, killed another,  
and stoned another. 36 Again  
he sent other slaves, more  
than the first; and they treated  
them in the same way.  
37 Finally he sent his son to  
them, saying, ‘They will  
respect my son.’ 38 But when  
the tenants saw the son, they  
said to themselves, ‘This is the  
heir; come, let us kill him and  
get his inheritance.’ 39 So they  
seized him, threw him out of  
the vineyard, and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" <sup>41</sup> They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'?

<sup>43</sup> Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. <sup>44</sup> The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them.

<sup>46</sup> They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds,

because they regarded him as a prophet.

**Psalm 27:2-3 (NRSV)**

<sup>2</sup> When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh— my adversaries and foes— they shall stumble and fall.

<sup>3</sup> Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

**Proverbs 10:27–28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.

<sup>28</sup> The hope of the righteous ends in gladness, but the expectation of the wicked comes to nothing.

## March 7



### Exodus 15:19 – 16:18 (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> When the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his chariot drivers went into the sea, the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them; but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground.

#### *The Song of Miriam* (Num 26:59)

<sup>20</sup> Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. <sup>21</sup> And Miriam sang to them:

“Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;  
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.”

#### *Bitter Water Made Sweet*

<sup>22</sup> Then Moses ordered Israel to set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness

and found no water. <sup>23</sup> When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter. That is why it was called Marah. <sup>24</sup> And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” <sup>25</sup> He cried out to the LORD; and the LORD showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

There the LORD made for them a statute and an ordinance and there he put them to the test. <sup>26</sup> He said, “If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in his sight, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you.”

<sup>27</sup> Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; and they camped there by the water.

*Bread from Heaven*

**16** The whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim; and Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.<sup>3</sup> The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not.”<sup>5</sup> On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.”<sup>6</sup> So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you

shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt,<sup>7</sup> and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?”<sup>8</sup> And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.”

<sup>9</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.’”

<sup>10</sup> And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.<sup>11</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and said,<sup>12</sup> “I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then

you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’ ”

<sup>13</sup> In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. <sup>14</sup> When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground.

<sup>15</sup> When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

<sup>16</sup> This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather as much of it as each of you needs, an omer to a person according to the number of persons, all providing for those in their own tents.’ ” <sup>17</sup> The Israelites did so, some gathering more, some less. <sup>18</sup> But when they measured it with an omer, those who gathered much had nothing over, and those who gathered little had no shortage; they gathered as much as each of them needed.

**Matthew 22:1-22** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the  
Wedding Banquet*  
(Lk 14:15–24)

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying:

<sup>2</sup> “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. <sup>3</sup> He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. <sup>4</sup> Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ <sup>5</sup> But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, <sup>6</sup> while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. <sup>7</sup> The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup> Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ <sup>10</sup> Those



slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

<sup>11</sup> “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe,<sup>12</sup> and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless.<sup>13</sup> Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’<sup>14</sup> For many are called, but few are chosen.”

*The Question about  
Paying Taxes*

*(Mk 12:13–17; Lk 20:20–26)*

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said.<sup>16</sup> So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality.<sup>17</sup> Tell us, then, what you think. Is it

lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?”<sup>18</sup> But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?

<sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius.<sup>20</sup> Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?”<sup>21</sup> They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”<sup>22</sup> When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

**Psalm 27:4-6 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> One thing I asked of the LORD,  
that will I seek after:  
to live in the house of the LORD  
all the days of my life,  
to behold the beauty of the LORD,  
and to inquire in his temple.

<sup>5</sup> For he will hide me in his shelter  
in the day of trouble;  
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;

he will set me high on a rock.

<sup>6</sup> Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

**Proverbs 10:29–30 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup> The way of the LORD is a stronghold for the upright, but destruction for evildoers.

<sup>30</sup> The righteous will never be removed, but the wicked will not remain in the land.

## March 8



**Exodus 16:19 – 17:16 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> And Moses said to them, “Let no one leave any of it over until morning.” <sup>20</sup> But they did not listen to Moses;

some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul. And Moses was angry with them.

<sup>21</sup> Morning by morning they gathered it, as much as each needed; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

<sup>22</sup> On the sixth day they gathered twice as much food, two omers apiece. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, <sup>23</sup> he said to them, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD; bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning.’ ” <sup>24</sup> So they put it

aside until morning, as Moses commanded them; and it did not become foul, and there were no worms in it. <sup>25</sup> Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field.

<sup>26</sup> Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is a sabbath, there will be none.”

<sup>27</sup> On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, and they found none. <sup>28</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and instructions? <sup>29</sup> See! The LORD has given you the sabbath, therefore on the sixth day he gives you food for two days; each of you stay where you are; do not leave your place on the seventh day.” <sup>30</sup> So the people rested on the seventh day.

<sup>31</sup> The house of Israel called it manna; it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. <sup>32</sup> Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Let an <sup>g</sup>omer of it be kept throughout your generations, in order that they may see the food with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’ ” <sup>33</sup> And Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar, and

put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD, to be kept throughout your generations.” <sup>34</sup> As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the covenant, for safekeeping. <sup>35</sup> The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a habitable land; they ate manna, until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. <sup>36</sup> An omer is a tenth of an ephah.

*Water from the Rock*  
(Num 20:1–13)

**17** From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> The people quarreled with Moses, and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” <sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with

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<sup>g</sup> an ancient Hebrew dry measure, the [tenth](#) part of an [ephah](#) (an ancient Hebrew dry measure equivalent to a bushel).

thirst?”<sup>4</sup> So Moses cried out to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.”<sup>5</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.”<sup>6</sup> I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.<sup>7</sup> He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

*Amalek Attacks Israel  
and Is Defeated*

*(Gen 14:7; Num 13:29; 14:25)*

<sup>8</sup> Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim.<sup>9</sup> Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some men for us and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.”<sup>10</sup> So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went

up to the top of the hill.<sup>11</sup> Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.<sup>12</sup> But Moses’ hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the sun set.<sup>13</sup> And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the sword.

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this as a reminder in a book and recite it in the hearing of Joshua: I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.”<sup>15</sup> And Moses built an altar and called it, The LORD is my banner.<sup>16</sup> He said, “A hand upon the banner of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

**Matthew 22:23-33** (NRSV)

*The Question about  
the Resurrection*

*(Mk 12:18-27; Lk 20:27-40)*

<sup>23</sup> The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection;

and they asked him a question, saying, <sup>24</sup> “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.’

<sup>25</sup> Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother. <sup>26</sup> The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh. <sup>27</sup> Last of all, the woman herself died. <sup>28</sup> In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.”

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. <sup>30</sup> For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. <sup>31</sup> And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, <sup>32</sup> ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is God not of the dead, but of the living.” <sup>33</sup> And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

### **Psalm 27:7-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud,  
be gracious to me and answer me!  
<sup>8</sup> “Come,” my heart says,  
“seek his face!”  
Your face, LORD, do I seek.  
<sup>9</sup> Do not hide your face from me.  
Do not turn your servant away in anger,  
you who have been my help.  
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,  
O God of my salvation!  
<sup>10</sup> If my father and mother forsake me,  
the LORD will take me up.

### **Proverbs 10:31–32 (NRSV)**

<sup>31</sup> The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,  
but the perverse tongue will be cut off.  
<sup>32</sup> The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,  
but the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.

# March 9



## Exodus 18:1-12 (NRSV)

### *Jethro's Advice*

*(Deut 1:9-18)*

<sup>1</sup> Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for his people Israel, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> After Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro took her back,

<sup>3</sup> along with her two sons. The name of the one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been an alien in a foreign land"), <sup>4</sup> and the name of the other, Eliezer (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"). <sup>5</sup> Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came into the wilderness where Moses was encamped at the mountain of God, bringing Moses' sons and wife to him. <sup>6</sup> He sent word to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, with your wife and her two sons." <sup>7</sup> Moses went out to meet his father-in-law; he

bowed down and kissed him; each asked after the other's welfare, and they went into the tent. <sup>8</sup> Then Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had beset them on the way, and how the LORD had delivered them.

<sup>9</sup> Jethro rejoiced for all the good that the LORD had done to Israel, in delivering them from the Egyptians.

<sup>10</sup> Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has delivered you from the Egyptians and from Pharaoh. <sup>11</sup> Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods, because he delivered the people from the Egyptians, when they dealt arrogantly with them." <sup>12</sup> And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God.

## Matthew 22:34-46 (NRSV)

### *The Greatest Commandment*

*(Mk 12:28-34; Lk 10:25-28)*

<sup>34</sup> When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered

together, <sup>35</sup> and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. <sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” <sup>37</sup> He said to him, “ **You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.**’ <sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: ‘**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**’ <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

*The Question about  
David’s Son*

*(Mk 12:35–37; Lk 20:41–44)*

<sup>41</sup> Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: <sup>42</sup> “**What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?**” They said to him, “The son of David.” <sup>43</sup> He said to them, “**How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,** <sup>44</sup> ‘**The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”**’ ?” <sup>45</sup> If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” <sup>46</sup> No

one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

**Psalm 27:11-14** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, O LORD,  
and lead me on a level path  
because of my enemies.  
<sup>12</sup> Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries,  
for false witnesses have risen against me,  
and they are breathing out violence.  
<sup>13</sup> I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living.  
<sup>14</sup> Wait for the LORD;  
be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the LORD!

**Proverbs 11:1–3** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> A false balance is an abomination to the LORD,  
but an accurate weight is his delight.  
<sup>2</sup> **When pride comes, then comes disgrace;  
but wisdom is with the humble.**



<sup>3</sup> The integrity of the upright guides them,  
but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.

## March 10



### Exodus 18:13 – 19:15 (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> The next day Moses sat as judge for the people, while the people stood around him from morning until evening. <sup>14</sup> When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?" <sup>15</sup> Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. <sup>16</sup> When they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make known to them the statutes

and instructions of God."

<sup>17</sup> Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. <sup>18</sup> You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you. For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. <sup>19</sup> Now listen to me. I will give you counsel, and God be with you! You should represent the people before God, and you should bring their cases before God; <sup>20</sup> teach them the statutes and instructions and make known to them the way they are to go and the things they are to do. <sup>21</sup> You should also look for able men among all the people, men who fear God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain; set such men over them as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. <sup>22</sup> Let them sit as judges for the people at all times; let them bring every important case to you, but decide every minor case themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. <sup>23</sup> If you do this, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people



will go to their home in peace.”

<sup>24</sup> So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. <sup>25</sup> Moses chose able men from all Israel and appointed them as heads over the people, as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. <sup>26</sup> And they judged the people at all times; hard cases they brought to Moses, but any minor case they decided themselves. <sup>27</sup> Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went off to his own country.

### *The Israelites Reach Mount Sinai*

**19** On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day, they came into the wilderness of Sinai. <sup>2</sup> They had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain. <sup>3</sup> Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites:

<sup>4</sup> You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.”

<sup>7</sup> So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. <sup>8</sup> The people all answered as one: “Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do.” Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with you and so trust you ever after.”

### *The People Consecrated*

When Moses had told the words of the people to the LORD, <sup>10</sup> the LORD said to

Moses: “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes<sup>11</sup> and prepare for the third day, because on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.”<sup>12</sup> You shall set limits for the people all around, saying, ‘Be careful not to go up the mountain or to touch the edge of it. Any who touch the mountain shall be put to death.’<sup>13</sup> No hand shall touch them, but they shall be stoned or shot with arrows; whether animal or human being, they shall not live.’ When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they may go up on the mountain.”<sup>14</sup> So Moses went down from the mountain to the people. He consecrated the people, and they washed their clothes.<sup>15</sup> And he said to the people, “Prepare for the third day; do not go near a woman.”

### **Matthew 23:1-12 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Denounces Scribes  
and Pharisees*

*(Mk 12:38–40; Lk 20:45–47)*

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,<sup>2</sup> **“The scribes and the Pharisees sit**

**on Moses’ seat;<sup>3</sup> therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach.<sup>4</sup> They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them.<sup>5</sup> They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their<sup>h</sup> phylacteries broad and their fringes long.<sup>6</sup> They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues,<sup>7</sup> and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi.<sup>8</sup> But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students.<sup>9</sup> And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven.<sup>10</sup> Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.<sup>11</sup> The greatest among you will be your**

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<sup>h</sup> a small leather case containing OT scripture verses and worn on the arm and forehead by Jews, especially when praying<sup>h</sup>

servant. <sup>12</sup> All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

**Psalms 28:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Help and Thanksgiving for It*  
Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> To you, O LORD, I call;  
my rock, do not refuse to hear me,  
for if you are silent to me,  
I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
- <sup>2</sup> Hear the voice of my supplication,  
as I cry to you for help,  
as I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary.
- <sup>3</sup> Do not drag me away with the wicked,  
with those who are workers of evil,  
who speak peace with their neighbors,  
while mischief is in their hearts.
- <sup>4</sup> Repay them according to their work,  
and according to the evil of their deeds;  
repay them according to the work of their hands;

render them their due reward.

- <sup>5</sup> Because they do not regard the works of the LORD,  
or the work of his hands,  
he will break them down and build them up no more.

**Proverbs 11:4 (NRSV)**

- <sup>4</sup> Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,  
but righteousness delivers from death.

## March 11



**Exodus 19:16 – 20:26 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, as well as a thick cloud on the mountain, and a blast of a trumpet so loud that all the people who were in the camp trembled. <sup>17</sup> Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God. They took their stand at the foot of the

mountain. <sup>18</sup> Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD had descended upon it in fire; the smoke went up like the smoke of a kiln, while the whole mountain shook violently. <sup>19</sup> As the blast of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses would speak and God would answer him in thunder.

<sup>20</sup> When the LORD descended upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, the LORD summoned Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people not to break through to the LORD to look; otherwise many of them will perish. <sup>22</sup> Even the priests who approach the LORD must consecrate themselves or the LORD will break out against them." <sup>23</sup> Moses said to the LORD, "The people are not permitted to come up to Mount Sinai; for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and keep it holy.'" <sup>24</sup> The LORD said to him, "Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you; but do not let either the

priests or the people break through to come up to the LORD; otherwise he will break out against them." <sup>25</sup> So Moses went down to the people and told them.

*The Ten Commandments*  
(Deut 5:1–22)

**20** Then God spoke all these words: <sup>2</sup> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; <sup>3</sup> you shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup> You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

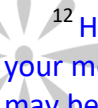
<sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, <sup>6</sup> but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup> You shall not make wrongful use of the name of

the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup> Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>10</sup> But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.

<sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.



<sup>12</sup> Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

<sup>13</sup> You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup> You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup> You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup> You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup> You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave,

or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

<sup>18</sup> When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, <sup>19</sup> and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die."

<sup>20</sup> Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin." <sup>21</sup> Then the people stood at a distance, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

#### *The Law concerning the Altar*

<sup>22</sup> The LORD said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the Israelites: "You have seen for yourselves that I spoke with you from heaven. <sup>23</sup> You shall not make gods of silver alongside me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. <sup>24</sup> You need make for me only an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your offerings of well-being, your sheep and

your oxen; in every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you.<sup>25</sup> But if you make for me an altar of stone, do not build it of hewn stones; for if you use a chisel upon it you profane it.<sup>26</sup> You shall not go up by steps to my altar, so that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.”

**Matthew 23:13-26 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.<sup>15</sup> Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

<sup>16</sup> “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.’<sup>17</sup> You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made

the gold sacred?<sup>18</sup> And you say, ‘Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.’<sup>19</sup> How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?<sup>20</sup> So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it;<sup>21</sup> and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it;<sup>22</sup> and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

<sup>23</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.<sup>24</sup> You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

<sup>25</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.<sup>26</sup> You blind

Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may become clean.

## March 12



### **Psalms 28:6-9** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
for he has heard the  
sound of my pleadings.  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD is my strength  
and my shield;  
in him my heart trusts;  
so I am helped, and my  
heart exults,  
and with my song I give  
thanks to him.  
<sup>8</sup> The LORD is the strength of  
his people;  
he is the saving refuge of  
his anointed.  
<sup>9</sup> O save your people, and  
bless your heritage;  
be their shepherd, and  
carry them forever.

### **Proverbs 11:5-6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> The righteousness of the  
blameless keeps their  
ways straight,  
but the wicked fall by  
their own wickedness.  
<sup>6</sup> The righteousness of the  
upright saves them,  
but the treacherous are  
taken captive by their  
schemes.

### **Exodus 21:1-21** (NRSV)

#### *The Law concerning Slaves* (Deut 15:12-18)

<sup>1</sup> These are the ordinances  
that you shall set before them:  
<sup>2</sup> When you buy a male  
Hebrew slave, he shall serve  
six years, but in the seventh he  
shall go out a free person,  
without debt. <sup>3</sup> If he comes in  
single, he shall go out single; if  
he comes in married, then his  
wife shall go out with him. <sup>4</sup> If  
his master gives him a wife  
and she bears him sons or  
daughters, the wife and her  
children shall be her master's  
and he shall go out alone. <sup>5</sup> But  
if the slave declares, "I love my  
master, my wife, and my  
children; I will not go out a  
free person," <sup>6</sup> then his master  
shall bring him before God. He  
shall be brought to the door or  
the doorpost; and his master  
shall pierce his ear with an  
awl; and he shall serve him for  
life.  
<sup>7</sup> When a man sells his  
daughter as a slave, she shall  
not go out as the male slaves

do. <sup>8</sup> If she does not please her master, who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt unfairly with her. <sup>9</sup> If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. <sup>10</sup> If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish the food, clothing, or marital rights of the first wife. <sup>11</sup> And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out without debt, without payment of money.

*The Law concerning Violence*

<sup>12</sup> Whoever strikes a person mortally shall be put to death. <sup>13</sup> If it was not premeditated, but came about by an act of God, then I will appoint for you a place to which the killer may flee. <sup>14</sup> But if someone willfully attacks and kills another by treachery, you shall take the killer from my altar for execution.

<sup>15</sup> Whoever strikes father or mother shall be put to death.

<sup>16</sup> Whoever kidnaps a person, whether that person has been sold or is still held in possession, shall be put to death.

<sup>17</sup> Whoever curses father or mother shall be put to death.

<sup>18</sup> When individuals quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or fist so that the injured party, though not dead, is confined to bed, <sup>19</sup> but recovers and walks around outside with the help of a staff, then the assailant shall be free of liability, except to pay for the loss of time, and to arrange for full recovery.

<sup>20</sup> When a slave owner strikes a male or female slave with a rod and the slave dies immediately, the owner shall be punished. <sup>21</sup> But if the slave survives a day or two, there is no punishment; for the slave is the owner's property.

**Matthew 23:27-39** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead



and of all kinds of filth. <sup>28</sup> So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

<sup>29</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, <sup>30</sup> and you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ <sup>31</sup> Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. <sup>32</sup> Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors.

<sup>33</sup> You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape being sentenced to hell?

<sup>34</sup> Therefore I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, <sup>35</sup> so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the

sanctuary and the altar.

<sup>36</sup> Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

### *The Lament over Jerusalem*

*(Lk 13:34–35)*

<sup>37</sup> “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>38</sup> See, your house is left to you, desolate. <sup>39</sup> For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

### **Psalm 29:1-2 (NRSV)**

#### *The Voice of God in a Great Storm*

A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- <sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendor.

**Proverbs 11:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> When the wicked die, their hope perishes, and the expectation of the godless comes to nothing.

**March 13**



**Exodus 21:22 – 22:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman's husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine. <sup>23</sup> If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, <sup>24</sup> eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, <sup>25</sup> burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

<sup>26</sup> When a slaveowner strikes the eye of a male or female slave, destroying it, the owner shall let the slave go, a

free person, to compensate for the eye. <sup>27</sup> If the owner knocks out a tooth of a male or female slave, the slave shall be let go, a free person, to compensate for the tooth.

*Laws concerning Property*

<sup>28</sup> When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. <sup>29</sup> If the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not restrained it, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. <sup>30</sup> If a ransom is imposed on the owner, then the owner shall pay whatever is imposed for the redemption of the victim's life. <sup>31</sup> If it gores a boy or a girl, the owner shall be dealt with according to this same rule. <sup>32</sup> If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall pay to the slaveowner thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

<sup>33</sup> If someone leaves a pit open, or digs a pit and does

not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, <sup>34</sup> the owner of the pit shall make restitution, giving money to its owner, but keeping the dead animal.

<sup>35</sup> If someone's ox hurts the ox of another, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the price of it; and the dead animal they shall also divide. <sup>36</sup> But if it was known that the ox was accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not restrained it, the owner shall restore ox for ox, but keep the dead animal.

### *Laws of Restitution*

**22** When someone steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, the thief shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. The thief shall make restitution, but if unable to do so, shall be sold for the theft.

<sup>2</sup> If a thief is found breaking in, and is beaten to death, no bloodguilt is incurred; <sup>3</sup> but if it happens after sunrise, bloodguilt is incurred. <sup>4</sup> When the animal, whether ox or donkey or

sheep, is found alive in the thief's possession, the thief shall pay double.

<sup>5</sup> When someone causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets livestock loose to graze in someone else's field, restitution shall be made from the best in the owner's field or vineyard.

<sup>6</sup> When fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, the one who started the fire shall make full restitution.

<sup>7</sup> When someone delivers to a neighbor money or goods for safekeeping, and they are stolen from the neighbor's house, then the thief, if caught, shall pay double. <sup>8</sup> If the thief is not caught, the owner of the house shall be brought before God, to determine whether or not the owner had laid hands on the neighbor's goods.

<sup>9</sup> In any case of disputed ownership involving ox, donkey, sheep, clothing, or any other loss, of which one party says, "This is mine," the case of both parties shall come before God; the one whom

God condemns shall pay double to the other.

<sup>10</sup>When someone delivers to another a donkey, ox, sheep, or any other animal for safekeeping, and it dies or is injured or is carried off, without anyone seeing it, <sup>11</sup>an oath before the LORD shall decide between the two of them that the one has not laid hands on the property of the other; the owner shall accept the oath, and no restitution shall be made. <sup>12</sup>But if it was stolen, restitution shall be made to its owner. <sup>13</sup>If it was mangled by beasts, let it be brought as evidence; restitution shall not be made for the mangled remains.

**Matthew 24:1-14 (NRSV)**

*The Destruction of the Temple Foretold*  
(Mk 13:1-2; Lk 21:5-6)

<sup>1</sup>As Jesus came out of the temple and was going away, his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup>Then he asked them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

*Signs of the End of the Age*

(Mk 13:3-8; Lk 21:7-11)

<sup>3</sup>When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup>For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Messiah!’ and they will lead many astray. <sup>6</sup>And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup>For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: <sup>8</sup>all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

*Persecutions Foretold*

(Mk 13:9-13; Lk 21:12-19)

<sup>9</sup>“Then they will hand you over to be tortured and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. <sup>10</sup>Then many will fall away, and they will betray one another and

hate one another. <sup>11</sup> And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. <sup>12</sup> And because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. <sup>13</sup> But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>14</sup> And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

**Psalms 29:3-11 (NRSV)**

- <sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders,  
the LORD, over mighty waters.
- <sup>4</sup> The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.
- <sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
- <sup>6</sup> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.

- <sup>7</sup> The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.
- <sup>8</sup> The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- <sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl,  
and strips the forest bare;  
and in his temple all say,  
“Glory!”
- <sup>10</sup> The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.
- <sup>11</sup> May the LORD give strength to his people!  
May the LORD bless his people with peace!

**Proverbs 11:8 (NRSV)**

- <sup>8</sup> The righteous are delivered from trouble,  
and the wicked get into it instead.

# March 14



## Exodus 22:14 – 23:13 (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> When someone borrows an animal from another and it is injured or dies, the owner not being present, full restitution shall be made. <sup>15</sup> If the owner was present, there shall be no restitution; if it was hired, only the hiring fee is due.

### *Social and Religious Laws*

<sup>16</sup> When a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged to be married, and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife. <sup>17</sup> But if her father refuses to give her to him, he shall pay an amount equal to the bride-price for virgins.

<sup>18</sup> You shall not permit a female sorcerer to live.

<sup>19</sup> Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

<sup>20</sup> Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the LORD alone, shall be devoted to destruction.

<sup>21</sup> You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for

you were aliens in the land of Egypt. <sup>22</sup> You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. <sup>23</sup> If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry; <sup>24</sup> my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children orphans.

<sup>25</sup> If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them.

<sup>26</sup> If you take your neighbor's cloak in pawn, you shall restore it before the sun goes down; <sup>27</sup> for it may be your neighbor's only clothing to use as cover; in what else shall that person sleep? And if your neighbor cries out to me, I will listen, for I am compassionate.

<sup>28</sup> You shall not revile God, or curse a leader of your people.

<sup>29</sup> You shall not delay to make offerings from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses.

The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. <sup>30</sup> You shall do the same with your

oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall remain with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

<sup>31</sup>You shall be people consecrated to me; therefore you shall not eat any meat that is mangled by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

### *Justice for All*

**23** You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with the wicked to act as a malicious witness. <sup>2</sup>You shall not follow a majority in wrongdoing; when you bear witness in a lawsuit, you shall not side with the majority so as to pervert justice; <sup>3</sup>nor shall you be partial to the poor in a lawsuit.

<sup>4</sup>When you come upon your enemy's ox or donkey going astray, you shall bring it back.

<sup>5</sup>When you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden and you would hold back from setting it free, you must help to set it free.

<sup>6</sup>You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in

their lawsuits. <sup>7</sup>Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and those in the right, for I will not acquit the guilty. <sup>8</sup>You shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the officials, and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

<sup>9</sup>You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

### *Sabbatical Year and Sabbath*

<sup>10</sup>For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; <sup>11</sup>but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

<sup>12</sup>Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief, and your home born slave and the resident alien may be refreshed. <sup>13</sup>Be attentive to all that I have said to you. Do not invoke the

names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.

**Matthew 24:15-28** (NRSV)

*The Desolating Sacrilege*  
(Mk 13:14–23; Lk 17:23–24, 37;  
21:20–24)

<sup>15</sup> “So when you see the desolating sacrilege standing in the holy place, as was spoken of by the prophet Daniel (let the reader understand), <sup>16</sup> then those in Judea must flee to the mountains; <sup>17</sup> the one on the housetop must not go down to take what is in the house; <sup>18</sup> the one in the field must not turn back to get a coat. <sup>19</sup> Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! <sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a sabbath. <sup>21</sup> For at that time there will be great suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. <sup>22</sup> And if those days had not been cut short, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. <sup>23</sup> Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look! Here is the Messiah!’ or ‘There he is!’—do not believe it.

<sup>24</sup> For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce great signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

<sup>25</sup> Take note, I have told you beforehand. <sup>26</sup> So, if they say to you, ‘Look! He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out. If they say, ‘Look! He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it.

<sup>27</sup> For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

<sup>28</sup> Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

**Psalm 30:1-3** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for Recovery  
from Grave Illness*

A Psalm. A Song at the dedication of the temple. Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me.
- <sup>2</sup> O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.
- <sup>3</sup> O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

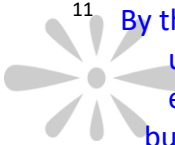


**Proverbs 11:9–11 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> With their mouths the  
godless would destroy  
their neighbors,  
but by knowledge the  
righteous are  
delivered.

<sup>10</sup> When it goes well with the  
righteous, the city  
rejoices;  
and when the wicked  
perish, there is  
jubilation.

<sup>11</sup> **By the blessing of the  
upright a city is  
exalted,  
but it is overthrown by  
the mouth of the  
wicked.**



**March  
15**



**Exodus 23:14 – 24:2 (NRSV)**

*The Annual Festivals*  
(Ex 34:18–26; Deut 16:1–17)

<sup>14</sup> Three times in the year  
you shall hold a festival for  
me. <sup>15</sup> You shall observe the  
festival of unleavened bread;

as I commanded you, you shall  
eat unleavened bread for  
seven days at the appointed  
time in the month of Abib, for  
in it you came out of Egypt.

No one shall appear before  
me empty-handed.

<sup>16</sup> You shall observe the  
festival of harvest, of the first  
fruits of your labor, of what  
you sow in the field. You shall  
observe the festival of  
ingathering at the end of the  
year, when you gather in from  
the field the fruit of your  
labor. <sup>17</sup> Three times in the  
year all your males shall  
appear before the Lord God.

<sup>18</sup> You shall not offer the  
blood of my sacrifice with  
anything leavened, or let the  
fat of my festival remain until  
the morning.

<sup>19</sup> The choicest of the first  
fruits of your ground you shall  
bring into the house of the  
LORD your God.

You shall not boil a kid in  
its mother's milk.

*The Conquest of  
Canaan Promised*

<sup>20</sup> I am going to send an  
angel in front of you, to guard  
you on the way and to bring

you to the place that I have prepared. <sup>21</sup> Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.

<sup>22</sup> But if you listen attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes.

<sup>23</sup> When my angel goes in front of you, and brings you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, <sup>24</sup> you shall not bow down to their gods, or worship them, or follow their practices, but you shall utterly demolish them and break their pillars in pieces. <sup>25</sup> You shall worship the LORD your God, and I will bless your bread and your water; and I will take sickness away from among you. <sup>26</sup> No one shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. <sup>27</sup> I will send my terror in front of you, and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your

enemies turn their backs to you. <sup>28</sup> And I will send the pestilence in front of you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you.

<sup>29</sup> I will not drive them out from before you in one year, or the land would become desolate and the wild animals would multiply against you.

<sup>30</sup> Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. <sup>31</sup> I will set your borders from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates; for I will hand over to you the inhabitants of the land, and you shall drive them out before you. <sup>32</sup> You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. <sup>33</sup> They shall not live in your land, or they will make you sin against me; for if you worship their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.

### *The Blood of the Covenant*

**24** Then he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship at a distance.

<sup>2</sup> Moses alone shall come near the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

**Matthew 24:29-36** (NRSV)

*The Coming of the Son of Man*

(Mk 13:24-27; Lk 21:25-28)

<sup>29</sup> “Immediately after the suffering of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken.

<sup>30</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see ‘the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven’ with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

*The Lesson of the Fig Tree*

(Mk 13:28-31; Lk 21:29-33)

<sup>32</sup> “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know

that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>34</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

*The Necessity for Watchfulness*

(Mk 13:32-37; Lk 17:26-27, 34-35; 21:34-36)

<sup>36</sup> “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

**Psalm 30:4-12** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.

<sup>5</sup> For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

<sup>6</sup> As for me, I said in my prosperity, “I shall never be moved.”

<sup>7</sup> By your favor, O LORD,

you had established me  
as a strong mountain;  
you hid your face;  
I was dismayed.

- 8 To you, O LORD, I cried,  
and to the LORD I made  
supplication:  
9 “What profit is there in my  
death,  
if I go down to the Pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
Will it tell of your  
faithfulness?  
10 Hear, O LORD, and be  
gracious to me!  
O LORD, be my helper!”  
11 You have turned my  
mourning into dancing;  
you have taken off my  
sackcloth  
and clothed me with joy,  
12 so that my soul may praise  
you and not be silent.  
O LORD my God, I will  
give thanks to you  
forever.

**Proverbs 11:12–13** (NRSV)

- 12 Whoever belittles another  
lacks sense,  
but an intelligent person  
remains silent.  
13 A gossip goes about telling  
secrets,

but one who is  
trustworthy in spirit  
keeps a confidence.

**March 16**



**Exodus 24:3 – 25:30** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, “All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do.” <sup>4</sup> And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and set up twelve pillars, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup> He sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed oxen as offerings of well-being to the LORD. <sup>6</sup> Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he dashed against the altar.

<sup>7</sup> Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." <sup>8</sup> Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, "See the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

*On the Mountain with God*

<sup>9</sup> Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, <sup>10</sup> and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. <sup>11</sup> God did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; also they beheld God, and they ate and drank.

<sup>12</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction."  
<sup>13</sup> So Moses set out with his

assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. <sup>14</sup> To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them."

<sup>15</sup> Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. <sup>16</sup> The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. <sup>17</sup> Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. <sup>18</sup> Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

*Offerings for the Tabernacle*  
(Ex 35:4–9)

**25** The LORD said to Moses: <sup>2</sup> Tell the Israelites to take for me an offering; from all whose hearts prompt them to give you shall receive the offering for me. <sup>3</sup> This is the offering that you shall receive from

them: gold, silver, and bronze,<sup>4</sup> blue, purple, and crimson yarns and fine linen, goats' hair,<sup>5</sup> tanned rams' skins, fine leather, acacia wood,<sup>6</sup> oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense,<sup>7</sup> onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and for the breastpiece.<sup>8</sup> And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them.<sup>9</sup> In accordance with all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

*The Ark of the Covenant*  
(Ex 37:1–9)

<sup>10</sup>They shall make an ark of acacia wood; it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high.<sup>11</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you shall overlay it, and you shall make a molding of gold upon it all around.<sup>12</sup> You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side.<sup>13</sup> You shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay

them with gold.<sup>14</sup> And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, by which to carry the ark.<sup>15</sup> The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it.<sup>16</sup> You shall put into the ark the covenant that I shall give you.

<sup>17</sup>Then you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its width.<sup>18</sup> You shall make two cherubim of gold; you shall make them of hammered work, at the two ends of the mercy seat.<sup>19</sup> Make one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other; of one piece with the mercy seat you shall make the cherubim at its two ends.<sup>20</sup> The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings. They shall face one to another; the faces of the cherubim shall be turned toward the mercy seat.<sup>21</sup> You shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark; and in the ark you shall put the covenant that I shall give you.<sup>22</sup> There I will meet with you,

and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the covenant, I will deliver to you all my commands for the Israelites.

*The Table for the  
Bread of the Presence*  
(Ex 37:10–16)

<sup>23</sup> You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high. <sup>24</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold around it. <sup>25</sup> You shall make around it a rim a handbreadth wide, and a molding of gold around the rim. <sup>26</sup> You shall make for it four rings of gold, and fasten the rings to the four corners at its four legs. <sup>27</sup> The rings that hold the poles used for carrying the table shall be close to the rim. <sup>28</sup> You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with these. <sup>29</sup> You shall make its plates and dishes for incense, and its flagons and bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. <sup>30</sup> And you shall set the bread of the

Presence on the table before me always.

**Matthew 24:37-51** (NRSV)

For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.

<sup>40</sup> Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>42</sup> Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup> Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

*The Faithful or the  
Unfaithful Slave*

(Lk 12:41–48)

<sup>45</sup> “Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves their allowance of food at the proper time? <sup>46</sup> Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. <sup>47</sup> Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions. <sup>48</sup> But if that wicked slave says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ <sup>49</sup> and he begins to beat his fellow slaves, and eats and drinks with drunkards, <sup>50</sup> the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know. <sup>51</sup> He will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**Psalm 31:1-2** (NRSV)

*Prayer and Praise for  
Deliverance from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> In you, O LORD, I seek  
refuge;  
do not let me ever be  
put to shame;

in your righteousness  
deliver me.

<sup>2</sup> Incline your ear to me;  
rescue me speedily.  
Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a strong fortress to save  
me.

**Proverbs 11:14** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Where there is no  
guidance, a nation falls,  
but in an abundance of  
counselors there is  
safety.

## March 17



**Exodus 25:31 – 26:29** (NRSV)

*The Lampstand*

(Ex 37:17–24)

<sup>31</sup> You shall make a  
lampstand of pure gold. The  
base and the shaft of the  
lampstand shall be made of  
hammered work; its cups, its  
calyxes, and its petals shall be  
of one piece with it; <sup>32</sup> and  
there shall be six branches  
going out of its sides, three



branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; <sup>33</sup> three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on one branch, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. <sup>34</sup> On the lampstand itself there shall be four cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with its calyxes and petals. <sup>35</sup> There shall be a calyx of one piece with it under the first pair of branches, a calyx of one piece with it under the next pair of branches, and a calyx of one piece with it under the last pair of branches—so for the six branches that go out of the lampstand. <sup>36</sup> Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it one hammered piece of pure gold. <sup>37</sup> You shall make the seven lamps for it; and the lamps shall be set up so as to give light on the space in front of it. <sup>38</sup> Its snuffers and trays shall be of pure gold. <sup>39</sup> It, and all these utensils, shall be

made from a talent of pure gold. <sup>40</sup> And see that you make them according to the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.

*The Tabernacle*  
(Ex 36:8–38)

**26** Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twisted linen, and blue, purple, and crimson yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them. <sup>2</sup> The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall be of the same size. <sup>3</sup> Five curtains shall be joined to one another; and the other five curtains shall be joined to one another. <sup>4</sup> You shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set; and likewise you shall make loops on the edge of the outermost curtain in the second set. <sup>5</sup> You shall make fifty loops on the one curtain, and you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another.

<sup>6</sup>You shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be one whole.

<sup>7</sup>You shall also make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; you shall make eleven curtains.

<sup>8</sup>The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains shall be of the same size. <sup>9</sup>You shall join five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and the sixth curtain you shall double over at the front of the tent. <sup>10</sup>You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set.

<sup>11</sup>You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops, and join the tent together, so that it may be one whole. <sup>12</sup>The part that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. <sup>13</sup>The cubit on the one side, and the

cubit on the other side, of what remains in the length of the curtains of the tent, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and that side, to cover it. <sup>14</sup>You shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and an outer covering of fine leather.

### *The Framework*

<sup>15</sup>You shall make upright frames of acacia wood for the tabernacle. <sup>16</sup>Ten cubits shall be the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the width of each frame. <sup>17</sup>There shall be two pegs in each frame to fit the frames together; you shall make these for all the frames of the tabernacle. <sup>18</sup>You shall make the frames for the tabernacle: twenty frames for the south side; <sup>19</sup>and you shall make forty bases of silver under the twenty frames, two bases under the first frame for its two pegs, and two bases under the next frame for its two pegs; <sup>20</sup>and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side twenty frames, <sup>21</sup>and their forty bases of silver, two bases under the

first frame, and two bases under the next frame;<sup>22</sup> and for the rear of the tabernacle westward you shall make six frames.<sup>23</sup> You shall make two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear;<sup>24</sup> they shall be separate beneath, but joined at the top, at the first ring; it shall be the same with both of them; they shall form the two corners.<sup>25</sup> And so there shall be eight frames, with their bases of silver, sixteen bases; two bases under the first frame, and two bases under the next frame.

<sup>26</sup>You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle,<sup>27</sup> and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward.<sup>28</sup> The middle bar, halfway up the frames, shall pass through from end to end.

<sup>29</sup>You shall overlay the frames with gold, and shall make their rings of gold to hold the bars; and you shall overlay the bars with gold.<sup>30</sup> Then you shall erect the tabernacle according

to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain.

**Matthew 25:1-13** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids*

<sup>1</sup> “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.<sup>2</sup> Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.<sup>3</sup> When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;<sup>4</sup> but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.<sup>5</sup> As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.<sup>6</sup> But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’<sup>7</sup> Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps.<sup>8</sup> The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’<sup>9</sup> But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’<sup>10</sup> And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the

wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup> Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup> But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup> Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**Psalm 31:3-8** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> You are indeed my rock and my fortress;  
for your name's sake lead me and guide me,  
<sup>4</sup> take me out of the net that is hidden for me,  
for you are my refuge.  
<sup>5</sup> Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.  
<sup>6</sup> You hate those who pay regard to worthless idols,  
but I trust in the LORD.  
<sup>7</sup> I will exult and rejoice in your steadfast love,  
because you have seen my affliction;  
you have taken heed of my adversities,  
<sup>8</sup> and have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy;

you have set my feet in a broad place.

**Proverbs 11:15** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> To guarantee loans for a stranger brings trouble, but there is safety in refusing to do so.

**March 18**



**Exodus 26:30 – 27:21** (NRSV)

*The Curtain*

<sup>31</sup> You shall make a curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. <sup>32</sup> You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, which have hooks of gold and rest on four bases of silver. <sup>33</sup> You shall hang the curtain under the clasps, and bring the ark of the covenant in there, within the curtain; and the curtain shall separate for you the holy place from the most holy. <sup>34</sup> You shall put

the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant in the most holy place. <sup>35</sup> You shall set the table outside the curtain, and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle opposite the table; and you shall put the table on the north side.

<sup>36</sup> You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen, embroidered with needlework. <sup>37</sup> You shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold; their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.

*The Altar of Burnt Offering*  
(Ex 38:1–7)

**27** You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and it shall be three cubits high. <sup>2</sup> You shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. <sup>3</sup> You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and firepans; you shall make all its

utensils of bronze. <sup>4</sup> You shall also make for it a grating, a network of bronze; and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. <sup>5</sup> You shall set it under the ledge of the altar so that the net shall extend halfway down the altar. <sup>6</sup> You shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze; <sup>7</sup> the poles shall be put through the rings, so that the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. <sup>8</sup> You shall make it hollow, with boards. They shall be made just as you were shown on the mountain.

*The Court and Its Hangings*  
(Ex 38:9–20)

<sup>9</sup> You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side the court shall have hangings of fine twisted linen one hundred cubits long for that side; <sup>10</sup> its twenty pillars and their twenty bases shall be of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver. <sup>11</sup> Likewise for its length on the north side there shall be hangings one hundred cubits long, their pillars twenty and their bases

twenty, of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver. <sup>12</sup> For the width of the court on the west side there shall be fifty cubits of hangings, with ten pillars and ten bases. <sup>13</sup> The width of the court on the front to the east shall be fifty cubits. <sup>14</sup> There shall be fifteen cubits of hangings on the one side, with three pillars and three bases. <sup>15</sup> There shall be fifteen cubits of hangings on the other side, with three pillars and three bases. <sup>16</sup> For the gate of the court there shall be a screen twenty cubits long, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen, embroidered with needlework; it shall have four pillars and with them four bases. <sup>17</sup> All the pillars around the court shall be banded with silver; their hooks shall be of silver, and their bases of bronze. <sup>18</sup> The length of the court shall be one hundred cubits, the width fifty, and the height five cubits, with hangings of fine twisted linen and bases of bronze. <sup>19</sup> All the utensils of the tabernacle for every use, and all its pegs and

all the pegs of the court, shall be of bronze.

### *The Oil for the Lamp*

*(Lev 24:1-4)*

<sup>20</sup> You shall further command the Israelites to bring you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, so that a lamp may be set up to burn regularly. <sup>21</sup> In the tent of meeting, outside the curtain that is before the covenant, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening to morning before the LORD. It shall be a perpetual ordinance to be observed throughout their generations by the Israelites.

### **Matthew 25:14-30** (NRSV)

#### *The Parable of the Talents*

*(Lk 19:11-27)*

<sup>14</sup> "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup> to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup> The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup> In the same way, the one who had the two

talents made two more talents.<sup>18</sup> But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.<sup>19</sup> After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.<sup>20</sup> Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.'<sup>21</sup> His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'<sup>22</sup> And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.'<sup>23</sup> His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'<sup>24</sup> Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward,

saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed;<sup>25</sup> so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'<sup>26</sup> But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter?'<sup>27</sup> Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.<sup>28</sup> So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.<sup>29</sup> For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.<sup>30</sup> As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

**Psalm 31:9-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD,  
for I am in distress;

my eye wastes away  
from grief,  
my soul and body also.  
10 For my life is spent with  
sorrow,  
and my years with  
sighing;  
my strength fails because  
of my misery,  
and my bones waste  
away.  
11 I am the scorn of all my  
adversaries,  
a horror to my  
neighbors,  
an object of dread to my  
acquaintances;  
those who see me in the  
street flee from me.  
12 I have passed out of mind  
like one who is dead;  
I have become like a  
broken vessel.  
13 For I hear the whispering  
of many—  
terror all around!—  
as they scheme together  
against me,  
as they plot to take my  
life.  
14 But I trust in you, O LORD;  
I say, “You are my God.”  
15 My times are in your hand;

deliver me from the  
hand of my enemies  
and persecutors.  
16 Let your face shine upon  
your servant;  
save me in your  
steadfast love.  
17 Do not let me be put to  
shame, O LORD,  
for I call on you;  
let the wicked be put to  
shame;  
let them go  
dumbfounded to  
Sheol.  
18 Let the lying lips be stilled  
that speak insolently  
against the righteous  
with pride and  
contempt.

**Proverbs 11:16–17 (NRSV)**  
16 A gracious woman gets  
honor,  
but she who hates virtue  
is covered with shame.  
The timid become  
destitute,  
but the aggressive gain  
riches.  
17 Those who are kind reward  
themselves,  
but the cruel do  
themselves harm.



## March 19



### Exodus 28:1-14 (NRSV)

#### *Vestments for the Priesthood* (Ex 39:1-7)

<sup>1</sup> Then bring near to you your brother Aaron, and his sons with him, from among the Israelites, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. <sup>2</sup> You shall make sacred vestments for the glorious adornment of your brother Aaron. <sup>3</sup> And you shall speak to all who have ability, whom I have endowed with skill, that they make Aaron’s vestments to consecrate him for my priesthood. <sup>4</sup> These are the vestments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a checkered tunic, a turban, and a sash. When they make these sacred vestments for your brother Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests, <sup>5</sup> they shall use gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine linen.

#### *The Ephod*

<sup>6</sup> They shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen, skillfully worked. <sup>7</sup> It shall have two shoulder-pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together. <sup>8</sup> The decorated band on it shall be of the same workmanship and materials, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. <sup>9</sup> You shall take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, <sup>10</sup> six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. <sup>11</sup> As a gem-cutter engraves signets, so you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel; you shall mount them in settings of gold filigree. <sup>12</sup> You shall set the two stones on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel; and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for remembrance. <sup>13</sup> You shall make settings of gold filigree,

<sup>14</sup> and two chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; and you shall attach the corded chains to the settings.

**Matthew 25:31-46** (NRSV)

*The Judgment of the Nations*

<sup>31</sup> “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup> and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was

it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup> And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ <sup>40</sup> And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ <sup>41</sup> Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ <sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ <sup>45</sup> Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to



one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

**Psalms 31:19-20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you, and accomplished for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of everyone!  
<sup>20</sup> In the shelter of your presence you hide them from human plots; you hold them safe under your shelter from contentious tongues.

**Proverbs 11:18-19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> The wicked earn no real gain, but those who sow righteousness get a true reward.  
<sup>19</sup> Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live, but whoever pursues evil will die.

# March 20



**Exodus 28:15-43** (NRSV)

*The Breastplate*

(Ex 39:8-21)

<sup>15</sup> You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work; you shall make it in the style of the ephod; of gold, of blue and purple and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen you shall make it.  
<sup>16</sup> It shall be square and doubled, a span in length and a span in width. <sup>17</sup> You shall set in it four rows of stones. A row of carnelian, chrysolite, and emerald shall be the first row; <sup>18</sup> and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and a moonstone; <sup>19</sup> and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; <sup>20</sup> and the fourth row a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree. <sup>21</sup> There shall be twelve stones with names corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel; they shall be like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. <sup>22</sup> You shall make for the breastpiece chains of pure

gold, twisted like cords; <sup>23</sup> and you shall make for the breastpiece two rings of gold, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece. <sup>24</sup> You shall put the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece; <sup>25</sup> the two ends of the two cords you shall attach to the two settings, and so attach it in front to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod. <sup>26</sup> You shall make two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod. <sup>27</sup> You shall make two rings of gold, and attach them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, at its joining above the decorated band of the ephod. <sup>28</sup> The breastpiece shall be bound by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it may lie on the decorated band of the ephod, and so that the breastpiece shall not come loose from the ephod. <sup>29</sup> So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart when he goes into the holy place, for a continual

remembrance before the LORD. <sup>30</sup> In the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD; thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the Israelites on his heart before the LORD continually.

*Other Priestly Vestments*  
(Ex 39:22–31)

<sup>31</sup> You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. <sup>32</sup> It shall have an opening for the head in the middle of it, with a woven binding around the opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it may not be torn. <sup>33</sup> On its lower hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, all around the lower hem, with bells of gold between them all around— <sup>34</sup> a golden bell and a pomegranate alternating all around the lower hem of the robe. <sup>35</sup> Aaron shall wear it when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD, and when he comes out, so that he may not die.

<sup>36</sup> You shall make a rosette of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, "Holy to the LORD."

<sup>37</sup> You shall fasten it on the turban with a blue cord; it shall be on the front of the turban. <sup>38</sup> It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take on himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering that the Israelites consecrate as their sacred donations; it shall always be on his forehead, in order that they may find favor before the LORD.

<sup>39</sup> You shall make the checkered tunic of fine linen, and you shall make a turban of fine linen, and you shall make a sash embroidered with needlework.

<sup>40</sup> For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics and sashes and headdresses; you shall make them for their glorious adornment. <sup>41</sup> You shall put them on your brother Aaron, and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, so that they may serve me as priests. <sup>42</sup> You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh; they

shall reach from the hips to the thighs; <sup>43</sup> Aaron and his sons shall wear them when they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place; or they will bring guilt on themselves and die. This shall be a perpetual ordinance for him and for his descendants after him.

### **Matthew 26:1-13 (NRSV)**

#### *The Plot to Kill Jesus*

*(Mk 14:1-2; Lk 22:1-2; Jn 11:45-53)*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup> "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

<sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, <sup>4</sup> and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. <sup>5</sup> But they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."

### *The Anointing at Bethany*

(Mk 14:3–9; Jn 12:1–8)

<sup>6</sup> Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, <sup>7</sup> a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. <sup>8</sup> But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, “Why this waste?” <sup>9</sup> For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor.” <sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “**Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me.** <sup>11</sup> **For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.** <sup>12</sup> **By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial.** <sup>13</sup> **Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”**

### **Psalm 31:21-22** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
for he has wondrously  
shown his steadfast  
love to me

when I was beset as a  
city under siege.

<sup>22</sup> I had said in my alarm,  
“I am driven far from  
your sight.”  
But you heard my  
supplications  
when I cried out to you  
for help.

### **Proverbs 11:20–21** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> Crooked minds are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
but those of blameless  
ways are his delight.  
<sup>21</sup> Be assured, the wicked will  
not go unpunished,  
but those who are  
righteous will escape.

## March 21



### **Exodus 29:1-28** (NRSV)

#### *The Ordination of the Priests* (Lev 8:1–36)

<sup>1</sup> Now this is what you shall do  
to them to consecrate them,  
so that they may serve me as

priests. Take one young bull and two rams without blemish, <sup>2</sup> and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil. You shall make them of choice wheat flour. <sup>3</sup> You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, and bring the bull and the two rams. <sup>4</sup> You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and wash them with water. <sup>5</sup> Then you shall take the vestments, and put on Aaron the tunic and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breast piece, and gird him with the decorated band of the ephod; <sup>6</sup> and you shall set the turban on his head, and put the holy diadem on the turban. <sup>7</sup> You shall take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head and anoint him. <sup>8</sup> Then you shall bring his sons, and put tunics on them, <sup>9</sup> and you shall gird them with sashes and tie headdresses on them; and the priesthood shall be theirs by a perpetual ordinance. You shall then ordain Aaron and his sons.

<sup>10</sup> You shall bring the bull in front of the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull, <sup>11</sup> and you shall slaughter the bull before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, <sup>12</sup> and shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and all the rest of the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar. <sup>13</sup> You shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and turn them into smoke on the altar. <sup>14</sup> But the flesh of the bull, and its skin, and its dung, you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering.

<sup>15</sup> Then you shall take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>16</sup> and you shall slaughter the ram, and shall take its blood and dash it against all sides of the altar. <sup>17</sup> Then you shall cut the ram into its parts, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its parts and its

head, <sup>18</sup> and turn the whole ram into smoke on the altar; it is a burnt offering to the LORD; it is a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.

<sup>19</sup> You shall take the other ram; and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>20</sup> and you shall slaughter the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and on the lobes of the right ears of his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet, and dash the rest of the blood against all sides of the altar. <sup>21</sup> Then you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his vestments and on his sons and his sons' vestments with him; then he and his vestments shall be holy, as well as his sons and his sons' vestments.

<sup>22</sup> You shall also take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the appendage of the liver, the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and the right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination),

<sup>23</sup> and one loaf of bread, one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer, out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the LORD; <sup>24</sup> and you shall place all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and raise them as an elevation offering before the LORD. <sup>25</sup> Then you shall take them from their hands, and turn them into smoke on the altar on top of the burnt offering of pleasing odor before the LORD; it is an offering by fire to the LORD.

<sup>26</sup> You shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron's ordination and raise it as an elevation offering before the LORD; and it shall be your portion. <sup>27</sup> You shall consecrate the breast that was raised as an elevation offering and the thigh that was raised as an elevation offering from the ram of ordination, from that which belonged to Aaron and his sons. <sup>28</sup> These things shall be a perpetual ordinance for Aaron and his sons from the Israelites, for this is an offering; and it shall be an offering by the Israelites from their sacrifice of offerings of



well-being, their offering to the LORD.

**Matthew 26:14-25** (NRSV)

*Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus*

*(Mk 14:10-11; Lk 22:3-6)*

<sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, “What will you give me if I betray him to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

*The Passover with the Disciples*

*(Mk 14:12-21; Lk 22:7-13)*

<sup>17</sup> On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?” <sup>18</sup> He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’ ” <sup>19</sup> So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.


<sup>20</sup> When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; <sup>21</sup> and while they were eating,

he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.” <sup>22</sup> And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, “Surely not I, Lord?” <sup>23</sup> He answered, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.” <sup>24</sup> The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.” <sup>25</sup> Judas, who betrayed him, said, “Surely not I, Rabbi?” He replied, “You have said so.”

**Psalm 31:23-24** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Love the LORD, all you his saints.

The LORD preserves the faithful, but abundantly repays the one who acts haughtily.



<sup>24</sup> Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the LORD.

**Proverbs 11:22** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout

is a beautiful woman  
without good sense.

## March 22



**Exodus 29:29 – 30:10 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup>The sacred vestments of Aaron shall be passed on to his sons after him; they shall be anointed in them and ordained in them. <sup>30</sup>The son who is priest in his place shall wear them seven days, when he comes into the tent of meeting to minister in the holy place.

<sup>31</sup>You shall take the ram of ordination, and boil its flesh in a holy place; <sup>32</sup>and Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>33</sup>They themselves shall eat the food by which atonement is made, to ordain and consecrate them, but no one else shall eat of them, because they are holy. <sup>34</sup>If any of the flesh for

the ordination, or of the bread, remains until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire; it shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

<sup>35</sup>Thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, just as I have commanded you; through seven days you shall ordain them. <sup>36</sup>Also every day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. Also you shall offer a sin offering for the altar, when you make atonement for it, and shall anoint it, to consecrate it.

<sup>37</sup>Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar, and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy; whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

### *The Daily Offerings* (Num 28:1–8)

<sup>38</sup>Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old regularly each day. <sup>39</sup>One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer in the evening; <sup>40</sup>and with the first lamb one-tenth of a measure of choice flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of

beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. <sup>41</sup> And the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. <sup>42</sup> It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. <sup>43</sup> I will meet with the Israelites there, and it shall be sanctified by my glory; <sup>44</sup> I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate, to serve me as priests. <sup>45</sup> I will dwell among the Israelites, and I will be their God. <sup>46</sup> And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am the LORD their God.

*The Altar of Incense*  
(Ex 37:25–28)

**30** You shall make an altar on which to offer incense; you shall make it of acacia wood.

<sup>2</sup> It shall be one cubit long, and one cubit wide; it shall be square, and shall be two cubits high; its horns shall be of one piece with it. <sup>3</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top, and its sides all around and its horns; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around. <sup>4</sup> And you shall make two golden rings for it; under its molding on two opposite sides of it you shall make them, and they shall hold the poles with which to carry it. <sup>5</sup> You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. <sup>6</sup> You shall place it in front of the curtain that is above the ark of the covenant, in front of the mercy seat that is over the covenant, where I will meet with you. <sup>7</sup> Aaron shall offer fragrant incense on it; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall offer it, <sup>8</sup> and when Aaron sets up the lamps in the evening, he shall offer it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations. <sup>9</sup> You shall not offer unholy incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; and you shall not

pour a drink offering on it.

<sup>10</sup> Once a year Aaron shall perform the rite of atonement on its horns. Throughout your generations he shall perform the atonement for it once a year with the blood of the atoning sin offering. It is most holy to the LORD.

**Matthew 26:26-46** (NRSV)

*The Institution of  
the Lord's Supper*

*(Mk 14:22-26; Lk 22:14-23;  
1 Cor 11:23-26)*

<sup>26</sup> While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." <sup>27</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; <sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

<sup>30</sup> When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

*Peter's Denial Foretold*  
*(Mk 14:27-31; Lk 22:31-34;  
Jn 13:36-38)*

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep of the  
flock will be scattered.'

<sup>32</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." <sup>33</sup> Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."

<sup>35</sup> Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

*Jesus Prays in Gethsemane*  
*(Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-46)*

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." <sup>37</sup> He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved,

even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.”

<sup>39</sup> And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.” <sup>40</sup> Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not stay awake with me one hour?” <sup>41</sup> Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” <sup>42</sup> Again he went away for the second time and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.” <sup>43</sup> Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. <sup>44</sup> So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. <sup>45</sup> Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup> Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

**Psalm 32:1-7 (NRSV)**

*The Joy of Forgiveness*

Of David. A Maskil.

- 1 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
- 2 Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- 3 While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long.
- 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. *Selah*
- 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*
- 6 Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters

shall not reach them.  
7 You are a hiding place for  
me;  
you preserve me from  
trouble;  
you surround me with  
glad cries of  
deliverance. *Selah*

**Proverbs 11:23** (NRSV)

23 The desire of the righteous  
ends only in good; the  
expectation of the  
wicked in wrath.

**March 23**



**Exodus 30:11-38** (NRSV)

*The Half Shekel for the  
Sanctuary*

11 The LORD spoke to  
Moses: 12 When you take a  
census of the Israelites to  
register them, at registration  
all of them shall give a ransom  
for their lives to the LORD, so  
that no plague may come  
upon them for being  
registered. 13 This is what each

one who is registered shall  
give: half a shekel according to  
the shekel of the sanctuary  
(the shekel is twenty gerahs),  
half a shekel as an offering to  
the LORD. 14 Each one who is  
registered, from twenty years  
old and upward, shall give the  
LORD's offering. 15 The rich shall  
not give more, and the poor  
shall not give less, than the  
half shekel, when you bring  
this offering to the LORD to  
make atonement for your  
lives. 16 You shall take the  
atonement money from the  
Israelites and shall designate it  
for the service of the tent of  
meeting; before the LORD it  
will be a reminder to the  
Israelites of the ransom given  
for your lives.

*The Bronze Basin*

17 The LORD spoke to  
Moses: 18 You shall make a  
bronze basin with a bronze  
stand for washing. You shall  
put it between the tent of  
meeting and the altar, and you  
shall put water in it; 19 with the  
water Aaron and his sons shall  
wash their hands and their  
feet. 20 When they go into the  
tent of meeting, or when they

come near the altar to minister, to make an offering by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. <sup>21</sup> They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die: it shall be a perpetual ordinance for them, for him and for his descendants throughout their generations.

*The Anointing Oil and Incense*  
(Ex 37:29)

<sup>22</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses: <sup>23</sup> Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, two hundred fifty, and two hundred fifty of aromatic cane, <sup>24</sup> and five hundred of cassia—measured by the sanctuary shekel—and a hin of olive oil; <sup>25</sup> and you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. <sup>26</sup> With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the covenant, <sup>27</sup> and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, <sup>28</sup> and the altar of burnt offering with all

its utensils, and the basin with its stand; <sup>29</sup> you shall consecrate them, so that they may be most holy; whatever touches them will become holy. <sup>30</sup> You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, in order that they may serve me as priests. <sup>31</sup> You shall say to the Israelites, “This shall be my holy anointing oil throughout your generations. <sup>32</sup> It shall not be used in any ordinary anointing of the body, and you shall make no other like it in composition; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you. <sup>33</sup> Whoever compounds any like it or whoever puts any of it on an unqualified person shall be cut off from the people.”

<sup>34</sup> The LORD said to Moses: Take sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum, sweet spices with pure frankincense (an equal part of each), <sup>35</sup> and make an incense blended as by the perfumer, seasoned with salt, pure and holy; <sup>36</sup> and you shall beat some of it into powder, and put part of it before the covenant in the tent of meeting where I shall meet with you; it shall be for

you most holy. <sup>37</sup> When you make incense according to this composition, you shall not make it for yourselves; it shall be regarded by you as holy to the LORD. <sup>38</sup> Whoever makes any like it to use as perfume shall be cut off from the people.

**Matthew 26:47-56** (NRSV)

*The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus*

(Mk 14:43-52; Lk 22:47-53;  
Jn 18:1-11)

<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. <sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." <sup>49</sup> At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. <sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. <sup>51</sup> Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said

to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword." <sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" <sup>55</sup> At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me." <sup>56</sup> But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

**Psalms 32:8-11** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> I will instruct you and  
teach you the way you  
should go;  
I will counsel you with  
my eye upon you.  
<sup>9</sup> Do not be like a horse or a  
mule, without  
understanding,





whose temper must be  
curbed with bit and  
bridle,  
else it will not stay near  
you.

<sup>10</sup> Many are the torments of  
the wicked,  
but steadfast love  
surrounds those who  
trust in the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Be glad in the LORD and  
rejoice, O righteous,  
and shout for joy, all you  
upright in heart.

**Proverbs 11:24–26** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> Some give freely, yet grow  
all the richer;  
others withhold what is  
due, and only suffer  
want.

<sup>25</sup> A generous person will be  
enriched,  
and one who gives water  
will get water.

<sup>26</sup> The people curse those  
who hold back grain,  
but a blessing is on the  
head of those who sell  
it.

## March 24



**Exodus 31:1-18** (NRSV)

*Bezalel and Oholiab*

(Ex 35:30–36:1)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses:

<sup>2</sup> See, I have called by name  
Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur,  
of the tribe of Judah: <sup>3</sup> and I  
have filled him with divine  
spirit, with ability, intelligence,  
and knowledge in every kind  
of craft, <sup>4</sup> to devise artistic  
designs, to work in gold, silver,  
and bronze, <sup>5</sup> in cutting stones  
for setting, and in carving  
wood, in every kind of craft.

<sup>6</sup> Moreover, I have appointed  
with him Oholiab son of  
Ahisamach, of the tribe of  
Dan; and I have given skill to  
all the skillful, so that they  
may make all that I have  
commanded you: <sup>7</sup> the tent of  
meeting, and the ark of the  
covenant, and the mercy seat  
that is on it, and all the  
furnishings of the tent, <sup>8</sup> the  
table and its utensils, and the  
pure lampstand with all its  
utensils, and the altar of  
incense, <sup>9</sup> and the altar of  
burnt offering with all its

utensils, and the basin with its stand,<sup>10</sup> and the finely worked vestments, the holy vestments for the priest Aaron and the vestments of his sons, for their service as priests,<sup>11</sup> and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the holy place. They shall do just as I have commanded you.

### *The Sabbath Law*

<sup>12</sup> The LORD said to Moses: <sup>13</sup> You yourself are to speak to the Israelites: “You shall keep my sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, given in order that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. <sup>14</sup> You shall keep the sabbath, because it is holy for you; everyone who profanes it shall be put to death; whoever does any work on it shall be cut off from among the people. <sup>15</sup> Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall be put to death. <sup>16</sup> Therefore the Israelites shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout their

generations, as a perpetual covenant. <sup>17</sup> It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”

### *The Two Tablets of the Covenant*

<sup>18</sup> When God finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the covenant, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

### **Matthew 26:57-68** (NRSV)

*Jesus before the High Priest*  
(Mk 14:53–65; Lk 22:66–71;  
Jn 18:12–14, 19–24)

<sup>57</sup> Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. <sup>58</sup> But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. <sup>59</sup> Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death,<sup>60</sup> but

they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward <sup>61</sup> and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' "

<sup>62</sup> The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" <sup>63</sup> But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." <sup>64</sup> Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you,

From now on you will see  
the Son of Man  
seated at the right hand  
of Power  
and coming on the  
clouds of heaven."

<sup>65</sup> Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy.

<sup>66</sup> What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death." <sup>67</sup> Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, <sup>68</sup> saying,

"Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

**Psalm 33:1-5** (NRSV)

*The Greatness and Goodness  
of God*

- 1 Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous.  
Praise befits the upright.
- 2 Praise the LORD with the lyre;  
make melody to him  
with the harp of ten strings.
- 3 Sing to him a new song;  
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.
- 4 For the word of the LORD is upright,  
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
- 5 He loves righteousness and justice;  
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

**Proverbs 11:27** (NRSV)

- <sup>27</sup> Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor, but evil comes to the one who searches for it.

## March 25



### Exodus 32:1-30 (NRSV)

#### *The Golden Calf*

(Deut 9:6–29)

<sup>1</sup> When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

<sup>2</sup> Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” <sup>3</sup> So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. <sup>4</sup> He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” <sup>5</sup> When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.” <sup>6</sup> They

rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; <sup>8</sup> they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’ ” <sup>9</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. <sup>10</sup> Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”

<sup>11</sup> But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, “O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

<sup>12</sup> Why should the Egyptians

say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people.<sup>13</sup> Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' "<sup>14</sup> And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

<sup>15</sup> Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain, carrying the two tablets of the covenant in his hands, tablets that were written on both sides, written on the front and on the back.<sup>16</sup> The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets.<sup>17</sup> When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of

war in the camp."<sup>18</sup> But he said,

"It is not the sound made by victors,  
or the sound made by losers;  
it is the sound of revelers that I hear."

<sup>19</sup> As soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets from his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.<sup>20</sup> He took the calf that they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it.

<sup>21</sup> Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?"<sup>22</sup> And Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord burn hot; you know the people, that they are bent on evil."<sup>23</sup> They said to me, 'Make us gods, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'<sup>24</sup> So I said to them, 'Whoever has gold, take it off'; so they gave it to me,

and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!”

<sup>25</sup>When Moses saw that the people were running wild (for Aaron had let them run wild, to the derision of their enemies), <sup>26</sup>then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, “Who is on the LORD’s side? Come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. <sup>27</sup>He said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Put your sword on your side, each of you! Go back and forth from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill your brother, your friend, and your neighbor.’” <sup>28</sup>The sons of Levi did as Moses commanded, and about three thousand of the people fell on that day.

<sup>29</sup>Moses said, “Today you have ordained yourselves for the service of the LORD, each one at the cost of a son or a brother, and so have brought a blessing on yourselves this day.”

<sup>30</sup>On the next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps

I can make atonement for your sin.”

**Matthew 26:69-75** (NRSV)

*Peter’s Denial of Jesus*

(Mk 14:66–72; Lk 22:54–62

Jn 18:15–18, 25–27)

<sup>69</sup>Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” <sup>70</sup>But he denied it before all of them, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.” <sup>71</sup>When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” <sup>72</sup>Again he denied it with an oath, “I do not know the man.” <sup>73</sup>After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.” <sup>74</sup>Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know the man!” At that moment the cock crowed. <sup>75</sup>Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: “Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

**Psalm 33:6-11** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> By the word of the LORD  
the heavens were  
made,  
and all their host by the  
breath of his mouth.  
<sup>7</sup> He gathered the waters of  
the sea as in a bottle;  
he put the deeps in  
storehouses.  
<sup>8</sup> Let all the earth fear the  
LORD;  
let all the inhabitants of  
the world stand in awe  
of him.  
<sup>9</sup> For he spoke, and it came  
to be;  
he commanded, and it  
stood firm.  
<sup>10</sup> The LORD brings the  
counsel of the nations  
to nothing;  
he frustrates the plans of  
the peoples.  
<sup>11</sup> The counsel of the LORD  
stands forever,  
the thoughts of his heart  
to all generations.

**Proverbs 11:28** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Those who trust in their  
riches will wither,  
but the righteous will  
flourish like green  
leaves.

**March 26**



**Exodus 32:31 – 33:23** (NRSV)

<sup>31</sup> So Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Alas, this people has sinned a great sin; they have made for themselves gods of gold. <sup>32</sup> But now, if you will only forgive their sin—but if not, blot me out of the book that you have written.” <sup>33</sup> But the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. <sup>34</sup> But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; see, my angel shall go in front of you. Nevertheless, when the day comes for punishment, I will punish them for their sin.”

<sup>35</sup> Then the LORD sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf—the one that Aaron made.

*The Command to Leave Sinai*

**33** The LORD said to Moses, “Go, leave this place, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, and go to the land of

which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.'

<sup>2</sup> I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. <sup>3</sup> Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, or I would consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."

<sup>4</sup> When the people heard these harsh words, they mourned, and no one put on ornaments. <sup>5</sup> For the LORD had said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'You are a stiff-necked people; if for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, and I will decide what to do to you.' " <sup>6</sup> Therefore the Israelites stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward.

#### *The Tent outside the Camp*

<sup>7</sup> Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp; he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who

sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp.

<sup>8</sup> Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise and stand, each of them, at the entrance of their tents and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent.

<sup>9</sup> When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses.

<sup>10</sup> When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise and bow down, all of them, at the entrance of their tent. <sup>11</sup> Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then he would return to the camp; but his young assistant, Joshua son of Nun, would not leave the tent.

#### *Moses' Intercession*

<sup>12</sup> Moses said to the LORD, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by



name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’

<sup>13</sup> Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” <sup>14</sup> He said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” <sup>15</sup> And he said to him, “If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. <sup>16</sup> For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.”

<sup>17</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” <sup>18</sup> Moses said, “Show me your glory, I pray.” <sup>19</sup> And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, ‘The LORD’; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. <sup>20</sup> But,” he said, “you cannot see my face;

for no one shall see me and live.” <sup>21</sup> And the LORD continued, “See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; <sup>22</sup> and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; <sup>23</sup> then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.”

**Matthew 27:1-14** (NRSV)

*Jesus Brought before Pilate*  
(Mk 15:1; Lk 23:1; Jn 18:28)

**27** When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. <sup>2</sup> They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

*The Suicide of Judas*  
(Acts 1:18–19)

<sup>3</sup> When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. <sup>4</sup> He said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said,

“What is that to us? See to it yourself.”<sup>5</sup> Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself.<sup>6</sup> But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.”

<sup>7</sup> After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter’s field as a place to bury foreigners.<sup>8</sup> For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

<sup>9</sup> Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price,<sup>10</sup> and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”

*Pilate Questions Jesus*  
(Mk 15:2–5; Lk 23:2–5  
Jn 18:29–38a)

<sup>11</sup> Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “**You say so.**”<sup>12</sup> But when he was accused by the chief priests

and elders, he did not answer.

<sup>13</sup> Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?”<sup>14</sup> But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

**Psalm 33:12-19** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Happy is the nation whose  
God is the LORD,  
the people whom he has  
chosen as his heritage.  
<sup>13</sup> The LORD looks down from  
heaven;  
he sees all humankind.  
<sup>14</sup> From where he sits  
enthroned he watches  
all the inhabitants of the  
earth—  
<sup>15</sup> he who fashions the hearts  
of them all,  
and observes all their  
deeds.  
<sup>16</sup> A king is not saved by his  
great army;  
a warrior is not delivered  
by his great strength.  
<sup>17</sup> The war horse is a vain  
hope for victory,  
and by its great might it  
cannot save.  
<sup>18</sup> Truly the eye of the LORD is  
on those who fear him,



on those who hope in his  
steadfast love,

<sup>19</sup> to deliver their soul from  
death,  
and to keep them alive in  
famine.

**Proverbs 11:29–31** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> Those who trouble their  
households will inherit  
wind,  
and the fool will be  
servant to the wise.  
<sup>30</sup> The fruit of the righteous is  
a tree of life,  
but violence takes lives  
away.  
<sup>31</sup> If the righteous are repaid  
on earth,  
how much more the  
wicked and the sinner!

**March 27**



**Exodus 34:1-14** (NRSV)

*Moses Makes New Tablets*  
(Deut 10:1–5)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Cut  
two tablets of stone like the

former ones, and I will write  
on the tablets the words that  
were on the former tablets,  
which you broke. <sup>2</sup> Be ready in  
the morning, and come up in  
the morning to Mount Sinai  
and present yourself there to  
me, on the top of the  
mountain. <sup>3</sup> No one shall come  
up with you, and do not let  
anyone be seen throughout all  
the mountain; and do not let  
flocks or herds graze in front  
of that mountain.” <sup>4</sup> So Moses  
cut two tablets of stone like  
the former ones; and he rose  
early in the morning and went  
up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD  
had commanded him, and  
took in his hand the two  
tablets of stone. <sup>5</sup> The LORD  
descended in the cloud and  
stood with him there, and  
proclaimed the name, “The  
LORD.” <sup>6</sup> The LORD passed  
before him, and proclaimed,  
“The LORD, the LORD,  
a God merciful and  
gracious,  
slow to anger,  
and abounding in steadfast  
love and faithfulness,  
<sup>7</sup> keeping steadfast love for  
the thousandth  
generation,

forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty, but visiting the iniquity of the parents upon the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

<sup>8</sup> And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. <sup>9</sup> He said, "If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

### *The Covenant Renewed*

(Ex 23:14–19; Deut 7:1–6; 16:1–17)

<sup>10</sup> He said: I hereby make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform marvels, such as have not been performed in all the earth or in any nation; and all the people among whom you live shall see the work of the LORD; for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you.

<sup>11</sup> Observe what I command you today. See, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the

Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

<sup>12</sup> Take care not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you are going, or it will become a snare among you. <sup>13</sup> You shall tear down their altars, break their pillars, and cut down their sacred poles <sup>14</sup> (for you shall worship no other god, because the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God).

### **Matthew 27:15-26** (NRSV)

*Barabbas or Jesus?*

(Mk 15:6–14; Lk 23:13–24;

Jn 18:39–40)

<sup>15</sup> Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup> At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. <sup>17</sup> So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" <sup>18</sup> For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. <sup>19</sup> While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him,

“Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.”<sup>20</sup> Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed.<sup>21</sup> The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.”<sup>22</sup> Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!”<sup>23</sup> Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

*Pilate Hands Jesus over  
to Be Crucified*

*(Mk 15:15; Lk 23:25; Jn 19:16)*

<sup>24</sup> So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.”<sup>25</sup> Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!”<sup>26</sup> So he released Barabbas for them;

and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

**Psalm 33:20-22** (NRSV)

- <sup>20</sup> Our soul waits for the  
LORD;  
he is our help and shield.  
<sup>21</sup> Our heart is glad in him,  
because we trust in his  
holy name.  
<sup>22</sup> Let your steadfast love, O  
LORD, be upon us,  
even as we hope in you.

**Proverbs 12:1** (NRSV)

- <sup>1</sup> Whoever loves discipline  
loves knowledge, but  
those who hate to be  
rebuked are stupid.

## March 28



**Exodus 34:15 – 35:9** (NRSV)

- <sup>15</sup> You shall not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, for when they prostitute themselves to their

gods and sacrifice to their gods, someone among them will invite you, and you will eat of the sacrifice. <sup>16</sup> And you will take wives from among their daughters for your sons, and their daughters who prostitute themselves to their gods will make your sons also prostitute themselves to their gods.

<sup>17</sup> You shall not make cast idols.

<sup>18</sup> You shall keep the festival of unleavened bread. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.

<sup>19</sup> All that first opens the womb is mine, all your male livestock, the firstborn of cow and sheep. <sup>20</sup> The firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem.

No one shall appear before me empty-handed.

<sup>21</sup> Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even in plowing time and in harvest time you

shall rest. <sup>22</sup> You shall observe the festival of weeks, the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the festival of ingathering at the turn of the year. <sup>23</sup> Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> For I will cast out nations before you, and enlarge your borders; no one shall covet your land when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year.

<sup>25</sup> You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, and the sacrifice of the festival of the passover shall not be left until the morning.

<sup>26</sup> The best of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God.

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

<sup>27</sup> The LORD said to Moses: Write these words; in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel. <sup>28</sup> He was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets

the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

### *The Shining Face of Moses*

<sup>29</sup> Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup> When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai.

<sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup> but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the

Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

### *Sabbath Regulations*

**35** Moses assembled all the congregation of the Israelites and said to them: These are the things that the LORD has commanded you to do:

<sup>2</sup> Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy sabbath of solemn rest to the LORD; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. <sup>3</sup> You shall kindle no fire in all your dwellings on the sabbath day.

### *Preparations for Making the Tabernacle*

(Ex 25:1–9; 39:32–43)

<sup>4</sup> Moses said to all the congregation of the Israelites: This is the thing that the LORD has commanded: <sup>5</sup> Take from among you an offering to the LORD; let whoever is of a generous heart bring the LORD's offering: gold, silver, and bronze; <sup>6</sup> blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine linen;

goats' hair, <sup>7</sup> tanned rams' skins, and fine leather; acacia wood, <sup>8</sup> oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, <sup>9</sup> and onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and the breast piece.

**Matthew 27:27-31** (NRSV)

*The Soldiers Mock Jesus*  
(Mk 15:16–20)

<sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. <sup>28</sup> They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup> They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup> After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

**Psalms 34:1-3** (NRSV)

*Praise for Deliverance  
from Trouble*

Of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

- 1 I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- 2 My soul makes its boast in the LORD;  
let the humble hear and be glad.
- 3 O magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.

**Proverbs 12:2-3** (NRSV)

- 2 The good obtain favor from the LORD,  
but those who devise evil he condemns.
- 3 No one finds security by wickedness,  
but the root of the righteous will never be moved.



## March 29



### Exodus 35:10 – 36:7 (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> All who are skillful among you shall come and make all that the LORD has commanded: the tabernacle, <sup>11</sup> its tent and its covering, its clasps and its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; <sup>12</sup> the ark with its poles, the mercy seat, and the curtain for the screen; <sup>13</sup> the table with its poles and all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; <sup>14</sup> the lampstand also for the light, with its utensils and its lamps, and the oil for the light; <sup>15</sup> and the altar of incense, with its poles, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance, the entrance of the tabernacle; <sup>16</sup> the altar of burnt offering, with its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin with its stand; <sup>17</sup> the hangings of the court, its pillars and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court; <sup>18</sup> the pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of the court, and their cords; <sup>19</sup> the

finely worked vestments for ministering in the holy place, the holy vestments for the priest Aaron, and the vestments of his sons, for their service as priests.

### *Offerings for the Tabernacle*

<sup>20</sup> Then all the congregation of the Israelites withdrew from the presence of Moses. <sup>21</sup> And they came, everyone whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and brought the LORD's offering to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the sacred vestments. <sup>22</sup> So they came, both men and women; all who were of a willing heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and pendants, all sorts of gold objects, everyone bringing an offering of gold to the LORD. <sup>23</sup> And everyone who possessed blue or purple or crimson yarn or fine linen or goats' hair or tanned rams' skins or fine leather, brought them. <sup>24</sup> Everyone who could make an offering of silver or bronze brought it as the LORD's offering; and everyone who

possessed acacia wood of any use in the work, brought it.

<sup>25</sup> All the skillful women spun with their hands, and brought what they had spun in blue and purple and crimson yarns and fine linen; <sup>26</sup> all the women whose hearts moved them to use their skill spun the goats' hair. <sup>27</sup> And the leaders brought onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and the breast piece, <sup>28</sup> and spices and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense. <sup>29</sup> All the Israelite men and women whose hearts made them willing to bring anything for the work that the LORD had commanded by Moses to be done, brought it as a freewill offering to the LORD.

### *Bezalel and Oholiab*

*(Ex 31:1–11)*

<sup>30</sup> Then Moses said to the Israelites: See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; <sup>31</sup> he has filled him with divine spirit, with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft, <sup>32</sup> to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, <sup>33</sup> in

cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, in every kind of craft. <sup>34</sup> And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. <sup>35</sup> He has filled them with skill to do every kind of work done by an artisan or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and in fine linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of artisan or skilled designer.

**36** Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful one to whom the LORD has given skill and understanding to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded.

<sup>2</sup> Moses then called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful one to whom the LORD had given skill, everyone whose heart was stirred to come to do the work; <sup>3</sup> and they received from Moses all the freewill offerings that the Israelites had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept

bringing him freewill offerings every morning,<sup>4</sup> so that all the artisans who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each from the task being performed,<sup>5</sup> and said to Moses, “The people are bringing much more than enough for doing the work that the LORD has commanded us to do.”<sup>6</sup> So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp: “No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary.” So the people were restrained from bringing;<sup>7</sup> for what they had already brought was more than enough to do all the work.

**Matthew 27:32-53** (NRSV)

*The Crucifixion of Jesus*  
(Mk 15:21–32; Lk 23:26–43  
Jn 19:16b–27)

<sup>32</sup> As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.

<sup>33</sup> And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),<sup>34</sup> they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.

<sup>35</sup> And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;<sup>36</sup> then they sat down there and kept watch over him.<sup>37</sup> Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

<sup>38</sup> Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.

<sup>39</sup> Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads<sup>40</sup> and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”<sup>41</sup> In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying,<sup>42</sup> “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him.”<sup>43</sup> He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, ‘I am God’s Son.’ ”<sup>44</sup> The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

### *The Death of Jesus*

(Mk 15:33–41; Lk 23:44–49)

*Jn 19:28–30*

<sup>45</sup> From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

<sup>46</sup> And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

<sup>47</sup> When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah."

<sup>48</sup> At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup> But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." <sup>50</sup> Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. <sup>51</sup> At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup> The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. <sup>53</sup> After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many.

### **Psalm 33:4-10 (NRSV)**

- <sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and he answered me,  
and delivered me from all my fears.
- <sup>5</sup> Look to him, and be radiant;  
so your faces shall never be ashamed.
- <sup>6</sup> This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,  
and was saved from every trouble.
- <sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
- <sup>8</sup> O taste and see that the LORD is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.
- <sup>9</sup> O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,  
for those who fear him have no want.
- <sup>10</sup> The young lions suffer want and hunger,  
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

### **Proverbs 12:4 (NRSV)**

- <sup>4</sup> A good wife is the crown of her husband,

but she who brings  
shame is like  
rottenness in his  
bones.

## March 30



**Exodus 36:8-38** (NRSV)

### *Construction of the Tabernacle* (Ex 26:1–37)

<sup>8</sup> All those with skill among the workers made the tabernacle with ten curtains; they were made of fine twisted linen, and blue, purple, and crimson yarns, with cherubim skillfully worked into them. <sup>9</sup> The length of each curtain was twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains were of the same size.

<sup>10</sup> He joined five curtains to one another, and the other five curtains he joined to one another. <sup>11</sup> He made loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain of the first

set; likewise he made them on the edge of the outermost curtain of the second set; <sup>12</sup> he made fifty loops on the one curtain, and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set; the loops were opposite one another. <sup>13</sup> And he made fifty clasps of gold, and joined the curtains one to the other with clasps; so the tabernacle was one whole.

<sup>14</sup> He also made curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven curtains. <sup>15</sup> The length of each curtain was thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains were of the same size. <sup>16</sup> He joined five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves. <sup>17</sup> He made fifty loops on the edge of the outermost curtain of the one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the other connecting curtain. <sup>18</sup> He made fifty clasps of bronze to join the tent together so that it might be one whole. <sup>19</sup> And he made for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and an outer covering of fine leather.

<sup>20</sup> Then he made the upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood.

<sup>21</sup> Ten cubits was the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the width of each frame.

<sup>22</sup> Each frame had two pegs for fitting together; he did this for all the frames of the tabernacle.

<sup>23</sup> The frames for the tabernacle he made in this way: twenty frames for the south side;

<sup>24</sup> and he made forty bases of silver under the twenty frames, two bases under the first frame for its two pegs, and two bases

under the next frame for its two pegs.

<sup>25</sup> For the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty frames

<sup>26</sup> and their forty bases of silver, two bases under the first frame and two bases

under the next frame.

<sup>27</sup> For the rear of the tabernacle westward he made six frames.

<sup>28</sup> He made two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear.

<sup>29</sup> They were separate beneath, but joined at the top, at the first ring; he made two of them in this way, for the two corners.

<sup>30</sup> There were eight frames with their bases

of silver: sixteen bases, under every frame two bases.

<sup>31</sup> He made bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle,

<sup>32</sup> and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the tabernacle

at the rear westward.

<sup>33</sup> He made the middle bar to pass through from end to end halfway up the frames.

<sup>34</sup> And he overlaid the frames with gold, and made rings of gold for them to hold the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

<sup>35</sup> He made the curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen, with cherubim skillfully

worked into it.

<sup>36</sup> For it he made four pillars of acacia, and overlaid them with gold; their hooks were of gold, and he cast for them four bases of silver.

<sup>37</sup> He also made a screen for the entrance to the tent, of blue, purple, and crimson

yarns, and fine twisted linen, embroidered with needlework;

<sup>38</sup> and its five pillars with their hooks. He overlaid their capitals and

their bases with gold, but their five bases were of bronze.

**Matthew 27:54-66** (NRSV)

<sup>54</sup> Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

<sup>55</sup> Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. <sup>56</sup> Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

*The Burial of Jesus*

(Mk 15:42-47; Lk 23:50-56  
Jn 19:38-42)

<sup>57</sup> When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup> He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. <sup>59</sup> So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth <sup>60</sup> and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He

then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. <sup>61</sup> Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

*The Guard at the Tomb*

<sup>62</sup> The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate <sup>63</sup> and said, “Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ <sup>64</sup> Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead,’ and the last deception would be worse than the first.” <sup>65</sup> Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.” <sup>66</sup> So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

**Psalm 33:11-14** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Come, O children, listen to me;

I will teach you the fear  
of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Which of you desires life,  
and covets many days to  
enjoy good?

<sup>13</sup> Keep your tongue from  
evil,  
and your lips from  
speaking deceit.

<sup>14</sup> Depart from evil, and do  
good;  
seek peace, and pursue  
it.

### **Proverbs 12:5–7 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> The thoughts of the  
righteous are just;  
the advice of the wicked  
is treacherous.

<sup>6</sup> The words of the wicked  
are a deadly ambush,  
but the speech of the  
upright delivers them.

<sup>7</sup> The wicked are  
overthrown and are no  
more, but the house of  
the righteous will  
stand.

## **March 31**



### **Exodus 37:1 – 38:8 (NRSV)**

#### *Making the Ark of the Covenant*

*(Ex 25:10–22)*

<sup>1</sup> Bezalel made the ark of  
acacia wood; it was two and a  
half cubits long, a cubit and a  
half wide, and a cubit and a  
half high. <sup>2</sup> He overlaid it with  
pure gold inside and outside,  
and made a molding of gold  
around it. <sup>3</sup> He cast for it four  
rings of gold for its four feet,  
two rings on its one side and  
two rings on its other side.  
<sup>4</sup> He made poles of acacia  
wood, and overlaid them with  
gold, <sup>5</sup> and put the poles into  
the rings on the sides of the  
ark, to carry the ark. <sup>6</sup> He  
made a mercy seat of pure  
gold; two cubits and a half was  
its length, and a cubit and a  
half its width. <sup>7</sup> He made two  
cherubim of hammered gold;  
at the two ends of the mercy  
seat he made them, <sup>8</sup> one  
cherub at the one end, and  
one cherub at the other end;  
of one piece with the mercy  
seat he made the cherubim at



its two ends. <sup>9</sup> The cherubim spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings. They faced one another; the faces of the cherubim were turned toward the mercy seat.

*Making the Table for the Bread of the Presence*  
(Ex 25:23–30)

<sup>10</sup> He also made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high. <sup>11</sup> He overlaid it with pure gold, and made a molding of gold around it. <sup>12</sup> He made around it a rim a handbreadth wide, and made a molding of gold around the rim. <sup>13</sup> He cast for it four rings of gold, and fastened the rings to the four corners at its four legs. <sup>14</sup> The rings that held the poles used for carrying the table were close to the rim. <sup>15</sup> He made the poles of acacia wood to carry the table, and overlaid them with gold. <sup>16</sup> And he made the vessels of pure gold that were to be on the table, its plates and dishes for incense, and its bowls and flagons with which to pour drink offerings.

*Making the Lampstand*  
(Ex 25:31–40)

<sup>17</sup> He also made the lampstand of pure gold. The base and the shaft of the lampstand were made of hammered work; its cups, its calyxes, and its petals were of one piece with it. <sup>18</sup> There were six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; <sup>19</sup> three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on one branch, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. <sup>20</sup> On the lampstand itself there were four cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with its calyxes and petals. <sup>21</sup> There was a calyx of one piece with it under the first pair of branches, a calyx of one piece with it under the next pair of branches, and a calyx of one piece with it under the last pair of branches. <sup>22</sup> Their calyxes and their branches were of one piece with it, the

whole of it one hammered piece of pure gold. <sup>23</sup> He made its seven lamps and its snuffers and its trays of pure gold. <sup>24</sup> He made it and all its utensils of a talent of pure gold.

*Making the Altar of Incense*  
(Ex 30:1–5)

<sup>25</sup> He made the altar of incense of acacia wood, one cubit long, and one cubit wide; it was square, and was two cubits high; its horns were of one piece with it. <sup>26</sup> He overlaid it with pure gold, its top, and its sides all around, and its horns; and he made for it a molding of gold all around, <sup>27</sup> and made two golden rings for it under its molding, on two opposite sides of it, to hold the poles with which to carry it. <sup>28</sup> And he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold.

*Making the Anointing Oil  
and the Incense*  
(Ex 30:22–38)

<sup>29</sup> He made the holy anointing oil also, and the pure fragrant incense, blended as by the perfumer.

*Making the Altar of  
Burnt Offering*  
(Ex 27:1–8)

**38** He made the altar of burnt offering also of acacia wood; it was five cubits long, and five cubits wide; it was square, and three cubits high. <sup>2</sup> He made horns for it on its four corners; its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. <sup>3</sup> He made all the utensils of the altar, the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the firepans: all its utensils he made of bronze. <sup>4</sup> He made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze, under its ledge, extending halfway down. <sup>5</sup> He cast four rings on the four corners of the bronze grating to hold the poles; <sup>6</sup> he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with bronze. <sup>7</sup> And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar, to carry it with them; he made it hollow, with boards. <sup>8</sup> He made the basin of bronze with its stand of bronze, from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

**Matthew 28:1-10 (NRSV)**

*Resurrection of Jesus*

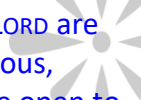
(Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-12;

Jn 20:1-10)

<sup>1</sup> After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” <sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them and said, **“Greetings!”** And they came to

him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, **“Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”**

**Psalm 34:15-22 (NRSV)**

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- <sup>15</sup> The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.
- <sup>16</sup> The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
- <sup>17</sup> When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.
- <sup>18</sup> The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.
- <sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD rescues them from them all.
- <sup>20</sup> He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken.
- <sup>21</sup> Evil brings death to the wicked,

and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

**Proverbs 12:8–9** (NRSV)

- <sup>8</sup> One is commended for good sense, but a perverse mind is despised.
- <sup>9</sup> Better to be despised and have a servant, than to be self-important and lack food.

**April 1**



**Exodus 38:9-31** (NRSV)

*Making the Court of the Tabernacle*  
(Ex 27:9–19)

<sup>9</sup> He made the court; for the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twisted linen, one hundred cubits

long; <sup>10</sup> its twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. <sup>11</sup> For the north side there were hangings one hundred cubits long; its twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. <sup>12</sup> For the west side there were hangings fifty cubits long, with ten pillars and ten bases; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. <sup>13</sup> And for the front to the east, fifty cubits. <sup>14</sup> The hangings for one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with three pillars and three bases. <sup>15</sup> And so for the other side; on each side of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with three pillars and three bases. <sup>16</sup> All the hangings around the court were of fine twisted linen. <sup>17</sup> The bases for the pillars were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver; the overlaying of their capitals was also of silver, and all the pillars of the court were banded with silver. <sup>18</sup> The screen for the

entrance to the court was embroidered with needlework in blue, purple, and crimson yarns and fine twisted linen. It was twenty cubits long and, along the width of it, five cubits high, corresponding to the hangings of the court.

<sup>19</sup> There were four pillars; their four bases were of bronze, their hooks of silver, and the overlaying of their capitals and their bands of silver. <sup>20</sup> All the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court all around were of bronze.

#### *Materials of the Tabernacle*

<sup>21</sup> These are the records of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the covenant, which were drawn up at the commandment of Moses, the work of the Levites being under the direction of Ithamar son of the priest Aaron.

<sup>22</sup> Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses; <sup>23</sup> and with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, engraver, designer, and embroiderer in blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and in fine linen.

<sup>24</sup> All the gold that was used for the work, in all the construction of the sanctuary, the gold from the offering, was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels, measured by the sanctuary shekel. <sup>25</sup> The silver from those of the congregation who were counted was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels, measured by the sanctuary shekel; <sup>26</sup> a beka a head (that is, half a shekel, measured by the sanctuary shekel), for everyone who was counted in the census, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred three thousand, five hundred fifty men. <sup>27</sup> The hundred talents of silver were for casting the bases of the sanctuary, and the bases of the curtain; one hundred bases for the hundred talents, a talent for a base. <sup>28</sup> Of the thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their capitals and made bands for them. <sup>29</sup> The bronze that was contributed was seventy talents, and two thousand four hundred

shekels; <sup>30</sup> with it he made the bases for the entrance of the tent of meeting, the bronze altar and the bronze grating for it and all the utensils of the altar, <sup>31</sup> the bases all around the court, and the bases of the gate of the court, all the pegs of the tabernacle, and all the pegs around the court.

**Matthew 28:11-20** (NRSV)

*The Report of the Guard*

<sup>11</sup> While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. <sup>12</sup> After the priests had assembled with the elders, they devised a plan to give a large sum of money to the soldiers, <sup>13</sup> telling them, “You must say, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ <sup>14</sup> If this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” <sup>15</sup> So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story is still told among the Jews to this day.

*The Commissioning  
of the Disciples*

(Mk 16:14–18; Lk 24:36–49; Jn 20:19–23; Acts 1:6–8)

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”



**Psalm 35:1-9** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from  
Enemies*

Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me!
- <sup>2</sup> Take hold of shield and buckler, and rise up to help me!

<sup>3</sup> Draw the spear and javelin  
 against my pursuers;  
 say to my soul,  
 “I am your salvation.”  
<sup>4</sup> Let them be put to shame  
 and dishonor  
 who seek after my life.  
 Let them be turned back  
 and confounded  
 who devise evil against  
 me.  
<sup>5</sup> Let them be like chaff  
 before the wind,  
 with the angel of the  
 LORD driving them on.  
<sup>6</sup> Let their way be dark and  
 slippery,  
 with the angel of the  
 LORD pursuing them.  
<sup>7</sup> For without cause they hid  
 their net for me;  
 without cause they dug a  
 pit for my life.  
<sup>8</sup> Let ruin come on them  
 unawares.  
 And let the net that they  
 hid ensnare them;  
 let them fall in it—to  
 their ruin.  
<sup>9</sup> Then my soul shall rejoice  
 in the LORD,  
 exulting in his  
 deliverance.

**Proverbs 12:10** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> The righteous know the  
 needs of their animals,  
 but the mercy of the  
 wicked is cruel.

**April 2**



**Exodus 39:1-43** (NRSV)

*Making the Vestments  
 for the Priesthood  
 (Ex 28:1–43)*

<sup>1</sup> Of the blue, purple, and  
 crimson yarns they made  
 finely worked vestments, for  
 ministering in the holy place;  
 they made the sacred  
 vestments for Aaron; as the  
 LORD had commanded Moses.  
<sup>2</sup> He made the ephod of  
 gold, of blue, purple, and  
 crimson yarns, and of fine  
 twisted linen. <sup>3</sup> Gold leaf was  
 hammered out and cut into  
 threads to work into the blue,  
 purple, and crimson yarns and  
 into the fine twisted linen, in  
 skilled design. <sup>4</sup> They made for  
 the ephod shoulder-pieces,  
 joined to it at its two edges.

<sup>5</sup> The decorated band on it was of the same materials and workmanship, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>6</sup> The onyx stones were prepared, enclosed in settings of gold filigree and engraved like the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons of Israel. <sup>7</sup> He set them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, to be stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>8</sup> He made the breastpiece, in skilled work, like the work of the ephod, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. <sup>9</sup> It was square; the breastpiece was made double, a span in length and a span in width when doubled. <sup>10</sup> They set in it four rows of stones. A row of carnelian, chrysolite, and emerald was the first row; <sup>11</sup> and the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire, and a moonstone; <sup>12</sup> and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; <sup>13</sup> and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a

jasper; they were enclosed in settings of gold filigree.

<sup>14</sup> There were twelve stones with names corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel; they were like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. <sup>15</sup> They made on the breastpiece chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; <sup>16</sup> and they made two settings of gold filigree and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece; <sup>17</sup> and they put the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece.

<sup>18</sup> Two ends of the two cords they had attached to the two settings of filigree; in this way they attached it in front to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod.

<sup>19</sup> Then they made two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod.

<sup>20</sup> They made two rings of gold, and attached them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, at its joining above the decorated band of the ephod.

<sup>21</sup> They bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the



ephod with a blue cord, so that it should lie on the decorated band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece should not come loose from the ephod; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>22</sup> He also made the robe of the ephod woven all of blue yarn; <sup>23</sup> and the opening of the robe in the middle of it was like the opening in a coat of mail, with a binding around the opening, so that it might not be torn. <sup>24</sup> On the lower hem of the robe they made pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. <sup>25</sup> They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the lower hem of the robe all around, between the pomegranates; <sup>26</sup> a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate all around on the lower hem of the robe for ministering; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>27</sup> They also made the tunics, woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, <sup>28</sup> and the turban of fine linen, and the headdresses of fine linen, and

the linen undergarments of fine twisted linen, <sup>29</sup> and the sash of fine twisted linen, and of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, embroidered with needlework; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>30</sup> They made the rosette of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, "Holy to the LORD." <sup>31</sup> They tied to it a blue cord, to fasten it on the turban above; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

### *The Work Completed*

*(Ex 35:10–19)*

<sup>32</sup> In this way all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished; the Israelites had done everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>33</sup> Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its utensils, its hooks, its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; <sup>34</sup> the covering of tanned rams' skins and the covering of fine leather, and the curtain for the screen; <sup>35</sup> the ark of the covenant with its poles and the mercy seat; <sup>36</sup> the table with all its utensils,

and the bread of the Presence;<sup>37</sup> the pure lampstand with its lamps set on it and all its utensils, and the oil for the light;<sup>38</sup> the golden altar, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance of the tent;<sup>39</sup> the bronze altar, and its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the basin with its stand;<sup>40</sup> the hangings of the court, its pillars, and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court, its cords, and its pegs; and all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting;<sup>41</sup> the finely worked vestments for ministering in the holy place, the sacred vestments for the priest Aaron, and the vestments of his sons to serve as priests.<sup>42</sup> The Israelites had done all of the work just as the LORD had commanded Moses.<sup>43</sup> When Moses saw that they had done all the work just as the LORD had commanded, he blessed them.

**Mark 1:1–15** (NRSV)

*The Proclamation of  
John the Baptist*

(Mt 3:1–12; Lk 3:1–20; Jn 1:19–28)

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,’  
”

<sup>4</sup> John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am

not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.

<sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

### *The Baptism of Jesus*

(Mt 3:13–17; Lk 3:21–22; Jn 1:29–34)

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

### *The Temptation of Jesus*

(Mt 4:1–11; Lk 4:1–13)

<sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

### *The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry*

(Mt 4:12–17; Lk 4:14–15)

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good

news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

### **Psalm 35:10-18** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> All my bones shall say,  
“O LORD, who is like you?  
You deliver the weak  
from those too strong for  
them,  
the weak and needy  
from those who  
despoil them.”  
<sup>11</sup> Malicious witnesses rise  
up;  
they ask me about things  
I do not know.  
<sup>12</sup> They repay me evil for  
good;  
my soul is forlorn.  
<sup>13</sup> But as for me, when they  
were sick,  
I wore sackcloth;  
I afflicted myself with  
fasting.  
I prayed with head bowed  
on my bosom,  
<sup>14</sup> as though I grieved for a  
friend or a brother;  
I went about as one who  
laments for a mother,  
bowed down and in  
mourning.

15 But at my stumbling they  
gathered in glee,  
they gathered together  
against me;  
ruffians whom I did not  
know  
tore at me without  
ceasing;  
16 they impiously mocked  
more and more,  
gnashing at me with  
their teeth.  
17 How long, O LORD, will you  
look on?  
Rescue me from their  
ravages,  
my life from the lions!  
18 Then I will thank you in the  
great congregation;  
in the mighty throng I  
will praise you.

**Proverbs 12:11 (NRSV)**

11 Those who till their land  
will have plenty of  
food,  
but those who follow  
worthless pursuits  
have no sense.

**April 3**



**Exodus 40:1-38 (NRSV)**

*The Tabernacle Erected and Its  
Equipment Installed*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses:  
<sup>2</sup> On the first day of the first  
month you shall set up the  
tabernacle of the tent of  
meeting. <sup>3</sup> You shall put in it  
the ark of the covenant, and  
you shall screen the ark with  
the curtain. <sup>4</sup> You shall bring in  
the table, and arrange its  
setting; and you shall bring in  
the lampstand, and set up its  
lamps. <sup>5</sup> You shall put the  
golden altar for incense before  
the ark of the covenant, and  
set up the screen for the  
entrance of the tabernacle.  
<sup>6</sup> You shall set the altar of  
burnt offering before the  
entrance of the tabernacle of  
the tent of meeting, <sup>7</sup> and  
place the basin between the  
tent of meeting and the altar,  
and put water in it. <sup>8</sup> You shall  
set up the court all around,  
and hang up the screen for the  
gate of the court. <sup>9</sup> Then you  
shall take the anointing oil,  
and anoint the tabernacle and

all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it shall become holy. <sup>10</sup> You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, so that the altar shall be most holy. <sup>11</sup> You shall also anoint the basin with its stand, and consecrate it. <sup>12</sup> Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and shall wash them with water, <sup>13</sup> and put on Aaron the sacred vestments, and you shall anoint him and consecrate him, so that he may serve me as priest. <sup>14</sup> You shall bring his sons also and put tunics on them, <sup>15</sup> and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests: and their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout all generations to come.

<sup>16</sup> Moses did everything just as the LORD had commanded him. <sup>17</sup> In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was set up.

<sup>18</sup> Moses set up the tabernacle; he laid its bases,

and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars; <sup>19</sup> and he spread the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent over it; as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>20</sup> He took the covenant and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark, and set the mercy seat above the ark; <sup>21</sup> and he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the curtain for screening, and screened the ark of the covenant; as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>22</sup> He put the table in the tent of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the curtain, <sup>23</sup> and set the bread in order on it before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>24</sup> He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, <sup>25</sup> and set up the lamps before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>26</sup> He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the curtain, <sup>27</sup> and offered fragrant incense on it; as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>28</sup> He also

put in place the screen for the entrance of the tabernacle.

<sup>29</sup> He set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>30</sup> He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, <sup>31</sup> with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. <sup>32</sup> When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed; as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>33</sup> He set up the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and put up the screen at the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

*The Cloud and the Glory*  
(Ex 13:21–22; Num 9:15–23)

<sup>34</sup> Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. <sup>35</sup> Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. <sup>36</sup> Whenever the

cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, the Israelites would set out on each stage of their journey; <sup>37</sup> but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day that it was taken up. <sup>38</sup> For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, before the eyes of all the house of Israel at each stage of their journey.

**Mark 1:16–28** (NRSV)

*Jesus Calls the First Disciples*  
(Mt 4:18–22; Lk 5:1–11)

<sup>16</sup> As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, “**Follow me and I will make you fish for people.**” <sup>18</sup> And immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. <sup>20</sup> Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

*The Man with an  
Unclean Spirit*  
(Lk 4:31–37)

<sup>21</sup> They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup> They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup> Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>24</sup> and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” <sup>25</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, **“Be silent, and come out of him!”** <sup>26</sup> And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup> They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” <sup>28</sup> At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

**Psalm 35:19–28** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> Do not let my treacherous enemies rejoice over me,  
or those who hate me without cause wink the eye.  
<sup>20</sup> For they do not speak peace,  
but they conceive deceitful words  
against those who are quiet in the land.  
<sup>21</sup> They open wide their mouths against me;  
they say, “Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it.”  
<sup>22</sup> You have seen, O LORD; do not be silent!  
O Lord, do not be far from me!  
<sup>23</sup> Wake up! Bestir yourself for my defense,  
for my cause, my God and my Lord!  
<sup>24</sup> Vindicate me, O LORD, my God,  
according to your righteousness,  
and do not let them rejoice over me.  
<sup>25</sup> Do not let them say to themselves,  
“Aha, we have our heart’s desire.”

Do not let them say, “We  
have swallowed you  
up.”

<sup>26</sup> Let all those who rejoice at  
my calamity  
be put to shame and  
confusion;  
let those who exalt  
themselves against me  
be clothed with shame  
and dishonor.

<sup>27</sup> Let those who desire my  
vindication  
shout for joy and be glad,  
and say evermore,  
“Great is the LORD,  
who delights in the  
welfare of his servant.”

<sup>28</sup> Then my tongue shall tell  
of your righteousness  
and of your praise all day  
long.

### **Proverbs 12:12–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> The wicked covet the  
proceeds of  
wickedness,  
but the root of the  
righteous bears fruit.

<sup>13</sup> The evil are ensnared by  
the transgression of  
their lips,  
but the righteous escape  
from trouble.

<sup>14</sup> From the fruit of the  
mouth one is filled  
with good things,  
and manual labor has its  
reward.

## **April 4**



### **Leviticus 1:1–17 (NRSV)**

#### *The Burnt Offering*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD summoned Moses  
and spoke to him from the  
tent of meeting, saying:

<sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of Israel  
and say to them: When any of  
you bring an offering of  
livestock to the LORD, you shall  
bring your offering from the  
herd or from the flock.

<sup>3</sup> If the offering is a burnt  
offering from the herd, you  
shall offer a male without  
blemish; you shall bring it to  
the entrance of the tent of  
meeting, for acceptance in  
your behalf before the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> You shall lay your hand on  
the head of the burnt offering,  
and it shall be acceptable in



your behalf as atonement for you. <sup>5</sup> The bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD; and Aaron's sons the priests shall offer the blood, dashing the blood against all sides of the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>6</sup> The burnt offering shall be flayed and cut up into its parts. <sup>7</sup> The sons of the priest Aaron shall put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire. <sup>8</sup> Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the parts, with the head and the suet, on the wood that is on the fire on the altar; <sup>9</sup> but its entrails and its legs shall be washed with water. Then the priest shall turn the whole into smoke on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> If your gift for a burnt offering is from the flock, from the sheep or goats, your offering shall be a male without blemish. <sup>11</sup> It shall be slaughtered on the north side of the altar before the LORD, and Aaron's sons the priests shall dash its blood against all sides of the altar. <sup>12</sup> It shall be cut up into its parts, with its

head and its suet, and the priest shall arrange them on the wood that is on the fire on the altar; <sup>13</sup> but the entrails and the legs shall be washed with water. Then the priest shall offer the whole and turn it into smoke on the altar; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> If your offering to the LORD is a burnt offering of birds, you shall choose your offering from turtledoves or pigeons. <sup>15</sup> The priest shall bring it to the altar and wring off its head, and turn it into smoke on the altar; and its blood shall be drained out against the side of the altar.

<sup>16</sup> He shall remove its crop with its contents and throw it at the east side of the altar, in the place for ashes. <sup>17</sup> He shall tear it open by its wings without severing it. Then the priest shall turn it into smoke on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

**Mark 1:29–45 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals Many at  
Simon's House*

(Mt. 8:14–17; Lk 4:38–41)

<sup>29</sup> As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup> He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup> That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup> And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup> And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

*A Preaching Tour in Galilee*

(Mt 4:23–25; Lk 4:42–44)

<sup>35</sup> In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup> And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup> When they found him, they

said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." <sup>38</sup> He answered, "**Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.**" <sup>39</sup> And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

*Jesus Cleanses a Leper*

(Mt 8:1–4; Lk 5:12–16)

<sup>40</sup> A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean." <sup>41</sup> Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "**I do choose. Be made clean!**" <sup>42</sup> Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. <sup>43</sup> After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, <sup>44</sup> saying to him, "**See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.**" <sup>45</sup> But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town

openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

**Psalms 36:1-5** (NRSV)

*Human Wickedness and Divine Goodness*

To the leader. Of David, the servant of the LORD.

- 1 Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in their hearts; there is no fear of God before their eyes.
- 2 For they flatter themselves in their own eyes that their iniquity cannot be found out and hated.
- 3 The words of their mouths are mischief and deceit; they have ceased to act wisely and do good.
- 4 They plot mischief while on their beds; they are set on a way that is not good; they do not reject evil.
- 5 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.

**Proverbs 12:15–17** (NRSV)

- 15 Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to advice.
- 16 Fools show their anger at once, but the prudent ignore an insult.
- 17 Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness speaks deceitfully.

**April 5**



**Leviticus 2:1–3:17** (NRSV)

*Grain Offerings*

- 1 When anyone presents a grain offering to the LORD, the offering shall be of choice flour; the worshiper shall pour oil on it, and put frankincense on it, <sup>2</sup> and bring it to Aaron's sons the priests. After taking from it a handful of the choice flour and oil, with all its frankincense, the priest shall turn this token portion into

smoke on the altar, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD. <sup>3</sup> And what is left of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons, a most holy part of the offerings by fire to the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> When you present a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be of choice flour: unleavened cakes mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers spread with oil. <sup>5</sup> If your offering is grain prepared on a griddle, it shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, unleavened; <sup>6</sup> break it in pieces, and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. <sup>7</sup> If your offering is grain prepared in a pan, it shall be made of choice flour in oil. <sup>8</sup> You shall bring to the LORD the grain offering that is prepared in any of these ways; and when it is presented to the priest, he shall take it to the altar. <sup>9</sup> The priest shall remove from the grain offering its token portion and turn this into smoke on the altar, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> And what is left of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part

of the offerings by fire to the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> No grain offering that you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you must not turn any leaven or honey into smoke as an offering by fire to the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> You may bring them to the LORD as an offering of choice products, but they shall not be offered on the altar for a pleasing odor. <sup>13</sup> You shall not omit from your grain offerings the salt of the covenant with your God; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.

<sup>14</sup> If you bring a grain offering of first fruits to the LORD, you shall bring as the grain offering of your first fruits coarse new grain from fresh ears, parched with fire. <sup>15</sup> You shall add oil to it and lay frankincense on it; it is a grain offering. <sup>16</sup> And the priest shall turn a token portion of it into smoke—some of the coarse grain and oil with all its frankincense; it is an offering by fire to the LORD.

### *Offerings of Well-Being*

**3** If the offering is a sacrifice of well-being, if you offer an

animal of the herd, whether male or female, you shall offer one without blemish before the LORD. <sup>2</sup>You shall lay your hand on the head of the offering and slaughter it at the entrance of the tent of meeting; and Aaron's sons the priests shall dash the blood against all sides of the altar.

<sup>3</sup>You shall offer from the sacrifice of well-being, as an offering by fire to the LORD, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is around the entrails; <sup>4</sup>the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys.

<sup>5</sup>Then Aaron's sons shall turn these into smoke on the altar, with the burnt offering that is on the wood on the fire, as an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>If your offering for a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD is from the flock, male or female, you shall offer one without blemish. <sup>7</sup>If you present a sheep as your offering, you shall bring it before the LORD <sup>8</sup>and lay your hand on the head of the

offering. It shall be slaughtered before the tent of meeting, and Aaron's sons shall dash its blood against all sides of the altar. <sup>9</sup>You shall present its fat from the sacrifice of well-being, as an offering by fire to the LORD: the whole broad tail, which shall be removed close to the backbone, the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is around the entrails; <sup>10</sup>the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which you shall remove with the kidneys. <sup>11</sup>Then the priest shall turn these into smoke on the altar as a food offering by fire to the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>If your offering is a goat, you shall bring it before the LORD <sup>13</sup>and lay your hand on its head; it shall be slaughtered before the tent of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall dash its blood against all sides of the altar.

<sup>14</sup>You shall present as your offering from it, as an offering by fire to the LORD, the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is around the entrails; <sup>15</sup>the two kidneys with the fat

that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which you shall remove with the kidneys. <sup>16</sup> Then the priest shall turn these into smoke on the altar as a food offering by fire for a pleasing odor.

All fat is the LORD'S. <sup>17</sup> It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, in all your settlements: you must not eat any fat or any blood.

**Mark 2:1–12 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals a Paralytic*  
(Mt 9:2–8; Lk 5:17–26)

<sup>1</sup> When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. <sup>2</sup> So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. <sup>3</sup> Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. <sup>4</sup> And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. <sup>5</sup> When

Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **“Son, your sins are forgiven.”** <sup>6</sup> Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, <sup>7</sup> **“Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”** <sup>8</sup> At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, **“Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and take your mat and walk’? <sup>10</sup> But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”**—he said to the paralytic— <sup>11</sup> **“I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home.”** <sup>12</sup> And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, **“We have never seen anything like this!”**

**Psalms 36:6-9** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Your righteousness is like  
the mighty mountains,  
your judgments are like  
the great deep;  
you save humans and  
animals alike, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup> How precious is your  
steadfast love, O God!  
All people may take  
refuge in the shadow  
of your wings.

<sup>8</sup> They feast on the  
abundance of your  
house,  
and you give them drink  
from the river of your  
delights.

<sup>9</sup> For with you is the  
fountain of life;  
in your light we see light.

**Proverbs 12:18** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Rash words are like sword  
thrusts,  
but the tongue of the  
wise brings healing.

**April 6**



**Leviticus 4:1–26** (NRSV)

*Sin Offerings*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying, <sup>2</sup> Speak to the people  
of Israel, saying: When anyone  
sins unintentionally in any of  
the LORD's commandments  
about things not to be done,  
and does any one of them:

<sup>3</sup> If it is the anointed priest  
who sins, thus bringing guilt  
on the people, he shall offer  
for the sin that he has  
committed a bull of the herd  
without blemish as a sin  
offering to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> He shall  
bring the bull to the entrance  
of the tent of meeting before  
the LORD and lay his hand on  
the head of the bull; the bull  
shall be slaughtered before  
the LORD. <sup>5</sup> The anointed priest  
shall take some of the blood of  
the bull and bring it into the  
tent of meeting. <sup>6</sup> The priest  
shall dip his finger in the blood  
and sprinkle some of the  
blood seven times before the  
LORD in front of the curtain of  
the sanctuary. <sup>7</sup> The priest  
shall put some of the blood on

the horns of the altar of fragrant incense that is in the tent of meeting before the LORD; and the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>8</sup> He shall remove all the fat from the bull of sin offering: the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is around the entrails; <sup>9</sup> the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins; and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys, <sup>10</sup> just as these are removed from the ox of the sacrifice of well-being. The priest shall turn them into smoke upon the altar of burnt offering. <sup>11</sup> But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, as well as its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung— <sup>12</sup> all the rest of the bull—he shall carry out to a clean place outside the camp, to the ash heap, and shall burn it on a wood fire; at the ash heap it shall be burned.

<sup>13</sup> If the whole congregation of Israel errs unintentionally and the matter

escapes the notice of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done and incur guilt; <sup>14</sup> when the sin that they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a bull of the herd for a sin offering and bring it before the tent of meeting. <sup>15</sup> The elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD. <sup>16</sup> The anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting, <sup>17</sup> and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, in front of the curtain. <sup>18</sup> He shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and the rest of the blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>19</sup> He shall remove all its fat and turn it into smoke on the altar. <sup>20</sup> He shall do with the bull just as is done with the bull of sin offering; he shall



do the same with this. The priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven.<sup>21</sup> He shall carry the bull outside the camp, and burn it as he burned the first bull; it is the sin offering for the assembly.

<sup>22</sup>When a ruler sins, doing unintentionally any one of all the things that by commandments of the LORD his God ought not to be done and incurs guilt,<sup>23</sup> once the sin that he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring as his offering a male goat without blemish.<sup>24</sup> He shall lay his hand on the head of the goat; it shall be slaughtered at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered before the LORD; it is a sin offering.<sup>25</sup> The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering.<sup>26</sup> All its fat he shall turn into smoke on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of well-being. Thus the priest shall make

atonement on his behalf for his sin, and he shall be forgiven.

**Mark 2:13–22 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Calls Levi*

*(Mt 9:9–13; Lk 5:27–32)*

<sup>13</sup>Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them.<sup>14</sup> As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, **“Follow me.”** And he got up and followed him.

<sup>15</sup>And as he sat at dinner in Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him.

<sup>16</sup>When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”<sup>17</sup> When Jesus heard this, he said to them, **“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”**

### *The Question about Fasting*

(Mt 9:14–17; Lk 5:33–39)

<sup>18</sup> Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” <sup>19</sup> Jesus said to them, “**The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.** <sup>20</sup> The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day.

<sup>21</sup> “No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. <sup>22</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.”

### **Psalm 36:10-12** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> O continue your steadfast love to those who know you,

and your salvation to the upright of heart!

- <sup>11</sup> Do not let the foot of the arrogant tread on me, or the hand of the wicked drive me away.
- <sup>12</sup> There the evildoers lie prostrate; they are thrust down, unable to rise.

### **Proverbs 12:19–20** (NRSV)

- <sup>19</sup> Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.
- <sup>20</sup> Deceit is in the mind of those who plan evil, but those who counsel peace have joy.

## April 7



### **Leviticus 4:27–5:19** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> If anyone of the ordinary people among you sins unintentionally in doing any one of the things that by the LORD’s commandments ought

not to be done and incurs guilt,<sup>28</sup> when the sin that you have committed is made known to you, you shall bring a female goat without blemish as your offering, for the sin that you have committed.

<sup>29</sup>You shall lay your hand on the head of the sin offering; and the sin offering shall be slaughtered at the place of the burnt offering.<sup>30</sup> The priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and he shall pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar.<sup>31</sup> He shall remove all its fat, as the fat is removed from the offering of well-being, and the priest shall turn it into smoke on the altar for a pleasing odor to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf, and you shall be forgiven.

<sup>32</sup>If the offering you bring as a sin offering is a sheep, you shall bring a female without blemish.<sup>33</sup> You shall lay your hand on the head of the sin offering; and it shall be slaughtered as a sin offering at the spot where the burnt

offering is slaughtered.<sup>34</sup> The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar.<sup>35</sup> You shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the sheep is removed from the sacrifice of well-being, and the priest shall turn it into smoke on the altar, with the offerings by fire to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for the sin that you have committed, and you shall be forgiven.

**5** When any of you sin in that you have heard a public adjuration to testify and—though able to testify as one who has seen or learned of the matter—do not speak up, you are subject to punishment.<sup>2</sup> Or when any of you touch any unclean thing—whether the carcass of an unclean beast or the carcass of unclean livestock or the carcass of an unclean swarming thing—and are unaware of it, you have become unclean, and are

guilty. <sup>3</sup> Or when you touch human uncleanness—any uncleanness by which one can become unclean—and are unaware of it, when you come to know it, you shall be guilty.

<sup>4</sup> Or when any of you utter aloud a rash oath for a bad or a good purpose, whatever people utter in an oath, and are unaware of it, when you come to know it, you shall in any of these be guilty. <sup>5</sup> When you realize your guilt in any of these, you shall confess the sin that you have committed.

<sup>6</sup> And you shall bring to the LORD, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed, a female from the flock, a sheep or a goat, as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for your sin.

<sup>7</sup> But if you cannot afford a sheep, you shall bring to the LORD, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed, two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. <sup>8</sup> You shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer first the one for the sin offering, wringing its head at

the nape without severing it.

<sup>9</sup> He shall sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, while the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar; it is a sin offering. <sup>10</sup> And the second he shall offer for a burnt offering according to the regulation. Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for the sin that you have committed, and you shall be forgiven.

<sup>11</sup> But if you cannot afford two turtledoves or two pigeons, you shall bring as your offering for the sin that you have committed one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour for a sin offering; you shall not put oil on it or lay frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering. <sup>12</sup> You shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall scoop up a handful of it as its memorial portion, and turn this into smoke on the altar, with the offerings by fire to the LORD; it is a sin offering. <sup>13</sup> Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for whichever of these sins you have committed, and you shall be forgiven. Like the grain

offering, the rest shall be for the priest.

### *Offerings with Restitution*

<sup>14</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>15</sup>When any of you commit a trespass and sin unintentionally in any of the holy things of the LORD, you shall bring, as your guilt offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, convertible into silver by the sanctuary shekel; it is a guilt offering. <sup>16</sup>And you shall make restitution for the holy thing in which you were remiss, and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. The priest shall make atonement on your behalf with the ram of the guilt offering, and you shall be forgiven.

<sup>17</sup>If any of you sin without knowing it, doing any of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, you have incurred guilt, and are subject to punishment. <sup>18</sup>You shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, or the equivalent, as a guilt offering; and the priest shall make

atonement on your behalf for the error that you committed unintentionally, and you shall be forgiven. <sup>19</sup>It is a guilt offering; you have incurred guilt before the LORD.

### **Mark 2:23–3:6 (NRSV)**

#### *Pronouncement about the Sabbath*

*(Mt 12:1–8; Lk 6:1–5)*

<sup>23</sup>One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. <sup>24</sup>The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" <sup>25</sup>And he said to them, "**Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? <sup>26</sup>He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions.**" <sup>27</sup>Then he said to them, "**The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; <sup>28</sup>so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.**"

*The Man with a Withered  
Hand*

(Mt 12:9–14; Lk 6:6–11)

**3** Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. <sup>2</sup> They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. <sup>3</sup> And he said to the man who had the withered hand, “Come forward.” <sup>4</sup> Then he said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. <sup>5</sup> He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. <sup>6</sup> The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

**Psalms 37:1-6** (NRSV)

*Exhortation to  
Patience and Trust*  
Of David.

<sup>1</sup> Do not fret because of the wicked;

do not be envious of wrongdoers,  
<sup>2</sup> for they will soon fade like the grass,  
and wither like the green herb.  
<sup>3</sup> Trust in the LORD, and do good;  
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.  
<sup>4</sup> Take delight in the LORD,  
and he will give you the desires of your heart.  
<sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD;  
trust in him, and he will act.  
<sup>6</sup> He will make your vindication shine like the light,  
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

**Proverbs 12:21–23** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> No harm happens to the righteous,  
but the wicked are filled with trouble.  
<sup>22</sup> Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,  
but those who act faithfully are his delight.

<sup>23</sup> One who is clever conceals  
knowledge,  
but the mind of a fool  
broadcasts folly.

## April 8



### Leviticus 6:1-23 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> When any of you sin and commit a trespass against the LORD by deceiving a neighbor in a matter of a deposit or a pledge, or by robbery, or if you have defrauded a neighbor, <sup>3</sup> or have found something lost and lied about it—if you swear falsely regarding any of the various things that one may do and sin thereby— <sup>4</sup> when you have sinned and realize your guilt, and would restore what you took by robbery or by fraud or the deposit that was committed to you, or the lost thing that you found, <sup>5</sup> or anything else about which you have sworn falsely, you shall

repay the principal amount and shall add one-fifth to it. You shall pay it to its owner when you realize your guilt. <sup>6</sup> And you shall bring to the priest, as your guilt offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, or its equivalent, for a guilt offering. <sup>7</sup> The priest shall make atonement on your behalf before the LORD, and you shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do and incur guilt thereby.

#### *Instructions concerning Sacrifices*

<sup>8</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>9</sup> Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the ritual of the burnt offering. The burnt offering itself shall remain on the hearth upon the altar all night until the morning, while the fire on the altar shall be kept burning. <sup>10</sup> The priest shall put on his linen vestments after putting on his linen undergarments next to his body; and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has reduced the burnt offering on the altar, and place them beside the altar. <sup>11</sup> Then

he shall take off his vestments and put on other garments, and carry the ashes out to a clean place outside the camp.

<sup>12</sup> The fire on the altar shall be kept burning; it shall not go out. Every morning the priest shall add wood to it, lay out the burnt offering on it, and turn into smoke the fat pieces of the offerings of well-being.

<sup>13</sup> A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar; it shall not go out.

<sup>14</sup> This is the ritual of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, in front of the altar.

<sup>15</sup> They shall take from it a handful of the choice flour and oil of the grain offering, with all the frankincense that is on the offering, and they shall turn its memorial portion into smoke on the altar as a pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>16</sup> Aaron and his sons shall eat what is left of it; it shall be eaten as unleavened cakes in a holy place; in the court of the tent of meeting they shall eat it. <sup>17</sup> It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it as their portion of my offerings by fire; it is most holy, like the sin

offering and the guilt offering.

<sup>18</sup> Every male among the descendants of Aaron shall eat of it, as their perpetual due throughout your generations, from the LORD's offerings by fire; anything that touches them shall become holy.

<sup>19</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>20</sup> This is the offering that Aaron and his sons shall offer to the LORD on the day when he is anointed: one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour as a regular offering, half of it in the morning and half in the evening. <sup>21</sup> It shall be made with oil on a griddle; you shall bring it well soaked, as a grain offering of baked pieces, and you shall present it as a pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>22</sup> And so the priest, anointed from among Aaron's descendants as a successor, shall prepare it; it is the LORD's—a perpetual due—to be turned entirely into smoke.

<sup>23</sup> Every grain offering of a priest shall be wholly burned; it shall not be eaten.



**Mark 3:7–19 (NRSV)**

*A Multitude at the Seaside*  
(Mt 12:15–21)

<sup>7</sup> Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him; <sup>8</sup> hearing all that he was doing, they came to him in great numbers from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and the region around Tyre and Sidon. <sup>9</sup> He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him; <sup>10</sup> for he had cured many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him. <sup>11</sup> Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and shouted, “You are the Son of God!” <sup>12</sup> But he sternly ordered them not to make him known.

*Jesus Appoints the Twelve*  
(Mt 10:1–4; Lk 6:12–16)

<sup>13</sup> He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. <sup>14</sup> And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message,

<sup>15</sup> and to have authority to cast out demons. <sup>16</sup> So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); <sup>17</sup> James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); <sup>18</sup> and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, <sup>19</sup> and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

**Psalm 37:-7-11 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Be still before the LORD,  
and wait patiently for him;  
do not fret over those  
who prosper in their  
way,  
over those who carry out  
evil devices.

<sup>8</sup> Refrain from anger, and  
forsake wrath.  
Do not fret—it leads only  
to evil.

<sup>9</sup> For the wicked shall be cut  
off,  
but those who wait for  
the LORD shall inherit  
the land.

<sup>10</sup> Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.

<sup>11</sup> But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

**Proverbs 12:24 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> The hand of the diligent will rule, while the lazy will be put to forced labor.

**April 9**



**Leviticus 6:24-7:27 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>25</sup> Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the ritual of the sin offering. The sin offering shall be slaughtered before the LORD at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered;

it is most holy. <sup>26</sup> The priest who offers it as a sin offering shall eat of it; it shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting.

<sup>27</sup> Whatever touches its flesh shall become holy; and when any of its blood is spattered on a garment, you shall wash the bespattered part in a holy place. <sup>28</sup> An earthen vessel in which it was boiled shall be broken; but if it is boiled in a bronze vessel, that shall be scoured and rinsed in water.

<sup>29</sup> Every male among the priests shall eat of it; it is most holy. <sup>30</sup> But no sin offering shall be eaten from which any blood is brought into the tent of meeting for atonement in the holy place; it shall be burned with fire.

**7** This is the ritual of the guilt offering. It is most holy; <sup>2</sup> at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered, they shall slaughter the guilt offering, and its blood shall be dashed against all sides of the altar. <sup>3</sup> All its fat shall be offered: the broad tail, the fat that covers the entrails, <sup>4</sup> the two kidneys with the fat that is

on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which shall be removed with the kidneys. <sup>5</sup>The priest shall turn them into smoke on the altar as an offering by fire to the LORD; it is a guilt offering.

<sup>6</sup>Every male among the priests shall eat of it; it shall be eaten in a holy place; it is most holy.

<sup>7</sup>The guilt offering is like the sin offering, there is the same ritual for them; the priest who makes atonement with it shall have it. <sup>8</sup>So, too, the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering shall keep the skin of the burnt offering that he has offered. <sup>9</sup>And every grain offering baked in the oven, and all that is prepared in a pan or on a griddle, shall belong to the priest who offers it. <sup>10</sup>But every other grain offering, mixed with oil or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron equally.

#### *Further Instructions*

<sup>11</sup>This is the ritual of the sacrifice of the offering of well-being that one may offer to the LORD. <sup>12</sup>If you offer it for thanksgiving, you shall offer with the thank offering

unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of choice flour well soaked in oil. <sup>13</sup>With your thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being you shall bring your offering with cakes of leavened bread. <sup>14</sup>From this you shall offer one cake from each offering, as a gift to the LORD; it shall belong to the priest who dashes the blood of the offering of well-being.

<sup>15</sup>And the flesh of your thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being shall be eaten on the day it is offered; you shall not leave any of it until morning.

<sup>16</sup>But if the sacrifice you offer is a votive offering or a freewill offering, it shall be eaten on the day that you offer your sacrifice, and what is left of it shall be eaten the next day;

<sup>17</sup>but what is left of the flesh of the sacrifice shall be burned up on the third day. <sup>18</sup>If any of the flesh of your sacrifice of well-being is eaten on the third day, it shall not be acceptable, nor shall it be credited to the one who offers it; it shall be an abomination, and the one who eats of it shall incur guilt.

<sup>19</sup> Flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten; it shall be burned up. As for other flesh, all who are clean may eat such flesh.

<sup>20</sup> But those who eat flesh from the LORD's sacrifice of well-being while in a state of uncleanness shall be cut off from their kin. <sup>21</sup> When any one of you touches any unclean thing—human uncleanness or an unclean animal or any unclean creature—and then eats flesh from the LORD's sacrifice of well-being, you shall be cut off from your kin.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>23</sup> Speak to the people of Israel, saying: You shall eat no fat of ox or sheep or goat. <sup>24</sup> The fat of an animal that died or was torn by wild animals may be put to any other use, but you must not eat it. <sup>25</sup> If any one of you eats the fat from an animal of which an offering by fire may be made to the LORD, you who eat it shall be cut off from your kin. <sup>26</sup> You must not eat any blood whatever, either of bird or of animal, in any of your settlements. <sup>27</sup> Any one of you

who eats any blood shall be cut off from your kin.

**Mark 3:20–30 (NRSV)**

*Jesus and Beelzebul*  
(Mt 12:22–32; Lk 11:14–23)

Then he went home; <sup>20</sup> and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. <sup>21</sup> When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." <sup>22</sup> And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." <sup>23</sup> And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? <sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup> And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. <sup>26</sup> And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. <sup>27</sup> But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

<sup>28</sup> “Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; <sup>29</sup> but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” — <sup>30</sup> for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

**Psalm 37:12-20** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> The wicked plot against the righteous,  
and gnash their teeth at them;  
<sup>13</sup> but the LORD laughs at the wicked,  
for he sees that their day is coming.  
<sup>14</sup> The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows  
to bring down the poor and needy,  
to kill those who walk uprightly;  
<sup>15</sup> their sword shall enter their own heart,  
and their bows shall be broken.  
<sup>16</sup> Better is a little that the righteous person has  
than the abundance of many wicked.

<sup>17</sup> For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,  
but the LORD upholds the righteous.

<sup>18</sup> The LORD knows the days of the blameless,  
and their heritage will abide forever;

<sup>19</sup> they are not put to shame in evil times,  
in the days of famine they have abundance.

<sup>20</sup> But the wicked perish, and the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures;  
they vanish—like smoke they vanish away.

**Proverbs 12:25** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Anxiety weighs down the human heart,  
but a good word cheers it up.



## April 10



### Leviticus 7:28-8:17 (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>29</sup>Speak to the people of Israel, saying: Any one of you who would offer to the LORD your sacrifice of well-being must yourself bring to the LORD your offering from your sacrifice of well-being.

<sup>30</sup>Your own hands shall bring the LORD's offering by fire; you shall bring the fat with the breast, so that the breast may be raised as an elevation offering before the LORD.

<sup>31</sup>The priest shall turn the fat into smoke on the altar, but the breast shall belong to Aaron and his sons. <sup>32</sup>And the right thigh from your sacrifices of well-being you shall give to the priest as an offering; <sup>33</sup>the one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood and fat of the offering of well-being shall have the right thigh for a portion. <sup>34</sup>For I have taken the breast of the elevation offering, and the thigh that is offered, from the people of Israel, from their sacrifices of

well-being, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons, as a perpetual due from the people of Israel.

<sup>35</sup>This is the portion allotted to Aaron and to his sons from the offerings made by fire to the LORD, once they have been brought forward to serve the LORD as priests; <sup>36</sup>these the LORD commanded to be given them, when he anointed them, as a perpetual due from the people of Israel throughout their generations.

<sup>37</sup>This is the ritual of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the offering of ordination, and the sacrifice of well-being, <sup>38</sup>which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, when he commanded the people of Israel to bring their offerings to the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

### *The Rites of Ordination* (Ex 29:1–37)

**8** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup>Take Aaron and his sons with him, the vestments, the anointing oil, the bull of sin offering, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened

bread; <sup>3</sup> and assemble the whole congregation at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>4</sup> And Moses did as the LORD commanded him. When the congregation was assembled at the entrance of the tent of meeting, <sup>5</sup> Moses said to the congregation, "This is what the LORD has commanded to be done."

<sup>6</sup> Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons forward, and washed them with water. <sup>7</sup> He put the tunic on him, fastened the sash around him, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him. He then put the decorated band of the ephod around him, tying the ephod to him with it. <sup>8</sup> He placed the breastpiece on him, and in the breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim. <sup>9</sup> And he set the turban on his head, and on the turban, in front, he set the golden ornament, the holy crown, as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>10</sup> Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them. <sup>11</sup> He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, and

anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the basin and its base, to consecrate them.

<sup>12</sup> He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him. <sup>13</sup> And Moses brought forward Aaron's sons, and clothed them with tunics, and fastened sashes around them, and tied headdresses on them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>14</sup> He led forward the bull of sin offering; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bull of sin offering, <sup>15</sup> and it was slaughtered. Moses took the blood and with his finger put some on each of the horns of the altar, purifying the altar; then he poured out the blood at the base of the altar. Thus he consecrated it, to make atonement for it. <sup>16</sup> Moses took all the fat that was around the entrails, and the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, and turned them into smoke on the altar. <sup>17</sup> But the bull itself, its skin and flesh and its dung, he burned with fire

outside the camp, as the LORD commanded Moses.

**Mark 3:31-4:9** (NRSV)

*The True Kindred of Jesus*

(Mt 12:46–50; Lk 8:19–21)

<sup>31</sup> Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. <sup>32</sup> A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.” <sup>33</sup> And he replied, “**Who are my mother and my brothers?**”

<sup>34</sup> And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “**Here are my mother and my brothers!** <sup>35</sup> **Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.**”

*The Parable of the Sower*

(Mt 13:1–23; Lk 8:4–15)

**4** Again he began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. <sup>2</sup> He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:

<sup>3</sup> “Listen! A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up.

<sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup> And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. <sup>8</sup> Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.” <sup>9</sup> And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

**Psalms 37:21-29** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> The wicked borrow, and do not pay back,  
but the righteous are generous and keep giving;

<sup>22</sup> for those blessed by the LORD shall inherit the land,  
but those cursed by him shall be cut off.



<sup>23</sup> Our steps are made firm by  
the LORD,  
when he delights in our  
way;

<sup>24</sup> though we stumble, we  
shall not fall headlong,  
for the LORD holds us by  
the hand.

<sup>25</sup> I have been young, and  
now am old,  
yet I have not seen the  
righteous forsaken  
or their children begging  
bread.

<sup>26</sup> They are ever giving  
liberally and lending,  
and their children  
become a blessing.

<sup>27</sup> Depart from evil, and do  
good;  
so you shall abide  
forever.

<sup>28</sup> For the LORD loves justice;  
he will not forsake his  
faithful ones.  
The righteous shall be kept  
safe forever,  
but the children of the  
wicked shall be cut off.

<sup>29</sup> The righteous shall inherit  
the land,  
and live in it forever.

### **Proverbs 12:26** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> The righteous gives good  
advice to friends,  
but the way of the  
wicked leads astray.

## **April 11**



### **Leviticus 8:18-9:6** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Then he brought forward  
the ram of burnt offering.  
Aaron and his sons laid their  
hands on the head of the ram,  
<sup>19</sup> and it was slaughtered.  
Moses dashed the blood  
against all sides of the altar.  
<sup>20</sup> The ram was cut into its  
parts, and Moses turned into  
smoke the head and the parts  
and the suet. <sup>21</sup> And after the  
entrails and the legs were  
washed with water, Moses  
turned into smoke the whole  
ram on the altar; it was a  
burnt offering for a pleasing  
odor, an offering by fire to the  
LORD, as the LORD commanded  
Moses.

<sup>22</sup> Then he brought forward the second ram, the ram of ordination. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>23</sup> and it was slaughtered. Moses took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>24</sup> After Aaron's sons were brought forward, Moses put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet; and Moses dashed the rest of the blood against all sides of the altar.

<sup>25</sup> He took the fat—the broad tail, all the fat that was around the entrails, the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat—and the right thigh. <sup>26</sup> From the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD, he took one cake of unleavened bread, one cake of bread with oil, and one wafer, and placed them on the fat and on the right thigh.

<sup>27</sup> He placed all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and raised them as an elevation offering

before the LORD. <sup>28</sup> Then Moses took them from their hands and turned them into smoke on the altar with the burnt offering. This was an ordination offering for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. <sup>29</sup> Moses took the breast and raised it as an elevation offering before the LORD; it was Moses' portion of the ram of ordination, as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>30</sup> Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was on the altar and sprinkled them on Aaron and his vestments, and also on his sons and their vestments. Thus he consecrated Aaron and his vestments, and also his sons and their vestments.

<sup>31</sup> And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, "Boil the flesh at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that is in the basket of ordination offerings, as I was commanded, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it'; <sup>32</sup> and what remains of the flesh and the bread you shall burn with fire. <sup>33</sup> You shall not go outside the entrance of the tent of

meeting for seven days, until the day when your period of ordination is completed. For it will take seven days to ordain you; <sup>34</sup> as has been done today, the LORD has commanded to be done to make atonement for you. <sup>35</sup> You shall remain at the entrance of the tent of meeting day and night for seven days, keeping the LORD's charge so that you do not die; for so I am commanded." <sup>36</sup> Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD commanded through Moses.

### *Aaron's Priesthood Inaugurated*

**9** On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. <sup>2</sup> He said to Aaron, "Take a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before the LORD. <sup>3</sup> And say to the people of Israel, 'Take a male goat for a sin offering; a calf and a lamb, yearlings without blemish, for a burnt offering; <sup>4</sup> and an ox and a ram for an offering of well-being to sacrifice before the LORD; and

a grain offering mixed with oil. For today the LORD will appear to you.' " <sup>5</sup> They brought what Moses commanded to the front of the tent of meeting; and the whole congregation drew near and stood before the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And Moses said, "This is the thing that the LORD commanded you to do, so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you."

### **Mark 4:10-25** (NRSV)

*The Purpose of the Parables*  
(Mt 13:10-17; Lk 8:9-10)

<sup>10</sup> When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; <sup>12</sup> in order that  
'they may indeed look, but not perceive,  
and may indeed listen,  
but not understand;  
so that they may not turn  
again and be forgiven.'  
"

<sup>13</sup> And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables?"

<sup>14</sup> The sower sows the word.  
<sup>15</sup> These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. <sup>16</sup> And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. <sup>18</sup> And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, <sup>19</sup> but the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. <sup>20</sup> And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

*A Lamp under a Bushel Basket*  
(Lk 8:16–18)

<sup>21</sup> He said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under the bushel basket, or under the bed, and not on the lampstand? <sup>22</sup> For there is

nothing hidden, except to be disclosed; nor is anything secret, except to come to light. <sup>23</sup> Let anyone with ears to hear listen!” <sup>24</sup> And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you. <sup>25</sup> For to those who have, more will be given; and from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.”

**Psalm 37:30-33** (NRSV)

<sup>30</sup> The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom,  
and their tongues speak justice.  
<sup>31</sup> The law of their God is in their hearts;  
their steps do not slip.  
<sup>32</sup> The wicked watch for the righteous,  
and seek to kill them.  
<sup>33</sup> The LORD will not abandon them to their power,  
or let them be condemned when they are brought to trial.

**Proverbs 12:27–28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> The lazy do not roast their game,  
but the diligent obtain precious wealth.

<sup>28</sup> In the path of righteousness there is life,  
in walking its path there is no death.

**April 12**



**Leviticus 9:7-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, “Draw near to the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people; and sacrifice the offering of the people, and make atonement for them; as the LORD has commanded.”

<sup>8</sup> Aaron drew near to the altar, and slaughtered the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. <sup>9</sup> The sons of Aaron presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger

in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar; and the rest of the blood he poured out at the base of the altar. <sup>10</sup> But the fat, the kidneys, and the appendage of the liver from the sin offering he turned into smoke on the altar, as the LORD commanded Moses; <sup>11</sup> and the flesh and the skin he burned with fire outside the camp.

<sup>12</sup> Then he slaughtered the burnt offering. Aaron’s sons brought him the blood, and he dashed it against all sides of the altar. <sup>13</sup> And they brought him the burnt offering piece by piece, and the head, which he turned into smoke on the altar. <sup>14</sup> He washed the entrails and the legs and, with the burnt offering, turned them into smoke on the altar.

<sup>15</sup> Next he presented the people’s offering. He took the goat of the sin offering that was for the people, and slaughtered it, and presented it as a sin offering like the first one. <sup>16</sup> He presented the burnt offering, and sacrificed it according to regulation. <sup>17</sup> He presented the grain offering, and, taking a handful of it, he

turned it into smoke on the altar, in addition to the burnt offering of the morning.

<sup>18</sup> He slaughtered the ox and the ram as a sacrifice of well-being for the people. Aaron's sons brought him the blood, which he dashed against all sides of the altar, <sup>19</sup> and the fat of the ox and of the ram—the broad tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat on them, and the appendage of the liver. <sup>20</sup> They first laid the fat on the breasts, and the fat was turned into smoke on the altar; <sup>21</sup> and the breasts and the right thigh Aaron raised as an elevation offering before the LORD, as Moses had commanded.

<sup>22</sup> Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them; and he came down after sacrificing the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the offering of well-being.

<sup>23</sup> Moses and Aaron entered the tent of meeting, and then came out and blessed the people; and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. <sup>24</sup> Fire came out from the LORD and consumed the

burnt offering and the fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

**Mark 4:26-41** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the Growing Seed*

<sup>26</sup> He also said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, <sup>27</sup> and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. <sup>28</sup> The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. <sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.”

*The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

(Mt 13:31–32; Lk 13:18–19)

<sup>30</sup> He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup> yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts

forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

*The Use of Parables*

<sup>33</sup> With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; <sup>34</sup> he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

*Jesus Stills a Storm*

(Mt 8:23–27; Lk 8:22–25)

<sup>35</sup> On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. <sup>37</sup> A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. <sup>38</sup> But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” <sup>39</sup> He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm.

<sup>40</sup> He said to them, “Why are

you afraid? Have you still no faith?” <sup>41</sup> And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

**Psalm 37:34-40** (NRSV)

<sup>34</sup> Wait for the LORD, and keep to his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land; you will look on the destruction of the wicked.

<sup>35</sup> I have seen the wicked oppressing, and towering like a cedar of Lebanon.

<sup>36</sup> Again I passed by, and they were no more; though I sought them, they could not be found.

<sup>37</sup> Mark the blameless, and behold the upright, for there is posterity for the peaceable.

<sup>38</sup> But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed; the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off.

<sup>39</sup> The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;



he is their refuge in the  
time of trouble.

<sup>40</sup> The LORD helps them and  
rescues them;  
he rescues them from  
the wicked, and saves  
them,  
because they take refuge  
in him.

**Proverbs 13:1** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> A wise child loves  
discipline,  
but a scoffer does not  
listen to rebuke.

**April 13**



**Leviticus 10:1-20** (NRSV)

*Nadab and Abihu*

<sup>1</sup> Now Aaron's sons, Nadab  
and Abihu, each took his  
censer, put fire in it, and laid  
incense on it; and they offered  
unholy fire before the LORD,  
such as he had not  
commanded them. <sup>2</sup> And fire  
came out from the presence of  
the LORD and consumed them,

and they died before the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron,  
"This is what the LORD meant  
when he said,

'Through those who are  
near me  
I will show myself holy,  
and before all the people  
I will be glorified.' "

And Aaron was silent.

<sup>4</sup> Moses summoned  
Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of  
Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and  
said to them, "Come forward,  
and carry your kinsmen away  
from the front of the  
sanctuary to a place outside  
the camp." <sup>5</sup> They came  
forward and carried them by  
their tunics out of the camp,  
as Moses had ordered. <sup>6</sup> And  
Moses said to Aaron and to his  
sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Do  
not dishevel your hair, and do  
not tear your vestments, or  
you will die and wrath will  
strike all the congregation; but  
your kindred, the whole house  
of Israel, may mourn the  
burning that the LORD has sent.  
<sup>7</sup> You shall not go outside the  
entrance of the tent of  
meeting, or you will die; for  
the anointing oil of the LORD is



on you.” And they did as Moses had ordered.

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD spoke to Aaron: <sup>9</sup> Drink no wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons, when you enter the tent of meeting, that you may not die; it is a statute forever throughout your generations.

<sup>10</sup> You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean; <sup>11</sup> and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them through Moses.

<sup>12</sup> Moses spoke to Aaron and to his remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar: Take the grain offering that is left from the LORD’s offerings by fire, and eat it unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy; <sup>13</sup> you shall eat it in a holy place, because it is your due and your sons’ due, from the offerings by fire to the LORD; for so I am commanded. <sup>14</sup> But the breast that is elevated and the thigh that is raised, you and your sons and daughters as well may eat in any clean place; for they have been assigned to you and your

children from the sacrifices of the offerings of well-being of the people of Israel. <sup>15</sup> The thigh that is raised and the breast that is elevated they shall bring, together with the offerings by fire of the fat, to raise for an elevation offering before the LORD; they are to be your due and that of your children forever, as the LORD has commanded.

<sup>16</sup> Then Moses made inquiry about the goat of the sin offering, and—it had already been burned! He was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s remaining sons, and said, <sup>17</sup> “Why did you not eat the sin offering in the sacred area? For it is most holy, and God has given it to you that you may remove the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement on their behalf before the LORD. <sup>18</sup> Its blood was not brought into the inner part of the sanctuary. You should certainly have eaten it in the sanctuary, as I commanded.” <sup>19</sup> And Aaron spoke to Moses, “See, today they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD; and

yet such things as these have befallen me! If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been agreeable to the LORD?" <sup>20</sup> And when Moses heard that, he agreed.

**Mark 5:1–20 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals the  
Gerasene Demoniac  
(Mt 8:28–9:1; Lk 8:26–39)*

<sup>1</sup> They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. <sup>2</sup> And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. <sup>3</sup> He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain; <sup>4</sup> for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. <sup>5</sup> Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. <sup>6</sup> When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him; <sup>7</sup> and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the

Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."

<sup>8</sup> For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

<sup>10</sup> He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. <sup>11</sup> Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding; <sup>12</sup> and the unclean spirits begged him, "Send us into the swine; let us enter them." <sup>13</sup> So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.

<sup>14</sup> The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. <sup>15</sup> They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. <sup>16</sup> Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the

swine reported it. <sup>17</sup> Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood. <sup>18</sup> As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. <sup>19</sup> But Jesus refused, and said to him, **“Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.”**

<sup>20</sup> And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

**Psalm 38:1-18** (NRSV)

*A Penitent Sufferer’s Plea for Healing*

A Psalm of David, for the memorial offering.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, do not rebuke me  
in your anger,  
or discipline me in your  
wrath.  
<sup>2</sup> For your arrows have sunk  
into me,  
and your hand has come  
down on me.  
<sup>3</sup> There is no soundness in  
my flesh  
because of your  
indignation;

there is no health in my  
bones  
because of my sin.  
<sup>4</sup> For my iniquities have  
gone over my head;  
they weigh like a burden  
too heavy for me.  
<sup>5</sup> My wounds grow foul and  
fester  
because of my  
foolishness;  
<sup>6</sup> I am utterly bowed down  
and prostrate;  
all day long I go around  
mourning.  
<sup>7</sup> For my loins are filled with  
burning,  
and there is no  
soundness in my flesh.  
<sup>8</sup> I am utterly spent and  
crushed;  
I groan because of the  
tumult of my heart.  
<sup>9</sup> O Lord, all my longing is  
known to you;  
my sighing is not hidden  
from you.  
<sup>10</sup> My heart throbs, my  
strength fails me;  
as for the light of my  
eyes—it also has gone  
from me.  
<sup>11</sup> My friends and  
companions stand

aloof from my  
affliction,  
and my neighbors stand  
far off.  
12 Those who seek my life lay  
their snares;  
those who seek to hurt  
me speak of ruin,  
and meditate treachery  
all day long.  
13 But I am like the deaf, I do  
not hear;  
like the mute, who  
cannot speak.  
14 Truly, I am like one who  
does not hear,  
and in whose mouth is  
no retort.  
15 But it is for you, O LORD,  
that I wait;  
it is you, O Lord my God,  
who will answer.  
16 For I pray, “Only do not let  
them rejoice over me,  
those who boast against  
me when my foot  
slips.”  
17 For I am ready to fall,  
and my pain is ever with  
me.  
18 I confess my iniquity;  
I am sorry for my sin.

### **Proverbs 13:2–3 (NRSV)**

<sup>2</sup> From the fruit of their  
words good persons  
eat good things,  
but the desire of the  
treacherous is for  
wrongdoing.  
<sup>3</sup> Those who guard their  
mouths preserve their  
lives;  
those who open wide  
their lips come to ruin.

## **April 14**



### **Leviticus 11:1-47 (NRSV)**

#### *Clean and Unclean Foods* (Deut 14:3–21)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and  
Aaron, saying to them: <sup>2</sup> Speak  
to the people of Israel, saying:  
From among all the land  
animals, these are the  
creatures that you may eat.  
<sup>3</sup> Any animal that has divided  
hoofs and is cleft-footed and  
chews the cud—such you may  
eat. <sup>4</sup> But among those that  
chew the cud or have divided  
hoofs, you shall not eat the

following: the camel, for even though it chews the cud, it does not have divided hoofs; it is unclean for you. <sup>5</sup> The rock badger, for even though it chews the cud, it does not have divided hoofs; it is unclean for you. <sup>6</sup> The hare, for even though it chews the cud, it does not have divided hoofs; it is unclean for you. <sup>7</sup> The pig, for even though it has divided hoofs and is cleft-footed, it does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. <sup>8</sup> Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch; they are unclean for you.

<sup>9</sup> These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the streams—such you may eat. <sup>10</sup> But anything in the seas or the streams that does not have fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and among all the other living creatures that are in the waters—they are detestable to you <sup>11</sup> and detestable they shall remain. Of their flesh you shall not eat,

and their carcasses you shall regard as detestable.

<sup>12</sup> Everything in the waters that does not have fins and scales is detestable to you.

<sup>13</sup> These you shall regard as detestable among the birds. They shall not be eaten; they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the osprey, <sup>14</sup> the buzzard, the kite of any kind; <sup>15</sup> every raven of any kind; <sup>16</sup> the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind; <sup>17</sup> the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, <sup>18</sup> the water hen, the desert owl, the carrion vulture, <sup>19</sup> the stork, the heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.

<sup>20</sup> All winged insects that walk upon all fours are detestable to you. <sup>21</sup> But among the winged insects that walk on all fours you may eat those that have jointed legs above their feet, with which to leap on the ground. <sup>22</sup> Of them you may eat: the locust according to its kind, the bald locust according to its kind, the cricket according to its kind, and the grasshopper according to its kind. <sup>23</sup> But all other winged insects that have

four feet are detestable to you.

### *Unclean Animals*

<sup>24</sup> By these you shall become unclean; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until the evening, <sup>25</sup> and whoever carries any part of the carcass of any of them shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. <sup>26</sup> Every animal that has divided hoofs but is not cleft-footed or does not chew the cud is unclean for you; everyone who touches one of them shall be unclean. <sup>27</sup> All that walk on their paws, among the animals that walk on all fours, are unclean for you; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until the evening, <sup>28</sup> and the one who carries the carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening; they are unclean for you.

<sup>29</sup> These are unclean for you among the creatures that swarm upon the earth: the weasel, the mouse, the great lizard according to its kind, <sup>30</sup> the gecko, the land

crocodile, the lizard, the sand lizard, and the chameleon.

<sup>31</sup> These are unclean for you among all that swarm; whoever touches one of them when they are dead shall be unclean until the evening.

<sup>32</sup> And anything upon which any of them falls when they are dead shall be unclean, whether an article of wood or cloth or skin or sacking, any article that is used for any purpose; it shall be dipped into water, and it shall be unclean until the evening, and then it shall be clean. <sup>33</sup> And if any of them falls into any earthen vessel, all that is in it shall be unclean, and you shall break the vessel. <sup>34</sup> Any food that could be eaten shall be unclean if water from any such vessel comes upon it; and any liquid that could be drunk shall be unclean if it was in any such vessel. <sup>35</sup> Everything on which any part of the carcass falls shall be unclean; whether an oven or stove, it shall be broken in pieces; they are unclean, and shall remain unclean for you. <sup>36</sup> But a spring or a cistern holding water shall be clean, while whatever

touches the carcass in it shall be unclean.<sup>37</sup> If any part of their carcass falls upon any seed set aside for sowing, it is clean;<sup>38</sup> but if water is put on the seed and any part of their carcass falls on it, it is unclean for you.

<sup>39</sup> If an animal of which you may eat dies, anyone who touches its carcass shall be unclean until the evening.

<sup>40</sup> Those who eat of its carcass shall wash their clothes and be unclean until the evening; and those who carry the carcass shall wash their clothes and be unclean until the evening.

<sup>41</sup> All creatures that swarm upon the earth are detestable; they shall not be eaten.

<sup>42</sup> Whatever moves on its belly, and whatever moves on all fours, or whatever has many feet, all the creatures that swarm upon the earth, you shall not eat; for they are detestable.<sup>43</sup> You shall not make yourselves detestable with any creature that swarms; you shall not defile yourselves with them, and so become unclean.<sup>44</sup> For I am the LORD your God; sanctify yourselves therefore, and be

holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming creature that moves on the earth.<sup>45</sup> For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; you shall be holy, for I am holy.

<sup>46</sup> This is the law pertaining to land animal and bird and every living creature that moves through the waters and every creature that swarms upon the earth,<sup>47</sup> to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the living creature that may be eaten and the living creature that may not be eaten.

### **Mark 5:21-34** (NRSV)

*A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed*

*(Mt 9:18-26; Lk 8:40-56)*

<sup>21</sup> When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea.<sup>22</sup> Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet<sup>23</sup> and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your

hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.”<sup>24</sup> So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him.<sup>25</sup> Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years.<sup>26</sup> She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse.<sup>27</sup> She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak,<sup>28</sup> for she said, “If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.”<sup>29</sup> Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.<sup>30</sup> Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, “**Who touched my clothes?**”<sup>31</sup> And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, ‘Who touched me?’ ”<sup>32</sup> He looked all around to see who had done it.<sup>33</sup> But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling,

fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.<sup>34</sup> He said to her, “**Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.**”

**Psalms 38:19-22** (NRSV)

- <sup>19</sup> Those who are my foes  
without cause are  
mighty,  
and many are those who  
hate me wrongfully.
- <sup>20</sup> Those who render me evil  
for good  
are my adversaries  
because I follow after  
good.
- <sup>21</sup> Do not forsake me, O LORD;  
O my God, do not be far  
from me;
- <sup>22</sup> make haste to help me,  
O Lord, my salvation.

**Proverbs 13:4** (NRSV)

- <sup>4</sup> The appetite of the lazy  
craves, and gets  
nothing,  
while the appetite of the  
diligent is richly  
supplied.



## April 15



### Leviticus 12:1-8 (NRSV)

#### *Purification of Women after Childbirth* (Cp Lk 2:22-24)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of Israel, saying:

If a woman conceives and bears a male child, she shall be ceremonially unclean seven days; as at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean. <sup>3</sup> On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. <sup>4</sup> Her time of blood purification shall be thirty-three days; she shall not touch any holy thing, or come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purification are completed. <sup>5</sup> If she bears a female child, she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation; her time of blood purification shall be sixty-six days.

<sup>6</sup> When the days of her purification are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of

the tent of meeting a lamb in its first year for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering.

<sup>7</sup> He shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement on her behalf; then she shall be clean from her flow of blood.

This is the law for her who bears a child, male or female.

<sup>8</sup> If she cannot afford a sheep, she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement on her behalf, and she shall be clean.

### Mark 5:35-43 (NRSV)

<sup>35</sup> While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" <sup>36</sup> But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "**Do not fear, only believe.**"

<sup>37</sup> He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.

<sup>38</sup> When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a

commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly.<sup>39</sup> When he had entered, he said to them, **“Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.”**<sup>40</sup> And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child’s father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was.<sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and said to her, **“Talitha cum,”** which means, “Little girl, get up!”<sup>42</sup> And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement.<sup>43</sup> He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

**Psalms 39:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Wisdom and Forgiveness*

To the leader: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

1 I said, “I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue; I will keep a muzzle on my mouth

as long as the wicked are in my presence.”

2 I was silent and still; I held my peace to no avail; my distress grew worse, my heart became hot within me. While I mused, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue:  
 3 “LORD, let me know my end, and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is.  
 4 You have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing in your sight. Surely everyone stands as a mere breath.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 13:5-6 (NRSV)**

5 The righteous hate falsehood, but the wicked act shamefully and disgracefully.

6 **Righteousness guards one whose way is upright,**



but sin overthrows the wicked.

## April 16



### Leviticus 13:1-23 (NRSV)

#### *Leprosy, Varieties and Symptoms*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

<sup>2</sup> When a person has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot, and it turns into a leprous disease on the skin of his body, he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. <sup>3</sup> The priest shall examine the disease on the skin of his body, and if the hair in the diseased area has turned white and the disease appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous disease; after the priest has examined him he shall pronounce him ceremonially unclean. <sup>4</sup> But if the spot is white in the skin of his body,

and appears no deeper than the skin, and the hair in it has not turned white, the priest shall confine the diseased person for seven days. <sup>5</sup> The priest shall examine him on the seventh day, and if he sees that the disease is checked and the disease has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall confine him seven days more. <sup>6</sup> The priest shall examine him again on the seventh day, and if the disease has abated and the disease has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is only an eruption; and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean. <sup>7</sup> But if the eruption spreads in the skin after he has shown himself to the priest for his cleansing, he shall appear again before the priest. <sup>8</sup> The priest shall make an examination, and if the eruption has spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a leprous disease.

<sup>9</sup> When a person contracts a leprous disease, he shall be brought to the priest. <sup>10</sup> The priest shall make an examination, and if there is a

white swelling in the skin that has turned the hair white, and there is quick raw flesh in the swelling,<sup>11</sup> it is a chronic leprous disease in the skin of his body. The priest shall pronounce him unclean; he shall not confine him, for he is unclean.<sup>12</sup> But if the disease breaks out in the skin, so that it covers all the skin of the diseased person from head to foot, so far as the priest can see,<sup>13</sup> then the priest shall make an examination, and if the disease has covered all his body, he shall pronounce him clean of the disease; since it has all turned white, he is clean.<sup>14</sup> But if raw flesh ever appears on him, he shall be unclean;<sup>15</sup> the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him unclean. Raw flesh is unclean, for it is a leprous disease.<sup>16</sup> But if the raw flesh again turns white, he shall come to the priest;<sup>17</sup> the priest shall examine him, and if the disease has turned white, the priest shall pronounce the diseased person clean. He is clean.

<sup>18</sup>When there is on the skin of one's body a boil that

has healed,<sup>19</sup> and in the place of the boil there appears a white swelling or a reddish-white spot, it shall be shown to the priest.<sup>20</sup> The priest shall make an examination, and if it appears deeper than the skin and its hair has turned white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; this is a leprous disease, broken out in the boil.<sup>21</sup> But if the priest examines it and the hair on it is not white, nor is it deeper than the skin but has abated, the priest shall confine him seven days.<sup>22</sup> If it spreads in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is diseased.<sup>23</sup> But if the spot remains in one place and does not spread, it is the scar of the boil; the priest shall pronounce him clean.

**Mark 6:1-15 (NRSV)**

*The Rejection of Jesus  
at Nazareth*

(Mt 13:54-58; Lk 4:16-30)

<sup>1</sup> He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.<sup>2</sup> On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What

is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! <sup>3</sup> Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. <sup>4</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "**Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.**" <sup>5</sup> And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. <sup>6</sup> And he was amazed at their unbelief.

*The Mission of the Twelve*  
(Mt 10:5-15; Lk 9:1-6)

Then he went about among the villages teaching. <sup>7</sup> He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. <sup>8</sup> He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; <sup>9</sup> but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. <sup>10</sup> He said to them, "**Wherever you enter**

**a house, stay there until you leave the place.** <sup>11</sup> **If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.**" <sup>12</sup> So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. <sup>13</sup> They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

*The Death of John the Baptist*  
(Mt 14:1-12; Lk 9:7-9)

<sup>14</sup> King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." <sup>15</sup> But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old."

**Psalm 39:6-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Surely everyone goes about like a shadow. Surely for nothing they are in turmoil; they heap up, and do not know who will gather. <sup>7</sup> "And now, O Lord, what do I wait for?"

My hope is in you.  
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions.  
Do not make me the scorn of the fool.  
9 I am silent; I do not open my mouth,  
for it is you who have done it.  
10 Remove your stroke from me;  
I am worn down by the blows of your hand.  
11 “You chastise mortals in punishment for sin,  
consuming like a moth what is dear to them;  
surely everyone is a mere breath. *Selah*  
12 “Hear my prayer, O LORD,  
and give ear to my cry;  
do not hold your peace at my tears.  
For I am your passing guest,  
an alien, like all my forebears.  
13 Turn your gaze away from me, that I may smile again,  
before I depart and am no more.”

**Proverbs 13:7–8 (NRSV)**

7 Some pretend to be rich,  
yet have nothing;  
others pretend to be poor,  
yet have great wealth.  
8 Wealth is a ransom for a person’s life,  
but the poor get no threats.

**April 17**



**Leviticus 13:24-59 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> Or, when the body has a burn on the skin and the raw flesh of the burn becomes a spot, reddish-white or white,  
<sup>25</sup> the priest shall examine it. If the hair in the spot has turned white and it appears deeper than the skin, it is a leprous disease; it has broken out in the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean. This is a leprous disease. <sup>26</sup> But if the priest examines it and the hair in the spot is not white, and it is no deeper than the skin but

has abated, the priest shall confine him seven days.<sup>27</sup> The priest shall examine him the seventh day; if it is spreading in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. This is a leprous disease.<sup>28</sup> But if the spot remains in one place and does not spread in the skin but has abated, it is a swelling from the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him clean; for it is the scar of the burn.

<sup>29</sup>When a man or woman has a disease on the head or in the beard,<sup>30</sup> the priest shall examine the disease. If it appears deeper than the skin and the hair in it is yellow and thin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is an itch, a leprous disease of the head or the beard.<sup>31</sup> If the priest examines the itching disease, and it appears no deeper than the skin and there is no black hair in it, the priest shall confine the person with the itching disease for seven days.<sup>32</sup> On the seventh day the priest shall examine the itch; if the itch has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the itch appears to be no deeper than the skin,<sup>33</sup> he

shall shave, but the itch he shall not shave. The priest shall confine the person with the itch for seven days more.

<sup>34</sup>On the seventh day the priest shall examine the itch; if the itch has not spread in the skin and it appears to be no deeper than the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean.<sup>35</sup> But if the itch spreads in the skin after he was pronounced clean,<sup>36</sup> the priest shall examine him. If the itch has spread in the skin, the priest need not seek for the yellow hair; he is unclean.<sup>37</sup> But if in his eyes the itch is checked, and black hair has grown in it, the itch is healed, he is clean; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

<sup>38</sup>When a man or a woman has spots on the skin of the body, white spots,<sup>39</sup> the priest shall make an examination, and if the spots on the skin of the body are of a dull white, it is a rash that has broken out on the skin; he is clean.

<sup>40</sup>If anyone loses the hair from his head, he is bald but he is clean.<sup>41</sup> If he loses the

hair from his forehead and temples, he has baldness of the forehead but he is clean.

<sup>42</sup> But if there is on the bald head or the bald forehead a reddish-white diseased spot, it is a leprous disease breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead. <sup>43</sup> The priest shall examine him; if the diseased swelling is reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, which resembles a leprous disease in the skin of the body, <sup>44</sup> he is leprous, he is unclean. The priest shall pronounce him unclean; the disease is on his head.

<sup>45</sup> The person who has the leprous disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head be disheveled; and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, "Unclean, unclean."

<sup>46</sup> He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

<sup>47</sup> Concerning clothing: when a leprous disease appears in it, in woolen or linen cloth, <sup>48</sup> in warp or woof of linen or wool, or in a skin or

in anything made of skin, <sup>49</sup> if the disease shows greenish or reddish in the garment, whether in warp or woof or in skin or in anything made of skin, it is a leprous disease and shall be shown to the priest.

<sup>50</sup> The priest shall examine the disease, and put the diseased article aside for seven days.

<sup>51</sup> He shall examine the disease on the seventh day. If the disease has spread in the cloth, in warp or woof, or in the skin, whatever be the use of the skin, this is a spreading leprous disease; it is unclean.

<sup>52</sup> He shall burn the clothing, whether diseased in warp or woof, woolen or linen, or anything of skin, for it is a spreading leprous disease; it shall be burned in fire.

<sup>53</sup> If the priest makes an examination, and the disease has not spread in the clothing, in warp or woof or in anything of skin, <sup>54</sup> the priest shall command them to wash the article in which the disease appears, and he shall put it aside seven days more. <sup>55</sup> The priest shall examine the diseased article after it has been washed. If the diseased



spot has not changed color, though the disease has not spread, it is unclean; you shall burn it in fire, whether the leprous spot is on the inside or on the outside.

<sup>56</sup> If the priest makes an examination, and the disease has abated after it is washed, he shall tear the spot out of the cloth, in warp or woof, or out of skin. <sup>57</sup> If it appears again in the garment, in warp or woof, or in anything of skin, it is spreading; you shall burn with fire that in which the disease appears. <sup>58</sup> But the cloth, warp or woof, or anything of skin from which the disease disappears when you have washed it, shall then be washed a second time, and it shall be clean.

<sup>59</sup> This is the ritual for a leprous disease in a cloth of wool or linen, either in warp or woof, or in anything of skin, to decide whether it is clean or unclean.

### **Mark 6:16-29 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

<sup>17</sup> For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. <sup>18</sup> For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." <sup>19</sup> And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, <sup>20</sup> for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. <sup>21</sup> But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. <sup>22</sup> When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." <sup>23</sup> And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." <sup>24</sup> She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied,

“The head of John the baptizer.”<sup>25</sup> Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

<sup>26</sup>The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her.

<sup>27</sup>Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, <sup>28</sup>brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. <sup>29</sup>When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

### **Psalms 40:1-3** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for Deliverance  
and Prayer for Help  
(Ps 70:1–5)*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> I waited patiently for the  
LORD;  
he inclined to me and  
heard my cry.
- <sup>2</sup> He drew me up from the  
desolate pit,  
out of the miry bog,  
and set my feet upon a  
rock,

making my steps secure.

- <sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my  
mouth,  
a song of praise to our  
God.  
Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the  
LORD.

### **Proverbs 13:9–10** (NRSV)

- <sup>9</sup> The light of the righteous  
rejoices,  
but the lamp of the  
wicked goes out.
- <sup>10</sup> By insolence the heedless  
make strife,  
but wisdom is with those  
who take advice.

## **April 18**



### **Leviticus 14:1-32** (NRSV)

*Purification of Lepers and  
Leprous Houses*

*(Cp Mt 8:1–4; Lk 5:12–14)*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying: <sup>2</sup>This shall be the ritual  
for the leprous person at the  
time of his cleansing:

He shall be brought to the priest; <sup>3</sup> the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall make an examination. If the disease is healed in the leprous person, <sup>4</sup> the priest shall command that two living clean birds and cedarwood and crimson yarn and hyssop be brought for the one who is to be cleansed. <sup>5</sup> The priest shall command that one of the birds be slaughtered over fresh water in an earthen vessel. <sup>6</sup> He shall take the living bird with the cedarwood and the crimson yarn and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the fresh water. <sup>7</sup> He shall sprinkle it seven times upon the one who is to be cleansed of the leprous disease; then he shall pronounce him clean, and he shall let the living bird go into the open field. <sup>8</sup> The one who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and bathe himself in water, and he shall be clean. After that he shall come into the camp, but shall live outside his tent seven days. <sup>9</sup> On the seventh

day he shall shave all his hair: of head, beard, eyebrows; he shall shave all his hair. Then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean.

<sup>10</sup> On the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish, and a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil, and one log of oil. <sup>11</sup> The priest who cleanses shall set the person to be cleansed, along with these things, before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>12</sup> The priest shall take one of the lambs, and offer it as a guilt offering, along with the log of oil, and raise them as an elevation offering before the LORD. <sup>13</sup> He shall slaughter the lamb in the place where the sin offering and the burnt offering are slaughtered in the holy place; for the guilt offering, like the sin offering, belongs to the priest: it is most holy. <sup>14</sup> The priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed,

and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot. <sup>15</sup> The priest shall take some of the log of oil and pour it into the palm of his own left hand, <sup>16</sup> and dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand and sprinkle some oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. <sup>17</sup> Some of the oil that remains in his hand the priest shall put on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt offering. <sup>18</sup> The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed. Then the priest shall make atonement on his behalf before the LORD: <sup>19</sup> the priest shall offer the sin offering, to make atonement for the one to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall slaughter the burnt offering; <sup>20</sup> and the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. Thus the priest shall make atonement on his behalf and he shall be clean.

<sup>21</sup> But if he is poor and cannot afford so much, he shall take one male lamb for a guilt offering to be elevated, to make atonement on his behalf, and one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering and a log of oil; <sup>22</sup> also two turtledoves or two pigeons, such as he can afford, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. <sup>23</sup> On the eighth day he shall bring them for his cleansing to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, before the LORD; <sup>24</sup> and the priest shall take the lamb of the guilt offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall raise them as an elevation offering before the LORD. <sup>25</sup> The priest shall slaughter the lamb of the guilt offering and shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering, and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot. <sup>26</sup> The priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand, <sup>27</sup> and shall sprinkle with his right finger some of

the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD.

<sup>28</sup> The priest shall put some of the oil that is in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and the big toe of the right foot, where the blood of the guilt offering was placed. <sup>29</sup> The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed, to make atonement on his behalf before the LORD. <sup>30</sup> And he shall offer, of the turtledoves or pigeons such as he can afford, <sup>31</sup> one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, along with a grain offering; and the priest shall make atonement before the LORD on behalf of the one being cleansed. <sup>32</sup> This is the ritual for the one who has a leprous disease, who cannot afford the offerings for his cleansing.

### **Mark 6:30-44** (NRSV)

*Feeding the Five Thousand*  
(Mt 14:13-21; Lk 9:10-17; Jn 6:1-14)

<sup>30</sup> The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> He said to them,

**“Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.”**

For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.

<sup>32</sup> And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup> Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

<sup>35</sup> When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late;

<sup>36</sup> send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat.” <sup>37</sup> But he answered them,

**“You give them something to eat.”** They said to him, “Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?” <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, **“How many loaves have you? Go and see.”** When they had found out,

they said, "Five, and two fish."

<sup>39</sup> Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass.

<sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties.

<sup>41</sup> Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> And all ate and were filled; <sup>43</sup> and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup> Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

**Psalm 40:4-10** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Happy are those who make the LORD their trust, who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.

<sup>5</sup> You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you.

Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

<sup>6</sup> Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear.

Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

<sup>8</sup> I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

<sup>9</sup> I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation;

see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD.

<sup>10</sup> I have not hidden your saving help within my heart,

I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;

I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness

from the great  
congregation.

**Proverbs 13:11** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Wealth hastily gotten will  
dwindle,  
but those who gather  
little by little will  
increase it.

**April 19**



**Leviticus 14:33-57** (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses  
and Aaron, saying:

<sup>34</sup> When you come into the  
land of Canaan, which I give  
you for a possession, and I put  
a leprous disease in a house in  
the land of your possession,

<sup>35</sup> the owner of the house shall  
come and tell the priest,  
saying, "There seems to me to  
be some sort of disease in my  
house." <sup>36</sup> The priest shall  
command that they empty the  
house before the priest goes  
to examine the disease, or all  
that is in the house will

become unclean; and  
afterward the priest shall go in  
to inspect the house. <sup>37</sup> He  
shall examine the disease; if  
the disease is in the walls of  
the house with greenish or  
reddish spots, and if it appears  
to be deeper than the surface,  
<sup>38</sup> the priest shall go outside to  
the door of the house and  
shut up the house seven days.  
<sup>39</sup> The priest shall come again  
on the seventh day and make  
an inspection; if the disease  
has spread in the walls of the  
house, <sup>40</sup> the priest shall  
command that the stones in  
which the disease appears be  
taken out and thrown into an  
unclean place outside the city.

<sup>41</sup> He shall have the inside of  
the house scraped thoroughly,  
and the plaster that is scraped  
off shall be dumped in an  
unclean place outside the city.

<sup>42</sup> They shall take other stones  
and put them in the place of  
those stones, and take other  
plaster and plaster the house.

<sup>43</sup> If the disease breaks out  
again in the house, after he  
has taken out the stones and  
scraped the house and  
plastered it, <sup>44</sup> the priest shall  
go and make inspection; if the

disease has spread in the house, it is a spreading leprous disease in the house; it is unclean. <sup>45</sup> He shall have the house torn down, its stones and timber and all the plaster of the house, and taken outside the city to an unclean place. <sup>46</sup> All who enter the house while it is shut up shall be unclean until the evening; <sup>47</sup> and all who sleep in the house shall wash their clothes; and all who eat in the house shall wash their clothes.

<sup>48</sup> If the priest comes and makes an inspection, and the disease has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, the priest shall pronounce the house clean; the disease is healed. <sup>49</sup> For the cleansing of the house he shall take two birds, with cedarwood and crimson yarn and hyssop, <sup>50</sup> and shall slaughter one of the birds over fresh water in an earthen vessel, <sup>51</sup> and shall take the cedarwood and the hyssop and the crimson yarn, along with the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slaughtered bird and the fresh water, and sprinkle the house

seven times. <sup>52</sup> Thus he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the fresh water, and with the living bird, and with the cedarwood and hyssop and crimson yarn; <sup>53</sup> and he shall let the living bird go out of the city into the open field; so he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

<sup>54</sup> This is the ritual for any leprous disease: for an itch, <sup>55</sup> for leprous diseases in clothing and houses, <sup>56</sup> and for a swelling or an eruption or a spot, <sup>57</sup> to determine when it is unclean and when it is clean. This is the ritual for leprous diseases.

### **Mark 6:45-56 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Walks on the Water*  
(Mt 14:22-33; Jn 6:15-21)

<sup>45</sup> Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>46</sup> After saying farewell to them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

<sup>47</sup> When evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land.

<sup>48</sup> When he saw that they were



straining at the oars against an adverse wind, he came towards them early in the morning, walking on the sea. He intended to pass them by.<sup>49</sup> But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out;<sup>50</sup> for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, **“Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”**<sup>51</sup> Then he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded,<sup>52</sup> for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

*Healing the Sick in Gennesaret*  
(Mt 14:34–36)

<sup>53</sup> When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat.<sup>54</sup> When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him,<sup>55</sup> and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was.<sup>56</sup> And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even

the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

**Psalm 40:11-13** (NRSV)

- <sup>11</sup> Do not, O LORD, withhold your mercy from me; let your steadfast love and your faithfulness keep me safe forever.
- <sup>12</sup> For evils have encompassed me without number; my iniquities have overtaken me, until I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me.
- <sup>13</sup> Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me; O LORD, make haste to help me.

**Proverbs 13:12–14** (NRSV)

- <sup>12</sup> Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.
- <sup>13</sup> Those who despise the word bring destruction on themselves, but those who respect the commandment will be rewarded.

<sup>14</sup> The teaching of the wise is  
a fountain of life,  
so that one may avoid  
the snares of death.

## April 20



### Leviticus 15:1–33 (NRSV)

#### *Concerning Bodily Discharges*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of Israel and say to them:

When any man has a discharge from his member, his discharge makes him ceremonially unclean. <sup>3</sup> The uncleanness of his discharge is this: whether his member flows with his discharge, or his member is stopped from discharging, it is uncleanness for him. <sup>4</sup> Every bed on which the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean; and everything on which he sits shall be unclean. <sup>5</sup> Anyone who touches his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until

the evening. <sup>6</sup> All who sit on anything on which the one with the discharge has sat shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. <sup>7</sup> All who touch the body of the one with the discharge shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. <sup>8</sup> If the one with the discharge spits on persons who are clean, then they shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. <sup>9</sup> Any saddle on which the one with the discharge rides shall be unclean. <sup>10</sup> All who touch anything that was under him shall be unclean until the evening, and all who carry such a thing shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. <sup>11</sup> All those whom the one with the discharge touches without his having rinsed his hands in water shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. <sup>12</sup> Any earthen vessel that the one with the discharge touches shall be

broken; and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

<sup>13</sup> When the one with a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, he shall count seven days for his cleansing; he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in fresh water, and he shall be clean. <sup>14</sup> On the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before the LORD to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to the priest. <sup>15</sup> The priest shall offer them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make atonement on his behalf before the LORD for his discharge.

<sup>16</sup> If a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in water, and be unclean until the evening.

<sup>17</sup> Everything made of cloth or of skin on which the semen falls shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the evening. <sup>18</sup> If a man lies with a woman and has an emission of semen, both of them shall bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening.

<sup>19</sup> When a woman has a discharge of blood that is her regular discharge from her body, she shall be in her impurity for seven days, and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening.

<sup>20</sup> Everything upon which she lies during her impurity shall be unclean; everything also upon which she sits shall be unclean. <sup>21</sup> Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening.

<sup>22</sup> Whoever touches anything upon which she sits shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening; <sup>23</sup> whether it is the bed or anything upon which she sits, when he touches it he shall be unclean until the evening. <sup>24</sup> If any man lies with her, and her impurity falls on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

<sup>25</sup> If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of

the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness; as in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean.<sup>26</sup> Every bed on which she lies during all the days of her discharge shall be treated as the bed of her impurity; and everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of her impurity.<sup>27</sup> Whoever touches these things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening.<sup>28</sup> If she is cleansed of her discharge, she shall count seven days, and after that she shall be clean.<sup>29</sup> On the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting.<sup>30</sup> The priest shall offer one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make atonement on her behalf before the LORD for her unclean discharge.

<sup>31</sup> Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, so that they do not die in their uncleanness

by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.

<sup>32</sup> This is the ritual for those who have a discharge: for him who has an emission of semen, becoming unclean thereby,<sup>33</sup> for her who is in the infirmity of her period, for anyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and for the man who lies with a woman who is unclean.

**Mark 7:1-8 (NRSV)**

*The Tradition of the Elders*  
(Mt 15:1–20)

<sup>1</sup> Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him,<sup>2</sup> they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them.<sup>3</sup> (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders;<sup>4</sup> and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.)<sup>5</sup> So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why

do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" <sup>6</sup> He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me;

<sup>7</sup> in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

<sup>8</sup> You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

**Psalm 40:14-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Let all those be put to shame and confusion who seek to snatch away my life; let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt.

<sup>15</sup> Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"

<sup>16</sup> But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;

may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the LORD!"

<sup>17</sup> As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God.

**Proverbs 13:15–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Good sense wins favor, but the way of the faithless is their ruin.

<sup>16</sup> The clever do all things intelligently, but the fool displays folly.

**April 21**



**Leviticus 16:1–28 (NRSV)**

*The Day of Atonement*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they

drew near before the LORD and died.<sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Moses:

Tell your brother Aaron not to come just at any time into the sanctuary inside the curtain before the mercy seat that is upon the ark, or he will die; for I appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.<sup>3</sup> Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.<sup>4</sup> He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and shall have the linen undergarments next to his body, fasten the linen sash, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy vestments. He shall bathe his body in water, and then put them on.<sup>5</sup> He shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

<sup>6</sup> Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house.<sup>7</sup> He shall take the two goats and set them before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting;<sup>8</sup> and Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats, one lot

for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel.<sup>9</sup> Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the LORD, and offer it as a sin offering;<sup>10</sup> but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.

<sup>11</sup> Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house; he shall slaughter the bull as a sin offering for himself.<sup>12</sup> He shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, and two handfuls of crushed sweet incense, and he shall bring it inside the curtain<sup>13</sup> and put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the covenant, or he will die.<sup>14</sup> He shall take some of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times.

<sup>15</sup> He shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the curtain, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. <sup>16</sup> Thus he shall make atonement for the sanctuary, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which remains with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. <sup>17</sup> No one shall be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the sanctuary until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. <sup>18</sup> Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement on its behalf, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat, and put it on each of the horns of the altar. <sup>19</sup> He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and

cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.

<sup>20</sup> When he has finished atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. <sup>21</sup> Then Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness by means of someone designated for the task. <sup>22</sup> The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness.

<sup>23</sup> Then Aaron shall enter the tent of meeting, and shall take off the linen vestments that he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there. <sup>24</sup> He shall bathe his body in water in a holy place, and put on his vestments; then he shall come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, making atonement for himself and for

the people. <sup>25</sup> The fat of the sin offering he shall turn into smoke on the altar. <sup>26</sup> The one who sets the goat free for Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward may come into the camp. <sup>27</sup> The bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be consumed in fire. <sup>28</sup> The one who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward may come into the camp.

**Mark 7:9-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Then he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! <sup>10</sup> For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.’ <sup>11</sup> But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban’ (that is, an offering

to God)— <sup>12</sup> then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, <sup>13</sup> thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this.”

<sup>14</sup> Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup> there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

<sup>17</sup> When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. <sup>18</sup> He said to them, “Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, <sup>19</sup> since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) <sup>20</sup> And he said, “It is what comes out of a person that defiles. <sup>21</sup> For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit,



licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

**Psalm 41:1-3** (NRSV)

*Assurance of God’s Help and a Plea for Healing*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Happy are those who consider the poor; the LORD delivers them in the day of trouble.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD protects them and keeps them alive; they are called happy in the land.

You do not give them up to the will of their enemies.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD sustains them on their sickbed; in their illness you heal all their infirmities.

**Proverbs 13:17–19** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> A bad messenger brings trouble, but a faithful envoy, healing.

<sup>18</sup> Poverty and disgrace are for the one who ignores instruction, but one who heeds reproof is honored.

<sup>19</sup> A desire realized is sweet to the soul, but to turn away from evil is an abomination to fools.

**April 22**



**Leviticus 16:29-17:16** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> This shall be a statute to you forever: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall deny yourselves, and shall do no work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. <sup>30</sup> For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the LORD. <sup>31</sup> It is a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall deny yourselves; it is a statute forever. <sup>32</sup> The priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father’s place shall make atonement, wearing the linen vestments, the holy

vestments. <sup>33</sup> He shall make atonement for the sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. <sup>34</sup> This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the people of Israel once in the year for all their sins. And Moses did as the LORD had commanded him.

### *The Slaughtering of Animals*

**17** The LORD spoke to Moses:

<sup>2</sup> Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the people of Israel and say to them: This is what the LORD has commanded. <sup>3</sup> If anyone of the house of Israel slaughters an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or slaughters it outside the camp, <sup>4</sup> and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to present it as an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, he shall be held guilty of bloodshed; he has shed blood, and he shall be cut off from the people. <sup>5</sup> This is in order that the people of Israel may

bring their sacrifices that they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD, to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and offer them as sacrifices of well-being to the LORD. <sup>6</sup> The priest shall dash the blood against the altar of the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and turn the fat into smoke as a pleasing odor to the LORD, <sup>7</sup> so that they may no longer offer their sacrifices for goat-demons, to whom they prostitute themselves. This shall be a statute forever to them throughout their generations.

<sup>8</sup> And say to them further: Anyone of the house of Israel or of the aliens who reside among them who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, <sup>9</sup> and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to sacrifice it to the LORD, shall be cut off from the people.

### *Eating Blood Prohibited*

<sup>10</sup> If anyone of the house of Israel or of the aliens who reside among them eats any blood, I will set my face

against that person who eats blood, and will cut that person off from the people. <sup>11</sup> For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I have said to the people of Israel: No person among you shall eat blood, nor shall any alien who resides among you eat blood. <sup>13</sup> And anyone of the people of Israel, or of the aliens who reside among them, who hunts down an animal or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth.

<sup>14</sup> For the life of every creature—its blood is its life; therefore I have said to the people of Israel: You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off. <sup>15</sup> All persons, citizens or aliens, who eat what dies of itself or what has been torn by wild animals, shall wash their clothes, and bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the evening; then they shall be

clean. <sup>16</sup> But if they do not wash themselves or bathe their body, they shall bear their guilt.

**Mark 7:24-8:10** (NRSV)

*The Syrophenician  
Woman's Faith  
(Mt 15:21–28)*

<sup>24</sup> From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, <sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup> Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup> He said to her, **“Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”** <sup>28</sup> But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” <sup>29</sup> Then he said to her, **“For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.”** <sup>30</sup> So she went home, found the child

lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

*Jesus Cures a Deaf Man*  
(Mt 15:29–31)

<sup>31</sup> Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup> They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup> Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” <sup>35</sup> And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup> They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

*Feeding the Four Thousand*  
(Mt 15:32–39)

**8** In those days when there was again a great crowd without anything to eat, he called his disciples and said to them, <sup>2</sup> “I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. <sup>3</sup> If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way—and some of them have come from a great distance.” <sup>4</sup> His disciples replied, “How can one feed these people with bread here in the desert?” <sup>5</sup> He asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, “Seven.” <sup>6</sup> Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute; and they distributed them to the crowd. <sup>7</sup> They had also a few small fish; and after blessing them, he ordered that these too should be distributed. <sup>8</sup> They ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. <sup>9</sup> Now there

were about four thousand people. And he sent them away.<sup>10</sup> And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

**Psalms 41:4-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> As for me, I said, "O LORD,  
be gracious to me;  
heal me, for I have  
sinned against you."  
<sup>5</sup> My enemies wonder in  
malice  
when I will die, and my  
name perish.  
<sup>6</sup> And when they come to  
see me, they utter  
empty words,  
while their hearts gather  
mischief;  
when they go out, they  
tell it abroad.  
<sup>7</sup> All who hate me whisper  
together about me;  
they imagine the worst  
for me.  
<sup>8</sup> They think that a deadly  
thing has fastened on  
me,  
that I will not rise again  
from where I lie.  
<sup>9</sup> Even my bosom friend in  
whom I trusted,

who ate of my bread, has  
lifted the heel against  
me.

<sup>10</sup> But you, O LORD, be  
gracious to me,  
and raise me up, that I  
may repay them.  
<sup>11</sup> By this I know that you are  
pleased with me;  
because my enemy has  
not triumphed over  
me.  
<sup>12</sup> But you have upheld me  
because of my  
integrity,  
and set me in your  
presence forever.  
<sup>13</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the  
God of Israel,  
from everlasting to  
everlasting.  
Amen and Amen.

**Proverbs 13:20-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> Whoever walks with the  
wise becomes wise,  
but the companion of  
fools suffers harm.  
<sup>21</sup> Misfortune pursues  
sinners,  
but prosperity rewards  
the righteous.  
<sup>22</sup> The good leave an  
inheritance to their  
children's children,

but the sinner's wealth is  
laid up for the  
righteous.

<sup>23</sup> The field of the poor may  
yield much food,  
but it is swept away  
through injustice.

## April 23



### Leviticus 18:1-30 (NRSV)

#### *Sexual Relations*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying:

<sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of  
Israel and say to them: I am  
the LORD your God. <sup>3</sup> You shall  
not do as they do in the land  
of Egypt, where you lived, and  
you shall not do as they do in  
the land of Canaan, to which I  
am bringing you. You shall not  
follow their statutes. <sup>4</sup> My  
ordinances you shall observe  
and my statutes you shall  
keep, following them: I am the  
LORD your God. <sup>5</sup> You shall  
keep my statutes and my

ordinances; by doing so one  
shall live: I am the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> None of you shall  
approach anyone near of kin  
to uncover nakedness: I am  
the LORD. <sup>7</sup> You shall not  
uncover the nakedness of your  
father, which is the nakedness  
of your mother; she is your  
mother, you shall not uncover  
her nakedness. <sup>8</sup> You shall not  
uncover the nakedness of your  
father's wife; it is the  
nakedness of your father.

<sup>9</sup> You shall not uncover the  
nakedness of your sister, your  
father's daughter or your  
mother's daughter, whether  
born at home or born abroad.  
<sup>10</sup> You shall not uncover the  
nakedness of your son's  
daughter or of your daughter's  
daughter, for their nakedness  
is your own nakedness. <sup>11</sup> You  
shall not uncover the  
nakedness of your father's  
wife's daughter, begotten by  
your father, since she is your  
sister. <sup>12</sup> You shall not uncover  
the nakedness of your father's  
sister; she is your father's  
flesh. <sup>13</sup> You shall not uncover  
the nakedness of your  
mother's sister, for she is your  
mother's flesh. <sup>14</sup> You shall not

uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. <sup>15</sup> You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law: she is your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness. <sup>16</sup> You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. <sup>17</sup> You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are your flesh; it is depravity. <sup>18</sup> And you shall not take a woman as a rival to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.

<sup>19</sup> You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. <sup>20</sup> You shall not have sexual relations with your kinsman's wife, and defile yourself with her. <sup>21</sup> You shall not give any of your offspring to sacrifice them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. <sup>22</sup> You shall not lie with a

male as with a woman; it is an abomination. <sup>23</sup> You shall not have sexual relations with any animal and defile yourself with it, nor shall any woman give herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it: it is perversion.

<sup>24</sup> Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for by all these practices the nations I am casting out before you have defiled themselves.

<sup>25</sup> Thus the land became defiled; and I punished it for its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.

<sup>26</sup> But you shall keep my statutes and my ordinances and commit none of these abominations, either the citizen or the alien who resides among you <sup>27</sup> (for the inhabitants of the land, who were before you, committed all of these abominations, and the land became defiled); <sup>28</sup> otherwise the land will vomit you out for defiling it, as it vomited out the nation that was before you. <sup>29</sup> For whoever commits any of these abominations shall be cut off from their people. <sup>30</sup> So keep my charge not to commit any

of these abominations that were done before you, and not to defile yourselves by them: I am the LORD your God.

**Mark 8:11-26** (NRSV)

*The Demand for a Sign*  
(Mt 16:1-4)

<sup>11</sup>The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, asking him for a sign from heaven, to test him. <sup>12</sup>And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, “Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation.” <sup>13</sup>And he left them, and getting into the boat again, he went across to the other side.

*The Yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod*  
(Mt 16:5-12)

<sup>14</sup>Now the disciples had forgotten to bring any bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. <sup>15</sup>And he cautioned them, saying, “Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod.” <sup>16</sup>They said to one another, “It is because we have no bread.” <sup>17</sup>And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, “Why are you

talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? <sup>18</sup>Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? <sup>19</sup>When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?” They said to him, “Twelve.” <sup>20</sup>“And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?” And they said to him, “Seven.” <sup>21</sup>Then he said to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

*Jesus Cures a Blind Man at Bethsaida*

<sup>22</sup>They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. <sup>23</sup>He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Can you see anything?” <sup>24</sup>And the man looked up and said, “I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.” <sup>25</sup>Then Jesus



laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

<sup>26</sup> Then he sent him away to his home, saying, “Do not even go into the village.”

**Psalms 42:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Longing for God and  
His Help in Distress*

To the leader. A Maskil of the Korahites.

<sup>1</sup> As a deer longs for flowing streams,  
so my soul longs for you,  
O God.  
<sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God,  
for the living God.  
When shall I come and behold  
the face of God?  
<sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food  
day and night,  
while people say to me  
continually,  
“Where is your God?”  
<sup>4</sup> These things I remember,  
as I pour out my soul:  
how I went with the throng,  
and led them in procession to the house of God,

with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,  
a multitude keeping festival.

<sup>5</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,  
my help<sup>6</sup> and my God.  
My soul is cast down within me;  
therefore I remember you  
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon,  
from Mount Mizar.  
<sup>7</sup> Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your cataracts;  
all your waves and your billows  
have gone over me.  
<sup>8</sup> By day the LORD commands his steadfast love,  
and at night his song is with me,  
a prayer to the God of my life.

**Proverbs 13:24-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> Those who spare the rod hate their children,

but those who love them  
are diligent to  
discipline them.

<sup>25</sup> The righteous have enough  
to satisfy their  
appetite,  
but the belly of the  
wicked is empty.

## April 24



### Leviticus 19:1-34 (NRSV)

#### *Ritual and Moral Holiness*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying:

<sup>2</sup> Speak to all the  
congregation of the people of  
Israel and say to them: You  
shall be holy, for I the LORD  
your God am holy. <sup>3</sup> You shall  
each revere your mother and  
father, and you shall keep my  
sabbaths: I am the LORD your  
God. <sup>4</sup> Do not turn to idols or  
make cast images for  
yourselves: I am the LORD your  
God.

<sup>5</sup> When you offer a  
sacrifice of well-being to the  
LORD, offer it in such a way

that it is acceptable in your  
behalf. <sup>6</sup> It shall be eaten on  
the same day you offer it, or  
on the next day; and anything  
left over until the third day  
shall be consumed in fire. <sup>7</sup> If it  
is eaten at all on the third day,  
it is an abomination; it will not  
be acceptable. <sup>8</sup> All who eat it  
shall be subject to  
punishment, because they  
have profaned what is holy to  
the LORD; and any such person  
shall be cut off from the  
people.

<sup>9</sup> When you reap the  
harvest of your land, you shall  
not reap to the very edges of  
your field, or gather the  
gleanings of your harvest.

<sup>10</sup> You shall not strip your  
vineyard bare, or gather the  
fallen grapes of your vineyard;  
you shall leave them for the  
poor and the alien: I am the  
LORD your God.

<sup>11</sup> You shall not steal; you  
shall not deal falsely; and you  
shall not lie to one another.

<sup>12</sup> And you shall not swear  
falsely by my name, profaning  
the name of your God: I am  
the LORD.

<sup>13</sup> You shall not defraud  
your neighbor; you shall not

steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. <sup>14</sup> You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor.

<sup>16</sup> You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

<sup>17</sup> You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. <sup>18</sup> You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

<sup>19</sup> You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your animals breed with a different kind; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed; nor shall you put on a garment made of two different materials.

<sup>20</sup> If a man has sexual relations with a woman who is a slave, designated for another man but not ransomed or given her freedom, an inquiry shall be held. They shall not be put to death, since she has not been freed; <sup>21</sup> but he shall bring a guilt offering for himself to the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram as guilt offering. <sup>22</sup> And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of guilt offering before the LORD for his sin that he committed; and the sin he committed shall be forgiven him.

<sup>23</sup> When you come into the land and plant all kinds of trees for food, then you shall regard their fruit as forbidden; three years it shall be forbidden to you, it must not be eaten. <sup>24</sup> In the fourth year all their fruit shall be set apart for rejoicing in the LORD. <sup>25</sup> But in the fifth year you may eat of their fruit, that their yield may be increased for you: I am the LORD your God.

<sup>26</sup> You shall not eat anything with its blood. You shall not practice augury or

witchcraft. <sup>27</sup> You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard. <sup>28</sup> You shall not make any gashes in your flesh for the dead or tattoo any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

<sup>29</sup> Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, that the land not become prostituted and full of depravity. <sup>30</sup> You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

<sup>31</sup> Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

<sup>32</sup> You shall rise before the aged, and defer to the old; and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

<sup>33</sup> When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien.

<sup>34</sup> The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

**Mark 8:27-38** (NRSV)

*Peter's Declaration*

*about Jesus*

(Mt 16:13–20; Lk 9:18–20)

<sup>27</sup> Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” <sup>28</sup> And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” <sup>29</sup> He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” <sup>30</sup> And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

*Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection*

(Mt 16:21–28; Lk 9:21–27)

<sup>31</sup> Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup> But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your

mind not on divine things but on human things.”

<sup>34</sup> He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup> For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup> For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? <sup>37</sup> Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? <sup>38</sup> Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

**Psalm 42:9-11** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> I say to God, my rock,  
“Why have you forgotten me?  
Why must I walk about  
mournfully  
because the enemy  
oppresses me?”  
<sup>10</sup> As with a deadly wound in  
my body,

my adversaries taunt me,  
while they say to me  
continually,  
“Where is your God?”  
<sup>11</sup> Why are you cast down, O  
my soul,  
and why are you  
disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall  
again praise him,  
my help and my God.

**Proverbs 14:1-2** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The wise woman builds  
her house,  
but the foolish tears it  
down with her own  
hands.  
<sup>2</sup> Those who walk uprightly  
fear the LORD,  
but one who is devious  
in conduct despises  
him.

**April 25**



**Leviticus 19:35-20:21** (NRSV)

<sup>35</sup> You shall not cheat in  
measuring length, weight, or

quantity. <sup>36</sup> You shall have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. <sup>37</sup> You shall keep all my statutes and all my ordinances, and observe them: I am the LORD.

*Penalties for  
Violations of Holiness*

**20** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Say further to the people of Israel:

Any of the people of Israel, or of the aliens who reside in Israel, who give any of their offspring to Molech shall be put to death; the people of the land shall stone them to death. <sup>3</sup> I myself will set my face against them, and will cut them off from the people, because they have given of their offspring to Molech, defiling my sanctuary and profaning my holy name. <sup>4</sup> And if the people of the land should ever close their eyes to them, when they give of their offspring to Molech, and do not put them to death, <sup>5</sup> I myself will set my face against them and against their family,

and will cut them off from among their people, them and all who follow them in prostituting themselves to Molech.

<sup>6</sup> If any turn to mediums and wizards, prostituting themselves to them, I will set my face against them, and will cut them off from the people. <sup>7</sup> Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am the LORD your God. <sup>8</sup> Keep my statutes, and observe them; I am the LORD; I sanctify you. <sup>9</sup> All who curse father or mother shall be put to death; having cursed father or mother, their blood is upon them.

<sup>10</sup> If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death. <sup>11</sup> The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. <sup>12</sup> If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall be put to death; they have committed perversion, their blood is upon them. <sup>13</sup> If a man lies with a

male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. <sup>14</sup> If a man takes a wife and her mother also, it is depravity; they shall be burned to death, both he and they, that there may be no depravity among you. <sup>15</sup> If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he shall be put to death; and you shall kill the animal. <sup>16</sup> If a woman approaches any animal and has sexual relations with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them.

<sup>17</sup> If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people; he has uncovered his sister's nakedness, he shall be subject to punishment. <sup>18</sup> If a man lies with a woman having her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow and she has laid bare her flow of blood; both of

them shall be cut off from their people. <sup>19</sup> You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that is to lay bare one's own flesh; they shall be subject to punishment. <sup>20</sup> If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall be subject to punishment; they shall die childless. <sup>21</sup> If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

**Mark 9:1–13 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> And he said to them, **“Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”**

*The Transfiguration*

(Mt 17:1–8; Lk 9:28–36;

2 Pet 1:16–18)

<sup>2</sup> Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, <sup>3</sup> and his clothes became

dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.

<sup>4</sup> And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup> Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” <sup>6</sup> He did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

<sup>7</sup> Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” <sup>8</sup> Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore, but only Jesus.

*The Coming of Elijah*  
(Mt 17:9–13)

<sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. <sup>10</sup> So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean. <sup>11</sup> Then they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” <sup>12</sup> He said to them, “Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things. How

then is it written about the Son of Man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt?

<sup>13</sup> But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him.”

**Psalm 43:1-4** (NRSV)

*Prayer to God in  
Time of Trouble*

- <sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people; from those who are deceitful and unjust deliver me!
- <sup>2</sup> For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you cast me off? Why must I walk about mournfully because of the oppression of the enemy?
- <sup>3</sup> O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.



<sup>4</sup> Then I will go to the altar  
of God,  
to God my exceeding joy;  
and I will praise you with  
the harp,  
O God, my God.

**Proverbs 14:3–4 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> The talk of fools is a rod for  
their backs,  
but the lips of the wise  
preserve them.  
<sup>4</sup> Where there are no oxen,  
there is no grain;  
abundant crops come by  
the strength of the ox.

**April 26**



**Leviticus 20:22-21:24 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> You shall keep all my  
statutes and all my  
ordinances, and observe them,  
so that the land to which I  
bring you to settle in may not  
vomit you out. <sup>23</sup> You shall not  
follow the practices of the  
nation that I am driving out  
before you. Because they did

all these things, I abhorred  
them. <sup>24</sup> But I have said to you:  
You shall inherit their land,  
and I will give it to you to  
possess, a land flowing with  
milk and honey. I am the LORD  
your God; I have separated  
you from the peoples. <sup>25</sup> You  
shall therefore make a  
distinction between the clean  
animal and the unclean, and  
between the unclean bird and  
the clean; you shall not bring  
abomination on yourselves by  
animal or by bird or by  
anything with which the  
ground teems, which I have  
set apart for you to hold  
unclean. <sup>26</sup> You shall be holy to  
me; for I the LORD am holy, and  
I have separated you from the  
other peoples to be mine.

<sup>27</sup> A man or a woman who  
is a medium or a wizard shall  
be put to death; they shall be  
stoned to death, their blood is  
upon them.

*The Holiness of Priests  
(Cp Ezek 44:15–31)*

**21** The LORD said to Moses:  
Speak to the priests, the sons  
of Aaron, and say to them:

No one shall defile himself  
for a dead person among his

relatives, <sup>2</sup> except for his nearest kin: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother; <sup>3</sup> likewise, for a virgin sister, close to him because she has had no husband, he may defile himself for her. <sup>4</sup> But he shall not defile himself as a husband among his people and so profane himself. <sup>5</sup> They shall not make bald spots upon their heads, or shave off the edges of their beards, or make any gashes in their flesh. <sup>6</sup> They shall be holy to their God, and not profane the name of their God; for they offer the LORD's offerings by fire, the food of their God; therefore they shall be holy. <sup>7</sup> They shall not marry a prostitute or a woman who has been defiled; neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband. For they are holy to their God, <sup>8</sup> and you shall treat them as holy, since they offer the food of your God; they shall be holy to you, for I the LORD, I who sanctify you, am holy. <sup>9</sup> When the daughter of a priest profanes herself through prostitution, she profanes her

father; she shall be burned to death.

<sup>10</sup> The priest who is exalted above his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been consecrated to wear the vestments, shall not dishevel his hair, nor tear his vestments. <sup>11</sup> He shall not go where there is a dead body; he shall not defile himself even for his father or mother. <sup>12</sup> He shall not go outside the sanctuary and thus profane the sanctuary of his God; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD. <sup>13</sup> He shall marry only a woman who is a virgin. <sup>14</sup> A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, a prostitute, these he shall not marry. He shall marry a virgin of his own kin, <sup>15</sup> that he may not profane his offspring among his kin; for I am the LORD; I sanctify him.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>17</sup> Speak to Aaron and say: No one of your offspring throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the

food of his God. <sup>18</sup> For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, one who is blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long, <sup>19</sup> or one who has a broken foot or a broken hand, <sup>20</sup> or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or a man with a blemish in his eyes or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles. <sup>21</sup> No descendant of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the LORD's offerings by fire; since he has a blemish, he shall not come near to offer the food of his God. <sup>22</sup> He may eat the food of his God, of the most holy as well as of the holy. <sup>23</sup> But he shall not come near the curtain or approach the altar, because he has a blemish, that he may not profane my sanctuaries; for I am the LORD; I sanctify them. <sup>24</sup> Thus Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the people of Israel.

**Mark 9:14–29 (NRSV)**

*The Healing of a Boy  
with a Spirit*

(Mt 17:14–21; Lk 9:37–43a)

<sup>14</sup> When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and some

scribes arguing with them.

<sup>15</sup> When the whole crowd saw him, they were immediately overcome with awe, and they ran forward to greet him. <sup>16</sup> He asked them, “**What are you arguing about with them?**”

<sup>17</sup> Someone from the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; <sup>18</sup> and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so.” <sup>19</sup> He answered them, “**You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to me.**”

<sup>20</sup> And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. <sup>21</sup> Jesus asked the father, “**How long has this been happening to him?**” And he said, “From childhood. <sup>22</sup> It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do

anything, have pity on us and help us.”<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to him, “If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.”<sup>24</sup> Immediately the father of the child cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief!”

<sup>25</sup> When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!”<sup>26</sup> After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.”<sup>27</sup> But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand.

<sup>28</sup> When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”<sup>29</sup> He said to them, “This kind can come out only through prayer.”

### **Psalms 43:5** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you  
disquieted within me?

Hope in God; for I shall  
again praise him,  
my help and my God.

### **Proverbs 14:5–6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> A faithful witness does not  
lie,  
but a false witness  
breathes out lies.  
<sup>6</sup> A scoffer seeks wisdom in  
vain,  
but knowledge is easy  
for one who  
understands.

## **April 27**



### **Leviticus 22:1-16** (NRSV)

#### *The Use of Holy Offerings*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Direct Aaron and his sons to deal carefully with the sacred donations of the people of Israel, which they dedicate to me, so that they may not profane my holy name; I am the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Say to them: If anyone among all your offspring throughout

your generations comes near the sacred donations, which the people of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he is in a state of uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> No one of Aaron's offspring who has a leprous disease or suffers a discharge may eat of the sacred donations until he is clean. Whoever touches anything made unclean by a corpse or a man who has had an emission of semen, <sup>5</sup> and whoever touches any swarming thing by which he may be made unclean or any human being by whom he may be made unclean—whatever his uncleanness may be— <sup>6</sup> the person who touches any such shall be unclean until evening and shall not eat of the sacred donations unless he has washed his body in water.

<sup>7</sup> When the sun sets he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat of the sacred donations, for they are his food. <sup>8</sup> That which died or was torn by wild animals he shall not eat, becoming unclean by it: I am the LORD. <sup>9</sup> They shall keep my charge, so that they may not

incur guilt and die in the sanctuary for having profaned it: I am the LORD; I sanctify them.

<sup>10</sup> No lay person shall eat of the sacred donations. No bound or hired servant of the priest shall eat of the sacred donations; <sup>11</sup> but if a priest acquires anyone by purchase, the person may eat of them; and those that are born in his house may eat of his food. <sup>12</sup> If a priest's daughter marries a layman, she shall not eat of the offering of the sacred donations; <sup>13</sup> but if a priest's daughter is widowed or divorced, without offspring, and returns to her father's house, as in her youth, she may eat of her father's food. No lay person shall eat of it.

<sup>14</sup> If a man eats of the sacred donation unintentionally, he shall add one-fifth of its value to it, and give the sacred donation to the priest. <sup>15</sup> No one shall profane the sacred donations of the people of Israel, which they offer to the LORD, <sup>16</sup> causing them to bear guilt requiring a guilt offering, by eating their sacred

donations: for I am the LORD; I sanctify them.

**Mark 9:30-37** (NRSV)

*Jesus Again Foretells His Death and Resurrection*  
(Mt 17:22-23; Lk 9:43b-45)

<sup>30</sup>They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, **“The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.”** <sup>32</sup>But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

*Who Is the Greatest?*  
(Mt 18:1-5; Lk 9:46-48)

<sup>33</sup>Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, **“What were you arguing about on the way?”** <sup>34</sup>But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, **“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”** <sup>36</sup>Then he took a little child and put it

among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them,

<sup>37</sup>**“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”**

**Psalm 44:1-3** (NRSV)

*National Lament and Prayer for Help*

To the leader. Of the Korahites.  
A Maskil.

<sup>1</sup> We have heard with our ears, O God,  
our ancestors have told us,  
what deeds you performed in their days,  
in the days of old:  
<sup>2</sup> you with your own hand drove out the nations,  
but them you planted;  
you afflicted the peoples,  
but them you set free;  
<sup>3</sup> for not by their own sword did they win the land,  
nor did their own arm give them victory;  
but your right hand, and your arm,  
and the light of your countenance,  
for you delighted in them.

**Proverbs 14:7–8** (NRSV)

- <sup>7</sup> Leave the presence of a fool,  
for there you do not find words of knowledge.
- <sup>8</sup> It is the wisdom of the clever to understand where they go,  
but the folly of fools misleads.

**April 28**



**Leviticus 22:17-23:21** (NRSV)

*Acceptable Offerings*

<sup>17</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>18</sup> Speak to Aaron and his sons and all the people of Israel and say to them: When anyone of the house of Israel or of the aliens residing in Israel presents an offering, whether in payment of a vow or as a freewill offering that is offered to the LORD as a burnt offering, <sup>19</sup> to be acceptable in your behalf it shall be a male without blemish, of the cattle or the sheep or the goats. <sup>20</sup> You shall

not offer anything that has a blemish, for it will not be acceptable in your behalf.

<sup>21</sup> When anyone offers a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD, in fulfillment of a vow or as a freewill offering, from the herd or from the flock, to be acceptable it must be perfect; there shall be no blemish in it. <sup>22</sup> Anything blind, or injured, or maimed, or having a discharge or an itch or scabs—these you shall not offer to the LORD or put any of them on the altar as offerings by fire to the LORD.

<sup>23</sup> An ox or a lamb that has a limb too long or too short you may present for a freewill offering; but it will not be accepted for a vow. <sup>24</sup> Any animal that has its testicles bruised or crushed or torn or cut, you shall not offer to the LORD; such you shall not do within your land, <sup>25</sup> nor shall you accept any such animals from a foreigner to offer as food to your God; since they are mutilated, with a blemish in them, they shall not be accepted in your behalf.

<sup>26</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>27</sup> When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it

shall remain seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on it shall be acceptable as the LORD's offering by fire. <sup>28</sup> But you shall not slaughter, from the herd or the flock, an animal with its young on the same day.

<sup>29</sup> When you sacrifice a thanksgiving offering to the LORD, you shall sacrifice it so that it may be acceptable in your behalf. <sup>30</sup> It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall not leave any of it until morning: I am the LORD.

<sup>31</sup> Thus you shall keep my commandments and observe them: I am the LORD. <sup>32</sup> You shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel: I am the LORD; I sanctify you, <sup>33</sup> I who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD.

### *Appointed Festivals*

**23** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: These are the appointed festivals of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy

convocations, my appointed festivals.

### *The Sabbath, Passover, and Unleavened Bread*

*(Num 28:16–25)*

<sup>3</sup> Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation; you shall do no work: it is a sabbath to the LORD throughout your settlements.

<sup>4</sup> These are the appointed festivals of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall celebrate at the time appointed for them. <sup>5</sup> In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, there shall be a passover offering to the LORD, <sup>6</sup> and on the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of unleavened bread to the LORD; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup> On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations.

<sup>8</sup> For seven days you shall present the LORD's offerings by fire; on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation: you shall not work at your occupations.



### *The Offering of First Fruits*

<sup>9</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses:  
<sup>10</sup>Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. <sup>11</sup>He shall raise the sheaf before the LORD, that you may find acceptance; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall raise it. <sup>12</sup>On the day when you raise the sheaf, you shall offer a lamb a year old, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD.  
<sup>13</sup>And the grain offering with it shall be two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD; and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. <sup>14</sup>You shall eat no bread or parched grain or fresh ears until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements.

*The Festival of Weeks*  
(Ex 34:22; Num 28:26–31;  
Deut 16:9–10)

<sup>15</sup>And from the day after the sabbath, from the day on which you bring the sheaf of the elevation offering, you shall count off seven weeks; they shall be complete. <sup>16</sup>You shall count until the day after the seventh sabbath, fifty days; then you shall present an offering of new grain to the LORD. <sup>17</sup>You shall bring from your settlements two loaves of bread as an elevation offering, each made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of choice flour, baked with leaven, as first fruits to the LORD. <sup>18</sup>You shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, one young bull, and two rams; they shall be a burnt offering to the LORD, along with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.  
<sup>19</sup>You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a sacrifice of well-being. <sup>20</sup>The priest shall raise them with the bread of the first fruits as an elevation offering before the LORD, together with the two lambs; they shall be holy to

the LORD for the priest. <sup>21</sup> On that same day you shall make proclamation; you shall hold a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a statute forever in all your settlements throughout your generations.

**Mark 9:38-50 (NRSV)**

*Another Exorcist*

(Mt 10:40–42; Lk 9:49–50)

<sup>38</sup> John said to him,

“Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” <sup>39</sup> But Jesus said,

“Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.

<sup>40</sup> Whoever is not against us is for us. <sup>41</sup> For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

*Temptations to Sin*

(Mt 18:6–9; Lk 17:1–2)

<sup>42</sup> “If any of you put a

stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were

hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea.

<sup>43</sup> If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the

unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. <sup>47</sup> And if your

eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup> where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

<sup>49</sup> “For everyone will be salted with fire. <sup>50</sup> Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

**Psalms 44:4-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> You are my King and my God;  
you command victories for Jacob.

<sup>5</sup> Through you we push down our foes;

through your name we  
tread down our  
assailants.

6 For not in my bow do I  
trust,  
nor can my sword save  
me.

7 But you have saved us  
from our foes,  
and have put to  
confusion those who  
hate us.

8 In God we have boasted  
continually,  
and we will give thanks  
to your name forever.  
*Selah*

### **Proverbs 14:9–10 (NRSV)**

9 Fools mock at the guilt  
offering,  
but the upright enjoy  
God's favor.

10 The heart knows its own  
bitterness, and no  
stranger shares its joy.

## **April 29**



### **Leviticus 23:22–44 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> When you reap the  
harvest of your land, you shall  
not reap to the very edges of  
your field, or gather the  
gleanings of your harvest; you  
shall leave them for the poor  
and for the alien: I am the  
LORD your God.

### *The Festival of Trumpets* (Num 29:1–6)

<sup>23</sup> The LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying: <sup>24</sup> Speak to the  
people of Israel, saying: In the  
seventh month, on the first  
day of the month, you shall  
observe a day of complete  
rest, a holy convocation  
commemorated with trumpet  
blasts. <sup>25</sup> You shall not work at  
your occupations; and you  
shall present the LORD's  
offering by fire.

### *The Day of Atonement* (Num 29:7–11)

<sup>26</sup> The LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying: <sup>27</sup> Now, the  
tenth day of this seventh  
month is the day of  
atonement; it shall be a holy  
convocation for you: you shall  
deny yourselves and present  
the LORD's offering by fire;  
<sup>28</sup> and you shall do no work  
during that entire day; for it is

a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God.<sup>29</sup> For anyone who does not practice self-denial during that entire day shall be cut off from the people.<sup>30</sup> And anyone who does any work during that entire day, such a one I will destroy from the midst of the people.<sup>31</sup> You shall do no work: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements.<sup>32</sup> It shall be to you a sabbath of complete rest, and you shall deny yourselves; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening you shall keep your sabbath.

*The Festival of Booths*  
(Num 29:12–40; Deut 16:13–17)

<sup>33</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>34</sup> Speak to the people of Israel, saying: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month, and lasting seven days, there shall be the festival of booths to the LORD.<sup>35</sup> The first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations.<sup>36</sup> Seven days you shall present the LORD's offerings by fire; on the eighth day you shall

observe a holy convocation and present the LORD's offerings by fire; it is a solemn assembly; you shall not work at your occupations.

<sup>37</sup> These are the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you shall celebrate as times of holy convocation, for presenting to the LORD offerings by fire—burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its proper day—<sup>38</sup> apart from the sabbaths of the LORD, and apart from your gifts, and apart from all your votive offerings, and apart from all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.

<sup>39</sup> Now, the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall keep the festival of the LORD, lasting seven days; a complete rest on the first day, and a complete rest on the eighth day.<sup>40</sup> On the first day you shall take the fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.

<sup>41</sup> You shall keep it as a festival to the LORD seven days in the year; you shall keep it in the seventh month as a statute forever throughout your generations. <sup>42</sup> You shall live in booths for seven days; all that are citizens in Israel shall live in booths, <sup>43</sup> so that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

<sup>44</sup> Thus Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed festivals of the LORD.

### **Mark 10:1-12** (NRSV)

*Teaching about Divorce*  
(Mt 19:1-9)

<sup>1</sup> He left that place and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan. And crowds again gathered around him; and, as was his custom, he again taught them.

<sup>2</sup> Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" <sup>3</sup> He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" <sup>4</sup> They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal

and to divorce her." <sup>5</sup> But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you.

<sup>6</sup> But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' <sup>7</sup> 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, <sup>8</sup> and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. <sup>9</sup> Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

<sup>10</sup> Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. <sup>11</sup> He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; <sup>12</sup> and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

### **Psalms 44:9-22** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Yet you have rejected us and abased us, and have not gone out with our armies.

<sup>10</sup> You made us turn back from the foe, and our enemies have gotten spoil.

11 You have made us like  
sheep for slaughter,  
and have scattered us  
among the nations.  
12 You have sold your people  
for a trifle,  
demanding no high price  
for them.  
13 You have made us the  
taunt of our neighbors,  
the derision and scorn of  
those around us.  
14 You have made us a  
byword among the  
nations,  
a laughingstock among  
the peoples.  
15 All day long my disgrace is  
before me,  
and shame has covered  
my face  
16 at the words of the  
taunters and revilers,  
at the sight of the enemy  
and the avenger.  
17 All this has come upon us,  
yet we have not  
forgotten you,  
or been false to your  
covenant.  
18 Our heart has not turned  
back,  
nor have our steps  
departed from your  
way,

19 yet you have broken us in  
the haunt of jackals,  
and covered us with  
deep darkness.  
20 If we had forgotten the  
name of our God,  
or spread out our hands  
to a strange god,  
21 would not God discover  
this?  
For he knows the secrets  
of the heart.  
22 Because of you we are  
being killed all day  
long,  
and accounted as sheep  
for the slaughter.

**Proverbs 14:11–12 (NRSV)**

11 The house of the wicked is  
destroyed,  
but the tent of the  
upright flourishes.  
12 There is a way that seems  
right to a person,  
but its end is the way to  
death.

April 30



**Leviticus 24:1–25:13** (NRSV)

*The Lamp*

(Ex 27:20–21)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil of beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly. <sup>3</sup> Aaron shall set it up in the tent of meeting, outside the curtain of the covenant, to burn from evening to morning before the LORD regularly; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. <sup>4</sup> He shall set up the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold before the LORD regularly.

*The Bread for the Tabernacle*

<sup>5</sup> You shall take choice flour, and bake twelve loaves of it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. <sup>6</sup> You shall place them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold. <sup>7</sup> You shall put pure frankincense with each row, to be a token offering for the bread, as an offering by fire to

the LORD. <sup>8</sup> Every sabbath day Aaron shall set them in order before the LORD regularly as a commitment of the people of Israel, as a covenant forever. <sup>9</sup> They shall be for Aaron and his descendants, who shall eat them in a holy place, for they are most holy portions for him from the offerings by fire to the LORD, a perpetual due.

*Blasphemy and Its Punishment*

<sup>10</sup> A man whose mother was an Israelite and whose father was an Egyptian came out among the people of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a certain Israelite began fighting in the camp. <sup>11</sup> The Israelite woman's son blasphemed the Name in a curse. And they brought him to Moses—now his mother's name was Shelomith, daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan— <sup>12</sup> and they put him in custody, until the decision of the LORD should be made clear to them.

<sup>13</sup> The LORD said to Moses, saying: <sup>14</sup> Take the blasphemer outside the camp; and let all who were within hearing lay their hands on his head, and

let the whole congregation stone him. <sup>15</sup> And speak to the people of Israel, saying: Anyone who curses God shall bear the sin. <sup>16</sup> One who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall be put to death; the whole congregation shall stone the blasphemer. Aliens as well as citizens, when they blaspheme the Name, shall be put to death. <sup>17</sup> Anyone who kills a human being shall be put to death. <sup>18</sup> Anyone who kills an animal shall make restitution for it, life for life. <sup>19</sup> Anyone who maims another shall suffer the same injury in return: <sup>20</sup> fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; the injury inflicted is the injury to be suffered. <sup>21</sup> One who kills an animal shall make restitution for it; but one who kills a human being shall be put to death. <sup>22</sup> You shall have one law for the alien and for the citizen: for I am the LORD your God. <sup>23</sup> Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel; and they took the blasphemer outside the camp, and stoned him to death. The people of Israel did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

*The Sabbatical Year*  
(Deut 15:1–11)

**25** The LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a sabbath for the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; <sup>4</sup> but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the LORD: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. <sup>5</sup> You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. <sup>6</sup> You may eat what the land yields during its sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound laborers who live with you; <sup>7</sup> for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.

*The Year of Jubilee*

<sup>8</sup> You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times



seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years.<sup>9</sup> Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land.<sup>10</sup> And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family.<sup>11</sup> That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines.<sup>12</sup> For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces.

<sup>13</sup> In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property.

**Mark 10:13-16** (NRSV)

*Jesus Blesses Little Children*  
(Mt 19:13-15; Lk 18:15-17)

<sup>13</sup> People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to

them.<sup>14</sup> But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “**Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.**”<sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, **whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.**”<sup>16</sup> And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

**Psalm 44:23-26** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord?  
Awake, do not cast us off forever!

<sup>24</sup> Why do you hide your face?  
Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

<sup>25</sup> For we sink down to the dust;  
our bodies cling to the ground.

<sup>26</sup> Rise up, come to our help.  
Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love.

**Proverbs 14:13-14** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Even in laughter the heart is sad,

and the end of joy is grief.

<sup>14</sup> The perverse get what their ways deserve, and the good, what their deeds deserve.

## May 1



### Leviticus 25:14-46 (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> When you [the people of Israel] make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not cheat one another. <sup>15</sup> When you buy from your neighbor, you shall pay only for the number of years since the jubilee; the seller shall charge you only for the remaining crop years. <sup>16</sup> If the years are more, you shall increase the price, and if the years are fewer, you shall diminish the price; for it is a certain number of harvests that are being sold to you. <sup>17</sup> You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear

your God; for I am the LORD your God.

<sup>18</sup> You shall observe my statutes and faithfully keep my ordinances, so that you may live on the land securely.

<sup>19</sup> The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live on it securely. <sup>20</sup> Should you ask, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?" <sup>21</sup> I will order my blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it will yield a crop for three years. <sup>22</sup> When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating from the old crop; until the ninth year, when its produce comes in, you shall eat the old. <sup>23</sup> The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants.

<sup>24</sup> Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land.

<sup>25</sup> If anyone of your kin falls into difficulty and sells a piece of property, then the next of kin shall come and redeem what the relative has sold. <sup>26</sup> If the person has no one to redeem it, but then prospers

and finds sufficient means to do so,<sup>27</sup> the years since its sale shall be computed and the difference shall be refunded to the person to whom it was sold, and the property shall be returned.<sup>28</sup> But if there are not sufficient means to recover it, what was sold shall remain with the purchaser until the year of jubilee; in the jubilee it shall be released, and the property shall be returned.

<sup>29</sup> If anyone sells a dwelling house in a walled city, it may be redeemed until a year has elapsed since its sale; the right of redemption shall be one year.<sup>30</sup> If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, a house that is in a walled city shall pass in perpetuity to the purchaser, throughout the generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee.<sup>31</sup> But houses in villages that have no walls around them shall be classed as open country; they may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the jubilee.

<sup>32</sup> As for the cities of the Levites, the Levites shall forever have the right of redemption of the houses in the cities belonging to them.

<sup>33</sup> Such property as may be redeemed from the Levites—houses sold in a city belonging to them—shall be released in the jubilee; because the houses in the cities of the Levites are their possession among the people of Israel.

<sup>34</sup> But the open land around their cities may not be sold; for that is their possession for all time.

<sup>35</sup> If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you, you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens.<sup>36</sup> Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them, but fear your God; let them live with you.<sup>37</sup> You shall not lend them your money at interest taken in advance, or provide them food at a profit.<sup>38</sup> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God.

<sup>39</sup> If any who are dependent on you become so impoverished that they sell themselves to you, you shall not make them serve as slaves.<sup>40</sup> They shall remain

with you as hired or bound laborers. They shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee. <sup>41</sup> Then they and their children with them shall be free from your authority; they shall go back to their own family and return to their ancestral property. <sup>42</sup> For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves are sold. <sup>43</sup> You shall not rule over them with harshness, but shall fear your God. <sup>44</sup> As for the male and female slaves whom you may have, it is from the nations around you that you may acquire male and female slaves. <sup>45</sup> You may also acquire them from among the aliens residing with you, and from their families that are with you, who have been born in your land; and they may be your property. <sup>46</sup> You may keep them as a possession for your children after you, for them to inherit as property. These you may treat as slaves, but as for your fellow Israelites, no one shall rule over the other with harshness.

**Mark 10:17-31 (NRSV)**

*The Rich Man*

(Mt 19:16-30; Lk 18:18-30)

<sup>17</sup> As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>18</sup> Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.' " <sup>20</sup> He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." <sup>21</sup> Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." <sup>22</sup> When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

<sup>24</sup> And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>26</sup> They were greatly astounded and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” <sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.”

<sup>28</sup> Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.”

<sup>29</sup> Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, <sup>30</sup> who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

## Psalm 45:1-6 (NRSV)

### *Ode for a Royal Wedding*

To the leader: according to Lilies. Of the Korahites. A Maskil. A love song.

- <sup>1</sup> My heart overflows with a goodly theme;  
I address my verses to the king;  
my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.
- <sup>2</sup> You are the most handsome of men;  
grace is poured upon your lips;  
therefore God has blessed you forever.
- <sup>3</sup> Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your glory and majesty.
- <sup>4</sup> In your majesty ride on victoriously for the cause of truth and to defend the right;  
let your right hand teach you dread deeds.
- <sup>5</sup> Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies;  
the peoples fall under you.
- <sup>6</sup> Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever.



Your royal scepter is a  
scepter of equity;

**Proverbs 14:15–16** (NRSV)

- <sup>15</sup> The simple believe  
everything,  
but the clever consider  
their steps.
- <sup>16</sup> The wise are cautious and  
turn away from evil,  
but the fool throws off  
restraint and is  
careless.

## May 2



**Leviticus 25:47–26:13** (NRSV)

<sup>47</sup> If resident aliens among  
you prosper, and if any of your  
kin fall into difficulty with one  
of them and sell themselves to  
an alien, or to a branch of the  
alien's family, <sup>48</sup> after they  
have sold themselves they  
shall have the right of  
redemption; one of their  
brothers may redeem them,  
<sup>49</sup> or their uncle or their

uncle's son may redeem them,  
or anyone of their family who  
is of their own flesh may  
redeem them; or if they  
prosper they may redeem  
themselves. <sup>50</sup> They shall  
compute with the purchaser  
the total from the year when  
they sold themselves to the  
alien until the jubilee year; the  
price of the sale shall be  
applied to the number of  
years: the time they were with  
the owner shall be rated as  
the time of a hired laborer.  
<sup>51</sup> If many years remain, they  
shall pay for their redemption  
in proportion to the purchase  
price; <sup>52</sup> and if few years  
remain until the jubilee year,  
they shall compute thus:  
according to the years  
involved they shall make  
payment for their redemption.  
<sup>53</sup> As a laborer hired by the  
year they shall be under the  
alien's authority, who shall  
not, however, rule with  
harshness over them in your  
sight. <sup>54</sup> And if they have not  
been redeemed in any of  
these ways, they and their  
children with them shall go  
free in the jubilee year. <sup>55</sup> For  
to me the people of Israel are

servants; they are my servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

*Rewards for Obedience  
(Deut 7:12–24; 28:1–14)*

**26** You shall make for yourselves no idols and erect no carved images or pillars, and you shall not place figured stones in your land, to worship at them; for I am the LORD your God. <sup>2</sup>You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>If you follow my statutes and keep my commandments and observe them faithfully, <sup>4</sup>I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. <sup>5</sup>Your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and the vintage shall overtake the sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and live securely in your land. <sup>6</sup>And I will grant peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and no one shall make you afraid; I will remove dangerous animals from the land, and no sword shall go through your

land. <sup>7</sup>You shall give chase to your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

<sup>8</sup>Five of you shall give chase to a hundred, and a hundred of you shall give chase to ten thousand; your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

<sup>9</sup>I will look with favor upon you and make you fruitful and multiply you; and I will maintain my covenant with you. <sup>10</sup>You shall eat old grain long stored, and you shall have to clear out the old to make way for the new. <sup>11</sup>I will place my dwelling in your midst, and I shall not abhor you. <sup>12</sup>And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people. <sup>13</sup>I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be their slaves no more; I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.

**Mark 10:32-45 (NRSV)**

*A Third Time Jesus Foretells His  
Death and Resurrection  
(Mt 20:17–19; Lk 18:31–34)*

<sup>32</sup>They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and

those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, <sup>33</sup> saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; <sup>34</sup> they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.”

*The Request of James and John*  
(Mt 20:20–28)

<sup>35</sup> James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” <sup>36</sup> And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” <sup>37</sup> And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” <sup>38</sup> But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” <sup>39</sup> They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to

them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

<sup>41</sup> When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. <sup>42</sup> So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them.

<sup>43</sup> But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

**Psalm 45:7-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> you love righteousness  
and hate wickedness.  
Therefore God, your God,  
has anointed you



with the oil of gladness  
beyond your  
companions;  
8 your robes are all  
fragrant with myrrh  
and aloes and cassia.  
From ivory palaces  
stringed instruments  
make you glad;  
9 daughters of kings are  
among your ladies of  
honor;  
at your right hand stands  
the queen in gold of  
Ophir.  
10 Hear, O daughter, consider  
and incline your ear;  
forget your people and  
your father's house,  
11 and the king will desire  
your beauty.  
Since he is your lord, bow  
to him;  
12 the people of Tyre will  
seek your favor with  
gifts,  
the richest of the people  
13 with all kinds of  
wealth.  
The princess is decked in  
her chamber with gold-  
woven robes;  
14 in many-colored robes  
she is led to the king;

behind her the virgins,  
her companions,  
follow.  
15 With joy and gladness they  
are led along  
as they enter the palace  
of the king.  
16 In the place of ancestors  
you, O king, shall have  
sons;  
you will make them  
princes in all the earth.  
17 I will cause your name to  
be celebrated in all  
generations;  
therefore the peoples  
will praise you forever  
and ever.

**Proverbs 14:17–19 (NRSV)**

17 One who is quick-  
tempered acts  
foolishly,  
and the schemer is  
hated.  
18 The simple are adorned  
with folly,  
but the clever are  
crowned with  
knowledge.  
19 The evil bow down before  
the good, the wicked at  
the gates of the  
righteous.

## May 3



### Leviticus 26:14-46 (NRSV)

#### *Penalties for Disobedience* (Deut 28:15–68)

<sup>14</sup> But if you will not obey me, and do not observe all these commandments, <sup>15</sup> if you spurn my statutes, and abhor my ordinances, so that you will not observe all my commandments, and you break my covenant, <sup>16</sup> I in turn will do this to you: I will bring terror on you; consumption and fever that waste the eyes and cause life to pine away. You shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. <sup>17</sup> I will set my face against you, and you shall be struck down by your enemies; your foes shall rule over you, and you shall flee though no one pursues you. <sup>18</sup> And if in spite of this you will not obey me, I will continue to punish you sevenfold for your sins. <sup>19</sup> I will break your proud glory, and I will make your sky like iron and your earth like copper. <sup>20</sup> Your strength shall be spent to no purpose: your

land shall not yield its produce, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.

<sup>21</sup> If you continue hostile to me, and will not obey me, I will continue to plague you sevenfold for your sins. <sup>22</sup> I will let loose wild animals against you, and they shall bereave you of your children and destroy your livestock; they shall make you few in number, and your roads shall be deserted.

<sup>23</sup> If in spite of these punishments you have not turned back to me, but continue hostile to me, <sup>24</sup> then I too will continue hostile to you: I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins. <sup>25</sup> I will bring the sword against you, executing vengeance for the covenant; and if you withdraw within your cities, I will send pestilence among you, and you shall be delivered into enemy hands. <sup>26</sup> When I break your staff of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in a single oven, and they shall dole out your bread by weight; and though you eat, you shall not be satisfied.

<sup>27</sup> But if, despite this, you disobey me, and continue hostile to me, <sup>28</sup> I will continue hostile to you in fury; I in turn will punish you myself sevenfold for your sins. <sup>29</sup> You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. <sup>30</sup> I will destroy your high places and cut down your incense altars; I will heap your carcasses on the carcasses of your idols. I will abhor you. <sup>31</sup> I will lay your cities waste, will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing odors. <sup>32</sup> I will devastate the land, so that your enemies who come to settle in it shall be appalled at it. <sup>33</sup> And you I will scatter among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword against you; your land shall be a desolation, and your cities a waste.

<sup>34</sup> Then the land shall enjoy its sabbath years as long as it lies desolate, while you are in the land of your enemies; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its sabbath years. <sup>35</sup> As long as it lies desolate, it shall have the rest it did not have on your sabbaths when you were

living on it. <sup>36</sup> And as for those of you who survive, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall though no one pursues.

<sup>37</sup> They shall stumble over one another, as if to escape a sword, though no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand against your enemies. <sup>38</sup> You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall devour you. <sup>39</sup> And those of you who survive shall languish in the land of your enemies because of their iniquities; also they shall languish because of the iniquities of their ancestors.

<sup>40</sup> But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their ancestors, in that they committed treachery against me and, moreover, that they continued hostile to me— <sup>41</sup> so that I, in turn, continued hostile to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is

humbled and they make amends for their iniquity,<sup>42</sup> then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land.<sup>43</sup> For the land shall be deserted by them, and enjoy its sabbath years by lying desolate without them, while they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they dared to spurn my ordinances, and they abhorred my statutes.<sup>44</sup> Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, or abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God;<sup>45</sup> but I will remember in their favor the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, to be their God: I am the LORD.

<sup>46</sup> These are the statutes and ordinances and laws that the LORD established between himself and the people of Israel on Mount Sinai through Moses.

**Mark 10:46-52 (NRSV)**

*The Healing of Blind  
Bartimaeus*

(Mt 20:29–34; Lk 18:35–43)

<sup>46</sup> They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside.<sup>47</sup> When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”<sup>48</sup> Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”<sup>49</sup> Jesus stood still and said, “**Call him here.**” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.”<sup>50</sup> So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.<sup>51</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “**What do you want me to do for you?**” The blind man said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.”<sup>52</sup> Jesus said to him, “**Go; your faith has made you well.**” Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

**Psalms 46:1-7 (NRSV)**  
*God's Defense of His City and  
People*

To the leader. Of the Korahites.  
According to Alamo. A Song.

- 1 **God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.**
- 2 Therefore we will not fear,  
though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of  
the sea;
- 3 though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its  
tumult. *Selah*
- 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the  
city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.
- 5 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be  
moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.
- 6 The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms  
totter;  
he utters his voice, the earth melts.

- 7 The LORD of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

**Proverbs 14:20-21 (NRSV)**

- 20 The poor are disliked even by their neighbors,  
but the rich have many friends.
- 21 Those who despise their neighbors are sinners,  
but happy are those who are kind to the poor.

**May 4**



**Leviticus 27:1-34 (NRSV)**

*Votive Offerings*

- 1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When a person makes an explicit vow to the LORD concerning the equivalent for a human being, 3 the equivalent for a male shall be: from twenty to sixty years of

age the equivalent shall be fifty shekels of silver by the sanctuary shekel. <sup>4</sup> If the person is a female, the equivalent is thirty shekels. <sup>5</sup> If the age is from five to twenty years of age, the equivalent is twenty shekels for a male and ten shekels for a female. <sup>6</sup> If the age is from one month to five years, the equivalent for a male is five shekels of silver, and for a female the equivalent is three shekels of silver. <sup>7</sup> And if the person is sixty years old or over, then the equivalent for a male is fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels. <sup>8</sup> If any cannot afford the equivalent, they shall be brought before the priest and the priest shall assess them; the priest shall assess them according to what each one making a vow can afford.

<sup>9</sup> If it concerns an animal that may be brought as an offering to the LORD, any such that may be given to the LORD shall be holy. <sup>10</sup> Another shall not be exchanged or substituted for it, either good for bad or bad for good; and if one animal is substituted for

another, both that one and its substitute shall be holy. <sup>11</sup> If it concerns any unclean animal that may not be brought as an offering to the LORD, the animal shall be presented before the priest. <sup>12</sup> The priest shall assess it: whether good or bad, according to the assessment of the priest, so it shall be. <sup>13</sup> But if it is to be redeemed, one-fifth must be added to the assessment.

<sup>14</sup> If a person consecrates a house to the LORD, the priest shall assess it: whether good or bad, as the priest assesses it, so it shall stand. <sup>15</sup> And if the one who consecrates the house wishes to redeem it, one-fifth shall be added to its assessed value, and it shall revert to the original owner.

<sup>16</sup> If a person consecrates to the LORD any inherited landholding, its assessment shall be in accordance with its seed requirements: fifty shekels of silver to a homer of barley seed. <sup>17</sup> If the person consecrates the field as of the year of jubilee, that assessment shall stand; <sup>18</sup> but if the field is consecrated after the jubilee, the priest shall

compute the price for it according to the years that remain until the year of jubilee, and the assessment shall be reduced.<sup>19</sup> And if the one who consecrates the field wishes to redeem it, then one-fifth shall be added to its assessed value, and it shall revert to the original owner;<sup>20</sup> but if the field is not redeemed, or if it has been sold to someone else, it shall no longer be redeemable.

<sup>21</sup> But when the field is released in the jubilee, it shall be holy to the LORD as a devoted field; it becomes the priest's holding.<sup>22</sup> If someone consecrates to the LORD a field that has been purchased, which is not a part of the inherited landholding,<sup>23</sup> the priest shall compute for it the proportionate assessment up to the year of jubilee, and the assessment shall be paid as of that day, a sacred donation to the LORD.<sup>24</sup> In the year of jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom it was bought, whose holding the land is.<sup>25</sup> All assessments shall be by the sanctuary shekel:

twenty gerahs shall make a shekel.

<sup>26</sup> A firstling of animals, however, which as a firstling belongs to the LORD, cannot be consecrated by anyone; whether ox or sheep, it is the LORD's.<sup>27</sup> If it is an unclean animal, it shall be ransomed at its assessment, with one-fifth added; if it is not redeemed, it shall be sold at its assessment.

<sup>28</sup> Nothing that a person owns that has been devoted to destruction for the LORD, be it human or animal, or inherited landholding, may be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to the LORD.<sup>29</sup> No human beings who have been devoted to destruction can be ransomed; they shall be put to death.

<sup>30</sup> All tithes from the land, whether the seed from the ground or the fruit from the tree, are the LORD's; they are holy to the LORD.<sup>31</sup> If persons wish to redeem any of their tithes, they must add one-fifth to them.<sup>32</sup> All tithes of herd and flock, every tenth one that passes under the shepherd's staff, shall be holy to the LORD.

<sup>33</sup> Let no one inquire whether

it is good or bad, or make substitution for it; if one makes substitution for it, then both it and the substitute shall be holy and cannot be redeemed.

<sup>34</sup>These are the commandments that the LORD gave to Moses for the people of Israel on Mount Sinai.

**Mark 11:1-11** (NRSV)

*Jesus' Triumphal  
Entry into Jerusalem  
(Mt 21:1-11; Lk 19:28-40  
Jn 12:12-19)*

<sup>1</sup>When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples <sup>2</sup>and said to them, **“Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it.”** <sup>3</sup>If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’ ”

<sup>4</sup>They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, <sup>5</sup>some of the bystanders said to them,

“What are you doing, untying the colt?” <sup>6</sup>They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. <sup>7</sup>Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup>Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup>Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

<sup>10</sup>Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

<sup>11</sup>Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

**Psalms 46:8-11** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup>Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.



<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to  
the end of the earth;  
he breaks the bow, and  
shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with  
fire.

<sup>10</sup> “Be still, and know that I  
am God!  
I am exalted among the  
nations,  
I am exalted in the  
earth.”

<sup>11</sup> **The LORD of hosts is with  
us;  
the God of Jacob is our  
refuge.                      Selah**

**Proverbs 14:22–24 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> Do they not err that plan  
evil?

Those who plan good  
find loyalty and  
faithfulness.

<sup>23</sup> In all toil there is profit,  
but mere talk leads only  
to poverty.

<sup>24</sup> The crown of the wise is  
their wisdom,  
but folly is the garland of  
fools.

## May 5



**Numbers 1:1–54 (NRSV)**

*The First Census of Israel*  
(Cp 2 Sam 24:1–9; 1 Chr 21:1–6)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses in  
the wilderness of Sinai, in the  
tent of meeting, on the first  
day of the second month, in  
the second year after they had  
come out of the land of Egypt,  
saying: <sup>2</sup> Take a census of the  
whole congregation of  
Israelites, in their clans, by  
ancestral houses, according to  
the number of names, every  
male individually; <sup>3</sup> from  
twenty years old and upward,  
everyone in Israel able to go to  
war. You and Aaron shall  
enroll them, company by  
company. <sup>4</sup> A man from each  
tribe shall be with you, each  
man the head of his ancestral  
house. <sup>5</sup> These are the names  
of the men who shall assist  
you:

From Reuben, Elizur son of  
Shedeur.

<sup>6</sup> From Simeon, Shelumiel  
son of Zurishaddai.

<sup>7</sup> From Judah, Nahshon son  
of Amminadab.

8 From Issachar, Nethanel  
son of Zuar.

9 From Zebulun, Eliab son of  
Helon.

10 From the sons of Joseph:  
from Ephraim, Elishama  
son of Ammihud;  
from Manasseh, Gamaliel  
son of Pedahzur.

11 From Benjamin, Abidan  
son of Gideoni.

12 From Dan, Ahiezer son of  
Ammishaddai.

13 From Asher, Pagiel son of  
Ochran.

14 From Gad, Eliasaph son of  
Deuel.

15 From Naphtali, Ahira son  
of Enan.

16 These were the ones chosen  
from the congregation, the  
leaders of their ancestral  
tribes, the heads of the  
divisions of Israel.

<sup>17</sup> Moses and Aaron took  
these men who had been  
designated by name, <sup>18</sup> and on  
the first day of the second  
month they assembled the  
whole congregation together.  
They registered themselves in  
their clans, by their ancestral  
houses, according to the  
number of names from twenty  
years old and upward,

individually, <sup>19</sup> as the LORD  
commanded Moses. So he  
enrolled them in the  
wilderness of Sinai.

<sup>20</sup> The descendants of  
Reuben, Israel's firstborn,  
their lineage, in their clans, by  
their ancestral houses,  
according to the number of  
names, individually, every  
male from twenty years old  
and upward, everyone able to  
go to war: <sup>21</sup> those enrolled of  
the tribe of Reuben were  
forty-six thousand five  
hundred.

<sup>22</sup> The descendants of  
Simeon, their lineage, in their  
clans, by their ancestral  
houses, those of them that  
were numbered, according to  
the number of names,  
individually, every male from  
twenty years old and upward,  
everyone able to go to war:  
<sup>23</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of  
Simeon were fifty-nine  
thousand three hundred.

<sup>24</sup> The descendants of Gad,  
their lineage, in their clans, by  
their ancestral houses,  
according to the number of  
the names, from twenty years  
old and upward, everyone  
able to go to war: <sup>25</sup> those

enrolled of the tribe of Gad were forty-five thousand six hundred fifty.

<sup>26</sup> The descendants of Judah, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: <sup>27</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Judah were seventy-four thousand six hundred.

<sup>28</sup> The descendants of Issachar, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: <sup>29</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Issachar were fifty-four thousand four hundred.

<sup>30</sup> The descendants of Zebulun, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: <sup>31</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Zebulun were fifty-seven thousand four hundred.

<sup>32</sup> The descendants of Joseph, namely, the

descendants of Ephraim, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: <sup>33</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Ephraim were forty thousand five hundred.

<sup>34</sup> The descendants of Manasseh, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: <sup>35</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Manasseh were thirty-two thousand two hundred.

<sup>36</sup> The descendants of Benjamin, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: <sup>37</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Benjamin were thirty-five thousand four hundred.

<sup>38</sup> The descendants of Dan, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to

go to war: <sup>39</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Dan were sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

<sup>40</sup> The descendants of Asher, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war:

<sup>41</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Asher were forty-one thousand five hundred.

<sup>42</sup> The descendants of Naphtali, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war:

<sup>43</sup> those enrolled of the tribe of Naphtali were fifty-three thousand four hundred.

<sup>44</sup> These are those who were enrolled, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled with the help of the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each representing his ancestral house. <sup>45</sup> So the whole number of the Israelites, by their ancestral houses, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war in Israel— <sup>46</sup> their whole number was six

hundred three thousand five hundred fifty. <sup>47</sup> The Levites, however, were not numbered by their ancestral tribe along with them.

<sup>48</sup> The LORD had said to Moses: <sup>49</sup> Only the tribe of Levi you shall not enroll, and you shall not take a census of them with the other Israelites.

<sup>50</sup> Rather you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the covenant, and over all its equipment, and over all that belongs to it; they are to carry the tabernacle and all its equipment, and they shall tend it, and shall camp around the tabernacle. <sup>51</sup> When the tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up. And any outsider who comes near shall be put to death. <sup>52</sup> The other Israelites shall camp in their respective regimental camps, by companies; <sup>53</sup> but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the covenant, that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the Israelites; and the Levites shall perform the guard duty of the

tabernacle of the covenant.

<sup>54</sup> The Israelites did so; they did just as the LORD commanded Moses.

**Mark 11:12-25** (NRSV)

*Jesus Curses the Fig Tree*

(Mt 21:18–19)

<sup>12</sup> On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry.

<sup>13</sup> Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. <sup>14</sup> He said to it, **“May no one ever eat fruit from you again.”** And his disciples heard it.

*Jesus Cleanses the Temple*

(Mt 21:12–17; Lk 19:45–48;

Jn 2:13–22)

<sup>15</sup> Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; <sup>16</sup> and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.

<sup>17</sup> He was teaching and saying, **“Is it not written,**

**‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’?**

**But you have made it a den of robbers.”**

<sup>18</sup> And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. <sup>19</sup> And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

*The Lesson from  
the Withered Fig Tree*

(Mt 21:20–22)

<sup>20</sup> In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. <sup>21</sup> Then Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.”

<sup>22</sup> Jesus answered them, **“Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup> Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you.**

<sup>24</sup> **So I tell you, whatever you**

ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

<sup>25</sup> “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.”

**Psalm 47:1-7** (NRSV)

*God’s Rule over the Nations*

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
shout to God with loud songs of joy.
- <sup>2</sup> For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.
- <sup>3</sup> He subdued peoples under us,  
and nations under our feet.
- <sup>4</sup> He chose our heritage for us,  
the pride of Jacob whom he loves. *Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> God has gone up with a shout,  
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
- <sup>6</sup> Sing praises to God, sing praises;

sing praises to our King, sing praises.

- <sup>7</sup> For God is the king of all the earth;  
sing praises with a psalm.

**Proverbs 14:25** (NRSV)

- <sup>25</sup> A truthful witness saves lives, but one who utters lies is a betrayer.

**May 6**



**Numbers 2:1–3:10** (NRSV)

*The Order of Encampment and Marching*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup> The Israelites shall camp each in their respective regiments, under ensigns by their ancestral houses; they shall camp facing the tent of meeting on every side. <sup>3</sup> Those to camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the regimental encampment of Judah by companies. The leader of the people of Judah shall be

Nahshon son of Amminadab,<sup>4</sup> with a company as enrolled of seventy-four thousand six hundred.<sup>5</sup> Those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar. The leader of the Issacharites shall be Nethanel son of Zuar,<sup>6</sup> with a company as enrolled of fifty-four thousand four hundred.<sup>7</sup> Then the tribe of Zebulun: The leader of the Zebulunites shall be Eliab son of Helon,<sup>8</sup> with a company as enrolled of fifty-seven thousand four hundred.<sup>9</sup> The total enrollment of the camp of Judah, by companies, is one hundred eighty-six thousand four hundred. They shall set out first on the march.

<sup>10</sup> On the south side shall be the regimental encampment of Reuben by companies. The leader of the Reubenites shall be Elizur son of Shedeur,<sup>11</sup> with a company as enrolled of forty-six thousand five hundred.<sup>12</sup> And those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon. The leader of the Simeonites shall be Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai,<sup>13</sup> with a company as enrolled of fifty-nine

thousand three hundred.

<sup>14</sup> Then the tribe of Gad: The leader of the Gadites shall be Eliasaph son of Reuel,<sup>15</sup> with a company as enrolled of forty-five thousand six hundred fifty.<sup>16</sup> The total enrollment of the camp of Reuben, by companies, is one hundred fifty-one thousand four hundred fifty. They shall set out second.

<sup>17</sup> The tent of meeting, with the camp of the Levites, shall set out in the center of the camps; they shall set out just as they camp, each in position, by their regiments.

<sup>18</sup> On the west side shall be the regimental encampment of Ephraim by companies. The leader of the people of Ephraim shall be Elishama son of Ammihud,<sup>19</sup> with a company as enrolled of forty thousand five hundred.<sup>20</sup> Next to him shall be the tribe of Manasseh. The leader of the people of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel son of Pedahzur,<sup>21</sup> with a company as enrolled of thirty-two thousand two hundred.<sup>22</sup> Then the tribe of Benjamin: The leader of the Benjaminites shall be Abidan

son of Gideoni, <sup>23</sup> with a company as enrolled of thirty-five thousand four hundred.

<sup>24</sup> The total enrollment of the camp of Ephraim, by companies, is one hundred eight thousand one hundred. They shall set out third on the march.

<sup>25</sup> On the north side shall be the regimental encampment of Dan by companies. The leader of the Danites shall be Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, <sup>26</sup> with a company as enrolled of sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

<sup>27</sup> Those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Asher. The leader of the Asherites shall be Pagiel son of Ocran, <sup>28</sup> with a company as enrolled of forty-one thousand five hundred.

<sup>29</sup> Then the tribe of Naphtali: The leader of the Naphtalites shall be Ahira son of Enan, <sup>30</sup> with a company as enrolled of fifty-three thousand four hundred. <sup>31</sup> The total enrollment of the camp of Dan is one hundred fifty-seven thousand six hundred. They shall set out last, by companies.

<sup>32</sup> This was the enrollment of the Israelites by their ancestral houses; the total enrollment in the camps by their companies was six hundred three thousand five hundred fifty. <sup>33</sup> Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, the Levites were not enrolled among the other Israelites.

<sup>34</sup> The Israelites did just as the LORD had commanded Moses: They camped by regiments, and they set out the same way, everyone by clans, according to ancestral houses.

### *The Sons of Aaron* (Lev 10:1-7)

**3** This is the lineage of Aaron and Moses at the time when the LORD spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar; <sup>3</sup> these are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whom he ordained to minister as priests. <sup>4</sup> Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD when they offered unholy fire before the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai, and



they had no children. Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests in the lifetime of their father Aaron.

*The Duties of the Levites*

<sup>5</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>6</sup> Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, so that they may assist him.

<sup>7</sup> They shall perform duties for him and for the whole congregation in front of the tent of meeting, doing service at the tabernacle; <sup>8</sup> they shall be in charge of all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and attend to the duties for the Israelites as they do service at the tabernacle.

<sup>9</sup> You shall give the Levites to Aaron and his descendants; they are unreservedly given to him from among the Israelites.

<sup>10</sup> But you shall make a register of Aaron and his descendants; it is they who shall attend to the priesthood, and any outsider who comes near shall be put to death.

**Mark 11:27-33** (NRSV)

*Jesus' Authority Is Questioned*  
(Mt 21:23-27; Lk 20:1-8)

<sup>27</sup> Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him <sup>28</sup> and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things." <sup>30</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me." <sup>31</sup> They argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' <sup>32</sup> But shall we say, 'Of human origin'?"—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. <sup>33</sup> So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

**Psalm 47:8-9** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> God is king over the nations;  
God sits on his holy throne.

9 The princes of the peoples  
gather  
as the people of the God  
of Abraham.  
For the shields of the earth  
belong to God;  
he is highly exalted.

**Proverbs 14:26–27** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> In the fear of the LORD one  
has strong confidence,  
and one's children will  
have a refuge.

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the LORD is a  
fountain of life,  
so that one may avoid  
the snares of death.

**May 7**



**Numbers 3:11-51** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Then the LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying: <sup>12</sup> I hereby  
accept the Levites from among  
the Israelites as substitutes for  
all the firstborn that open the  
womb among the Israelites.  
The Levites shall be mine,

<sup>13</sup> for all the firstborn are  
mine; when I killed all the  
firstborn in the land of Egypt, I  
consecrated for my own all the  
firstborn in Israel, both human  
and animal; they shall be  
mine. I am the LORD.

*A Census of the Levites*  
(Cp Num 1:47–54)

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD spoke to  
Moses in the wilderness of  
Sinai, saying: <sup>15</sup> Enroll the  
Levites by ancestral houses  
and by clans. You shall enroll  
every male from a month old  
and upward. <sup>16</sup> So Moses  
enrolled them according to  
the word of the LORD, as he  
was commanded. <sup>17</sup> The  
following were the sons of  
Levi, by their names: Gershon,  
Kohath, and Merari. <sup>18</sup> These  
are the names of the sons of  
Gershon by their clans: Libni  
and Shimei. <sup>19</sup> The sons of  
Kohath by their clans: Amram,  
Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.  
<sup>20</sup> The sons of Merari by their  
clans: Mahli and Mushi. These  
are the clans of the Levites, by  
their ancestral houses.  
<sup>21</sup> To Gershon belonged  
the clan of the Libnites and  
the clan of the Shimeites;  
these were the clans of the

Gershonites. <sup>22</sup> Their enrollment, counting all the males from a month old and upward, was seven thousand five hundred. <sup>23</sup> The clans of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle on the west, <sup>24</sup> with Eliasaph son of Lael as head of the ancestral house of the Gershonites.

<sup>25</sup> The responsibility of the sons of Gershon in the tent of meeting was to be the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting, <sup>26</sup> the hangings of the court, the screen for the entrance of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and its cords—all the service pertaining to these.

<sup>27</sup> To Kohath belonged the clan of the Amramites, the clan of the Izharites, the clan of the Hebronites, and the clan of the Uzzielites; these are the clans of the Kohathites. <sup>28</sup> Counting all the males, from a month old and upward, there were eight thousand six hundred, attending to the duties of the sanctuary. <sup>29</sup> The clans of the Kohathites were to camp on

the south side of the tabernacle, <sup>30</sup> with Elizaphan son of Uzziel as head of the ancestral house of the clans of the Kohathites. <sup>31</sup> Their responsibility was to be the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with which the priests minister, and the screen—all the service pertaining to these. <sup>32</sup> Eleazar son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the leaders of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who had charge of the sanctuary.

<sup>33</sup> To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites: these are the clans of Merari. <sup>34</sup> Their enrollment, counting all the males from a month old and upward, was six thousand two hundred. <sup>35</sup> The head of the ancestral house of the clans of Merari was Zuriel son of Abihail; they were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. <sup>36</sup> The responsibility assigned to the sons of Merari was to be the frames of the tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all their accessories—all the

service pertaining to these;  
<sup>37</sup> also the pillars of the court  
all around, with their bases  
and pegs and cords.

<sup>38</sup> Those who were to camp  
in front of the tabernacle on  
the east—in front of the tent  
of meeting toward the east—  
were Moses and Aaron and  
Aaron's sons, having charge of  
the rites within the sanctuary,  
whatever had to be done for  
the Israelites; and any outsider  
who came near was to be put  
to death. <sup>39</sup> The total  
enrollment of the Levites  
whom Moses and Aaron  
enrolled at the commandment  
of the LORD, by their clans, all  
the males from a month old  
and upward, was twenty-two  
thousand.

### *The Redemption of the Firstborn*

<sup>40</sup> Then the LORD said to  
Moses: Enroll all the firstborn  
males of the Israelites, from a  
month old and upward, and  
count their names. <sup>41</sup> But you  
shall accept the Levites for  
me—I am the LORD—as  
substitutes for all the firstborn  
among the Israelites, and the  
livestock of the Levites as

substitutes for all the firstborn  
among the livestock of the  
Israelites. <sup>42</sup> So Moses enrolled  
all the firstborn among the  
Israelites, as the LORD  
commanded him. <sup>43</sup> The total  
enrollment, all the firstborn  
males from a month old and  
upward, counting the number  
of names, was twenty-two  
thousand two hundred  
seventy-three.

<sup>44</sup> Then the LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying: <sup>45</sup> Accept the  
Levites as substitutes for all  
the firstborn among the  
Israelites, and the livestock of  
the Levites as substitutes for  
their livestock; and the Levites  
shall be mine. I am the LORD.

<sup>46</sup> As the price of redemption  
of the two hundred seventy-  
three of the firstborn of the  
Israelites, over and above the  
number of the Levites, <sup>47</sup> you  
shall accept five shekels  
apiece, reckoning by the  
shekel of the sanctuary, a  
shekel of twenty gerahs.

<sup>48</sup> Give to Aaron and his sons  
the money by which the  
excess number of them is  
redeemed. <sup>49</sup> So Moses took  
the redemption money from  
those who were over and

above those redeemed by the Levites;<sup>50</sup> from the firstborn of the Israelites he took the money, one thousand three hundred sixty-five shekels, reckoned by the shekel of the sanctuary;<sup>51</sup> and Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

**Mark 12:1–17 (NRSV)**

*The Parable of  
the Wicked Tenants*  
(Mt 21:33–46; Lk 20:9–19)

<sup>1</sup> Then he began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watchtower; then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.<sup>2</sup> When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard.<sup>3</sup> But they seized him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed.<sup>4</sup> And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted.<sup>5</sup> Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many

others; some they beat, and others they killed.<sup>6</sup> He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’<sup>7</sup> But those tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’<sup>8</sup> So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.<sup>9</sup> What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.<sup>10</sup> Have you not read this scripture:

‘The stone that the  
builders rejected  
has become the  
cornerstone;

<sup>11</sup> this was the Lord’s doing,  
and it is amazing in our  
eyes?’”

<sup>12</sup> When they realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd. So they left him and went away.

*The Question about  
Paying Taxes*

(Mt 22:15–22; Lk 20:20–26)

<sup>13</sup> Then they sent to him some Pharisees and some

Herodians to trap him in what he said. <sup>14</sup> And they came and said to him, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? <sup>15</sup> Should we pay them, or should we not?” But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, “**Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it.**” <sup>16</sup> And they brought one. Then he said to them, “**Whose head is this, and whose title?**” They answered, “The emperor’s.” <sup>17</sup> Jesus said to them, “**Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.**” And they were utterly amazed at him.

**Psalms 48:1-8 (NRSV)**

*The Glory and Strength of Zion*

A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites.

<sup>1</sup> Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. His holy mountain, <sup>2</sup> beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth,

Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. <sup>3</sup> Within its citadels God has shown himself a sure defense. <sup>4</sup> Then the kings assembled, they came on together. <sup>5</sup> As soon as they saw it, they were astounded; they were in panic, they took to flight; <sup>6</sup> trembling took hold of them there, pains as of a woman in labor, <sup>7</sup> as when an east wind shatters the ships of Tarshish. <sup>8</sup> As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God, which God establishes forever. *Selah*

**Proverbs 14:28–29 (NRSV)**

<sup>28</sup> The glory of a king is a multitude of people; without people a prince is ruined. <sup>29</sup> Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but one

who has a hasty  
temper exalts folly.

## May 8



### Numbers 4:1-49 (NRSV)

#### *The Kohathites*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup> Take a census of the Kohathites separate from the other Levites, by their clans and their ancestral houses, <sup>3</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old, all who qualify to do work relating to the tent of meeting. <sup>4</sup> The service of the Kohathites relating to the tent of meeting concerns the most holy things. <sup>5</sup> When the camp is to set out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the screening curtain, and cover the ark of the covenant with it; <sup>6</sup> then they shall put on it a covering of fine leather, and spread over that a cloth all of blue, and shall put its poles in place. <sup>7</sup> Over the table of the bread of the Presence they shall

spread a blue cloth, and put on it the plates, the dishes for incense, the bowls, and the flagons for the drink offering; the regular bread also shall be on it; <sup>8</sup> then they shall spread over them a crimson cloth, and cover it with a covering of fine leather, and shall put its poles in place. <sup>9</sup> They shall take a blue cloth, and cover the lamp stand for the light, with its lamps, its snuffers, its trays, and all the vessels for oil with which it is supplied; <sup>10</sup> and they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of fine leather, and put it on the carrying frame. <sup>11</sup> Over the golden altar they shall spread a blue cloth, and cover it with a covering of fine leather, and shall put its poles in place; <sup>12</sup> and they shall take all the utensils of the service that are used in the sanctuary, and put them in a blue cloth, and cover them with a covering of fine leather, and put them on the carrying frame. <sup>13</sup> They shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it; <sup>14</sup> and they shall put on it all the utensils of the altar, which are used for the

service there, the firepans, the forks, the shovels, and the basins, all the utensils of the altar; and they shall spread on it a covering of fine leather, and shall put its poles in place.

<sup>15</sup> When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the Kohathites shall come to carry these, but they must not touch the holy things, or they will die. These are the things of the tent of meeting that the Kohathites are to carry.

<sup>16</sup> Eleazar son of Aaron the priest shall have charge of the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the regular grain offering, and the anointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle and all that is in it, in the sanctuary and in its utensils.

<sup>17</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

<sup>18</sup> You must not let the tribe of the clans of the Kohathites be destroyed from among the Levites. <sup>19</sup> This is how you must deal with them in order that they may live and not die

when they come near to the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and assign each to a particular task or burden. <sup>20</sup> But the Kohathites must not go in to look on the holy things even for a moment; otherwise they will die.

#### *The Gershonites and Merarites*

<sup>21</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>22</sup> Take a census of the Gershonites also, by their ancestral houses and by their clans; <sup>23</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old you shall enroll them, all who qualify to do work in the tent of meeting.

<sup>24</sup> This is the service of the clans of the Gershonites, in serving and bearing burdens:

<sup>25</sup> They shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tent of meeting with its covering, and the outer covering of fine leather that is on top of it, and the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting, <sup>26</sup> and the hangings of the court, and the screen for the entrance of the gate of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, and all



the equipment for their service; and they shall do all that needs to be done with regard to them.<sup>27</sup> All the service of the Gershonites shall be at the command of Aaron and his sons, in all that they are to carry, and in all that they have to do; and you shall assign to their charge all that they are to carry.<sup>28</sup> This is the service of the clans of the Gershonites relating to the tent of meeting, and their responsibilities are to be under the oversight of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.<sup>29</sup> As for the Merarites, you shall enroll them by their clans and their ancestral houses;<sup>30</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old you shall enroll them, everyone who qualifies to do the work of the tent of meeting.<sup>31</sup> This is what they are charged to carry, as the whole of their service in the tent of meeting: the frames of the tabernacle, with its bars, pillars, and bases,<sup>32</sup> and the pillars of the court all around with their bases, pegs, and cords, with all their equipment and all their related service; and you shall assign by name

the objects that they are required to carry.<sup>33</sup> This is the service of the clans of the Merarites, the whole of their service relating to the tent of meeting, under the hand of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.

#### *Census of the Levites*

<sup>34</sup> So Moses and Aaron and the leaders of the congregation enrolled the Kohathites, by their clans and their ancestral houses,<sup>35</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified for work relating to the tent of meeting;<sup>36</sup> and their enrollment by clans was two thousand seven hundred fifty.<sup>37</sup> This was the enrollment of the clans of the Kohathites, all who served at the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled according to the commandment of the LORD by Moses.

<sup>38</sup> The enrollment of the Gershonites, by their clans and their ancestral houses,<sup>39</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified for work relating to the tent of meeting—<sup>40</sup> their

enrollment by their clans and their ancestral houses was two thousand six hundred thirty.

<sup>41</sup> This was the enrollment of the clans of the Gershonites, all who served at the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled according to the commandment of the LORD.

<sup>42</sup> The enrollment of the clans of the Merarites, by their clans and their ancestral houses,

<sup>43</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified for work relating to the tent of meeting— <sup>44</sup> their enrollment by their clans was three thousand two hundred.

<sup>45</sup> This is the enrollment of the clans of the Merarites, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled according to the commandment of the LORD by Moses.

<sup>46</sup> All those who were enrolled of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the leaders of Israel enrolled, by their clans and their ancestral houses,

<sup>47</sup> from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified to do the work of service and the work of bearing burdens relating to

the tent of meeting, <sup>48</sup> their enrollment was eight thousand five hundred eighty.

<sup>49</sup> According to the commandment of the LORD through Moses they were appointed to their several tasks of serving or carrying; thus they were enrolled by him, as the LORD commanded Moses.

**Mark 12:18–34 (NRSV)**

*The Question about  
the Resurrection*

(Mt 22:23–33; Lk 20:27–40)

<sup>18</sup> Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, saying, <sup>19</sup> “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife but no child, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. <sup>20</sup> There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; <sup>21</sup> and the second married the widow and died, leaving no children; and the third likewise; <sup>22</sup> none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. <sup>23</sup> In the resurrection whose wife

will she be? For the seven had married her.”

<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, “Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? <sup>25</sup> For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. <sup>26</sup> And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? <sup>27</sup> He is God not of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong.”

*The First Commandment*  
(Mt 22:34–40; Lk 10:25–28)

<sup>28</sup> One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “**The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; <sup>30</sup> you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your**

**strength.’** <sup>31</sup> **The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”** <sup>32</sup> Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; <sup>33</sup> and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself,’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” <sup>34</sup> When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “**You are not far from the kingdom of God.**” After that no one dared to ask him any question.

**Psalm 48:9-14 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> We ponder your steadfast love, O God,  
in the midst of your temple.  
<sup>10</sup> Your name, O God, like your praise,  
reaches to the ends of the earth.  
Your right hand is filled with victory.  
<sup>11</sup> Let Mount Zion be glad,

let the towns of Judah  
rejoice  
because of your  
judgments.

<sup>12</sup> Walk about Zion, go all  
around it,  
count its towers,  
<sup>13</sup> consider well its ramparts;  
go through its citadels,  
that you may tell the next  
generation  
<sup>14</sup> that this is God,  
**our God forever and ever.**  
**He will be our guide  
forever.**

**Proverbs 14:30–31 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> A tranquil mind gives life  
to the flesh,  
but passion makes the  
bones rot.  
<sup>31</sup> Those who oppress the  
poor insult their  
Maker,  
but those who are kind  
to the needy honor  
him.

## May 9



**Numbers 5:1-31 (NRSV)**

*Unclean Persons*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying: <sup>2</sup> Command the  
Israelites to put out of the  
camp everyone who is  
leprous, or has a discharge,  
and everyone who is unclean  
through contact with a corpse;  
<sup>3</sup> you shall put out both male  
and female, putting them  
outside the camp; they must  
not defile their camp, where I  
dwell among them. <sup>4</sup> The  
Israelites did so, putting them  
outside the camp; as the LORD  
had spoken to Moses, so the  
Israelites did.

*Confession and Restitution*

<sup>5</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying: <sup>6</sup> Speak to the  
Israelites: When a man or a  
woman wrongs another,  
breaking faith with the LORD,  
that person incurs guilt <sup>7</sup> and  
shall confess the sin that has  
been committed. The person  
shall make full restitution for  
the wrong, adding one-fifth to  
it, and giving it to the one who

was wronged. <sup>8</sup> If the injured party has no next of kin to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for wrong shall go to the LORD for the priest, in addition to the ram of atonement with which atonement is made for the guilty party. <sup>9</sup> Among all the sacred donations of the Israelites, every gift that they bring to the priest shall be his. <sup>10</sup> The sacred donations of all are their own; whatever anyone gives to the priest shall be his.

#### *Concerning an Unfaithful Wife*

<sup>11</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>12</sup> Speak to the Israelites and say to them: If any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, <sup>13</sup> if a man has had intercourse with her but it is hidden from her husband, so that she is undetected though she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her since she was not caught in the act; <sup>14</sup> if a spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife who has defiled herself; or if a spirit of jealousy comes

on him, and he is jealous of his wife, though she has not defiled herself; <sup>15</sup> then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. And he shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley flour. He shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of remembrance, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

<sup>16</sup> Then the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD; <sup>17</sup> the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. <sup>18</sup> The priest shall set the woman before the LORD, dishevel the woman's hair, and place in her hands the grain offering of remembrance, which is the grain offering of jealousy. In his own hand the priest shall have the water of bitterness that brings the curse. <sup>19</sup> Then the priest shall make her take an oath, saying, "If no man has lain with you, if you have not turned aside to uncleanness while under your husband's

authority, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings the curse.<sup>20</sup> But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority, if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has had intercourse with you,"<sup>21</sup> —let the priest make the woman take the oath of the curse and say to the woman—"the LORD make you an execration and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your uterus drop, your womb discharge;<sup>22</sup> now may this water that brings the curse enter your bowels and make your womb discharge, your uterus drop!" And the woman shall say, "Amen. Amen."

<sup>23</sup> Then the priest shall put these curses in writing, and wash them off into the water of bitterness.<sup>24</sup> He shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings the curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her and cause bitter pain.<sup>25</sup> The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand, and shall elevate the grain offering

before the LORD and bring it to the altar;<sup>26</sup> and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering, as its memorial portion, and turn it into smoke on the altar, and afterward shall make the woman drink the water.<sup>27</sup> When he has made her drink the water, then, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, the water that brings the curse shall enter into her and cause bitter pain, and her womb shall discharge, her uterus drop, and the woman shall become an execration among her people.<sup>28</sup> But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, then she shall be immune and be able to conceive children.

<sup>29</sup> This is the law in cases of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself,<sup>30</sup> or when a spirit of jealousy comes on a man and he is jealous of his wife; then he shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall apply this entire law to her.<sup>31</sup> The man shall be free from iniquity, but

the woman shall bear her iniquity.

**Mark 12:35-37** (NRSV)

*The Question about David's Son*

(Mt 22:41-46; Lk 20:41-44)

<sup>35</sup> While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David?"

<sup>36</sup> David himself, by the Holy Spirit, declared, "The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet." "

<sup>37</sup> David himself calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?" And the large crowd was listening to him with delight.

**Psalms 49:1-9** (NRSV)

*The Folly of Trust in Riches*

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A

Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world,  
<sup>2</sup> both low and high, rich and poor together.  
<sup>3</sup> My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.

<sup>4</sup> I will incline my ear to a proverb;  
I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp.  
<sup>5</sup> Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,  
<sup>6</sup> those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches?  
<sup>7</sup> Truly, no ransom avails for one's life, there is no price one can give to God for it.  
<sup>8</sup> For the ransom of life is costly, and can never suffice,  
<sup>9</sup> that one should live on forever and never see the grave.

**Proverbs 14:32-33** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> The wicked are overthrown by their evildoing, but the righteous find a refuge in their integrity.  
<sup>33</sup> Wisdom is at home in the mind of one who has understanding,



but it is not known in the heart of fools.

## May 10



### Numbers 6:1–7:9 (NRSV)

#### *The Nazirites*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the Israelites and say to them: When either men or women make a special vow, the vow of a nazirite, to separate themselves to the LORD, <sup>3</sup> they shall separate themselves from wine and strong drink; they shall drink no wine vinegar or other vinegar, and shall not drink any grape juice or eat grapes, fresh or dried. <sup>4</sup> All their days as nazirites they shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins.

<sup>5</sup> All the days of their nazirite vow no razor shall come upon the head; until the time is completed for which they separate themselves to the LORD, they shall be holy;

they shall let the locks of the head grow long.

<sup>6</sup> All the days that they separate themselves to the LORD they shall not go near a corpse. <sup>7</sup> Even if their father or mother, brother or sister, should die, they may not defile themselves; because their consecration to God is upon the head. <sup>8</sup> All their days as nazirites they are holy to the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> If someone dies very suddenly nearby, defiling the consecrated head, then they shall shave the head on the day of their cleansing; on the seventh day they shall shave it. <sup>10</sup> On the eighth day they shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, <sup>11</sup> and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for them, because they incurred guilt by reason of the corpse. They shall sanctify the head that same day, <sup>12</sup> and separate themselves to the LORD for their days as nazirites, and bring a male lamb a year old



as a guilt offering. The former time shall be void, because the consecrated head was defiled.

<sup>13</sup> This is the law for the nazirites when the time of their consecration has been completed: they shall be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting, <sup>14</sup> and they shall offer their gift to the LORD, one male lamb a year old without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb a year old without blemish as a sin offering, one ram without blemish as an offering of well-being, <sup>15</sup> and a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of choice flour mixed with oil and unleavened wafers spread with oil, with their grain offering and their drink offerings. <sup>16</sup> The priest shall present them before the LORD and offer their sin offering and burnt offering, <sup>17</sup> and shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest also shall make the accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

<sup>18</sup> Then the nazirites shall shave the consecrated head at the entrance of the tent of

meeting, and shall take the hair from the consecrated head and put it on the fire under the sacrifice of well-being. <sup>19</sup> The priest shall take the shoulder of the ram, when it is boiled, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them in the palms of the nazirites, after they have shaved the consecrated head. <sup>20</sup> Then the priest shall elevate them as an elevation offering before the LORD; they are a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast that is elevated and the thigh that is offered. After that the nazirites may drink wine.

<sup>21</sup> This is the law for the nazirites who take a vow. Their offering to the LORD must be in accordance with the nazirite vow, apart from what else they can afford. In accordance with whatever vow they take, so they shall do, following the law for their consecration.

#### *The Priestly Benediction*

<sup>22</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>23</sup> Speak to

Aaron and his sons, saying,  
Thus you shall bless the  
Israelites: You shall say to  
them,

<sup>24</sup> The LORD bless you and  
keep you;  
<sup>25</sup> the LORD make his face to  
shine upon you, and be  
gracious to you;  
<sup>26</sup> the LORD lift up his  
countenance upon you,  
and give you peace.  
<sup>27</sup> So they shall put my  
name on the Israelites, and I  
will bless them.

#### *Offerings of the Leaders*

**7** On the day when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle, and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings, and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils, <sup>2</sup> the leaders of Israel, heads of their ancestral houses, the leaders of the tribes, who were over those who were enrolled, made offerings. <sup>3</sup> They brought their offerings before the LORD, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox; they presented them before the tabernacle.

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses:  
<sup>5</sup> Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the service of the tent of meeting, and give them to the Levites, to each according to his service. <sup>6</sup> So Moses took the wagons and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites.  
<sup>7</sup> Two wagons and four oxen he gave to the Gershonites, according to their service; <sup>8</sup> and four wagons and eight oxen he gave to the Merarites, according to their service, under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest. <sup>9</sup> But to the Kohathites he gave none, because they were charged with the care of the holy things that had to be carried on the shoulders.

#### **Mark 12:38-44** (NRSV)

*Jesus Denounces the Scribes*

(Mt 23:1-7; Lk 20:45-47)

<sup>38</sup> As he taught, he said,  
“Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, <sup>39</sup> and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! <sup>40</sup> They devour widows’ houses and for the sake of appearance say

long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

*The Widow's Offering*

(Lk 21:1-4)

<sup>41</sup> He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. <sup>42</sup> A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. <sup>43</sup> Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. <sup>44</sup> For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

**Psalm 49:10-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> When we look at the wise,  
they die;  
fool and dolt perish  
together  
and leave their wealth to  
others.  
<sup>11</sup> Their graves are their  
homes forever,  
their dwelling places to  
all generations,

though they named  
lands their own.

- <sup>12</sup> Mortals cannot abide in  
their pomp;  
they are like the animals  
that perish.  
<sup>13</sup> Such is the fate of the  
foolhardy,  
the end of those who are  
pleased with their lot.  
*Selah*  
<sup>14</sup> Like sheep they are  
appointed for Sheol;  
Death shall be their  
shepherd;  
straight to the grave they  
descend,  
and their form shall  
waste away;  
Sheol shall be their  
home.  
<sup>15</sup> But God will ransom my  
soul from the power of  
Sheol,  
for he will receive me.  
*Selah*  
<sup>16</sup> Do not be afraid when  
some become rich,  
when the wealth of their  
houses increases.  
<sup>17</sup> For when they die they will  
carry nothing away;  
their wealth will not go  
down after them.

18 Though in their lifetime  
they count themselves  
happy  
—for you are praised  
when you do well for  
yourself—  
19 they will go to the  
company of their  
ancestors,  
who will never again see  
the light.  
20 Mortals cannot abide in  
their pomp;  
they are like the animals  
that perish.

**Proverbs 14:34–35 (NRSV)**

34 Righteousness exalts a  
nation,  
but sin is a reproach to  
any people.  
35 A servant who deals wisely  
has the king's favor,  
but his wrath falls on one  
who acts shamefully.

**May 11**



**Numbers 7:10-89 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup>The leaders also  
presented offerings for the  
dedication of the altar at the  
time when it was anointed;  
the leaders presented their  
offering before the altar.  
<sup>11</sup>The LORD said to Moses:  
They shall present their  
offerings, one leader each day,  
for the dedication of the altar.  
<sup>12</sup>The one who presented  
his offering the first day was  
Nahshon son of Amminadab,  
of the tribe of Judah; <sup>13</sup>his  
offering was one silver plate  
weighing one hundred thirty  
shekels, one silver basin  
weighing seventy shekels,  
according to the shekel of the  
sanctuary, both of them full of  
choice flour mixed with oil for  
a grain offering; <sup>14</sup>one golden  
dish weighing ten shekels, full  
of incense; <sup>15</sup>one young bull,  
one ram, one male lamb a  
year old, for a burnt offering;  
<sup>16</sup>one male goat for a sin  
offering; <sup>17</sup>and for the  
sacrifice of well-being, two  
oxen, five rams, five male  
goats, and five male lambs a  
year old. This was the offering  
of Nahshon son of  
Amminadab.

<sup>18</sup> On the second day Nethanel son of Zuar, the leader of Issachar, presented an offering; <sup>19</sup> he presented for his offering one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>20</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>21</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, as a burnt offering; <sup>22</sup> one male goat as a sin offering; <sup>23</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Nethanel son of Zuar.

<sup>24</sup> On the third day Eliab son of Helon, the leader of the Zebulunites: <sup>25</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>26</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of

incense; <sup>27</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>28</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>29</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliab son of Helon.

<sup>30</sup> On the fourth day Elizur son of Shedeur, the leader of the Reubenites: <sup>31</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>32</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>33</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>34</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>35</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elizur son of Shedeur.

<sup>36</sup> On the fifth day Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, the leader of the Simeonites: <sup>37</sup> his offering was one silver

plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>38</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>39</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>40</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>41</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

<sup>42</sup> On the sixth day Eliasaph son of Deuel, the leader of the Gadites: <sup>43</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>44</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>45</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>46</sup> one male goat for a sin offering;

<sup>47</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliasaph son of Deuel.

<sup>48</sup> On the seventh day Elishama son of Ammihud, the leader of the Ephraimites: <sup>49</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>50</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>51</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>52</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>53</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elishama son of Ammihud.

<sup>54</sup> On the eighth day Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, the leader of the Manassites: <sup>55</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels,

according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>56</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>57</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>58</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>59</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

<sup>60</sup> On the ninth day Abidan son of Gideon, the leader of the Benjaminites: <sup>61</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>62</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>63</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>64</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>65</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a

year old. This was the offering of Abidan son of Gideon.

<sup>66</sup> On the tenth day Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, the leader of the Danites: <sup>67</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>68</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>69</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>70</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>71</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

<sup>72</sup> On the eleventh day Pagiel son of Ochran, the leader of the Asherites: <sup>73</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for

a grain offering; <sup>74</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>75</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>76</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>77</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Pagiel son of Ochrans.

<sup>78</sup> On the twelfth day Ahira son of Enan, the leader of the Naphtalites: <sup>79</sup> his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; <sup>80</sup> one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; <sup>81</sup> one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; <sup>82</sup> one male goat for a sin offering; <sup>83</sup> and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahira son of Enan.

<sup>84</sup> This was the dedication offering for the altar, at the

time when it was anointed, from the leaders of Israel: twelve silver plates, twelve silver basins, twelve golden dishes, <sup>85</sup> each silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels and each basin seventy, all the silver of the vessels two thousand four hundred shekels according to the shekel of the sanctuary, <sup>86</sup> the twelve golden dishes, full of incense, weighing ten shekels apiece according to the shekel of the sanctuary, all the gold of the dishes being one hundred twenty shekels; <sup>87</sup> all the livestock for the burnt offering twelve bulls, twelve rams, twelve male lambs a year old, with their grain offering; and twelve male goats for a sin offering; <sup>88</sup> and all the livestock for the sacrifice of well-being twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, the male lambs a year old sixty. This was the dedication offering for the altar, after it was anointed.

<sup>89</sup> When Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with the LORD, he would hear the voice speaking to him from



above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the covenant from between the two cherubim; thus it spoke to him.

**Mark 13:1-13** (NRSV)

*The Destruction of  
the Temple Foretold*  
(Mt 24:1-8; Lk 21:5-11)

<sup>1</sup> As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” <sup>2</sup> Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

<sup>3</sup> When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup> “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?”

<sup>5</sup> Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. <sup>6</sup> Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. <sup>7</sup> When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still

to come. <sup>8</sup> For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

*Persecution Foretold*  
(Mt 24:9-14; Lk 21:12-19)

<sup>9</sup> “As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them.

<sup>10</sup> And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. <sup>11</sup> When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

<sup>12</sup> Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; <sup>13</sup> and you will be hated by all because of my name. <sup>i</sup>But the one who

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<sup>i</sup> Also see Rev. 2-3 on enduring, overcoming, conquering.

endures to the end will be saved.

**Psalm 50:1-6** (NRSV)

*The Acceptable Sacrifice*

A Psalm of Asaph.

- <sup>1</sup> The mighty one, God the LORD,  
speaks and summons the earth  
from the rising of the sun  
to its setting.
- <sup>2</sup> Out of Zion, the perfection  
of beauty,  
God shines forth.
- <sup>3</sup> Our God comes and does  
not keep silence,  
before him is a  
devouring fire,  
and a mighty tempest all  
around him.
- <sup>4</sup> He calls to the heavens  
above  
and to the earth, that he  
may judge his people:
- <sup>5</sup> “Gather to me my faithful  
ones,  
who made a covenant  
with me by sacrifice!”
- <sup>6</sup> The heavens declare his  
righteousness,  
for God himself is judge.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 15:1–3** (NRSV)

- <sup>1</sup> A soft answer turns away  
wrath,  
but a harsh word stirs up  
anger.
- <sup>2</sup> The tongue of the wise  
dispenses knowledge,  
but the mouths of fools  
pour out folly.
- <sup>3</sup> **The eyes of the LORD are in  
every place,  
keeping watch on the  
evil and the good.**



**May 12**



**Numbers 8:1-9:3** (NRSV)

*The Seven Lamps*

(Ex 25:31–40)

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to Aaron and  
say to him: When you set up  
the lamps, the seven lamps  
shall give light in front of the  
lampstand. <sup>3</sup> Aaron did so; he  
set up its lamps to give light in  
front of the lampstand, as the  
LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>4</sup> Now this was how the lampstand was made, out of hammered work of gold. From its base to its flowers, it was hammered work; according to the pattern that the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

*Consecration and Service  
of the Levites*

<sup>5</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>6</sup> Take the Levites from among the Israelites and cleanse them. <sup>7</sup> Thus you shall do to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification on them, have them shave their whole body with a razor and wash their clothes, and so cleanse themselves. <sup>8</sup> Then let them take a young bull and its grain offering of choice flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another young bull for a sin offering. <sup>9</sup> You shall bring the Levites before the tent of meeting, and assemble the whole congregation of the Israelites. <sup>10</sup> When you bring the Levites before the LORD, the Israelites shall lay their hands on the Levites, <sup>11</sup> and Aaron shall present the Levites

before the LORD as an elevation offering from the Israelites, that they may do the service of the LORD. <sup>12</sup> The Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and he shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites. <sup>13</sup> Then you shall have the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons, and you shall present them as an elevation offering to the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the other Israelites, and the Levites shall be mine.

<sup>15</sup> Thereafter the Levites may go in to do service at the tent of meeting, once you have cleansed them and presented them as an elevation offering.

<sup>16</sup> For they are unreservedly given to me from among the Israelites; I have taken them for myself, in place of all that open the womb, the firstborn of all the Israelites. <sup>17</sup> For all the firstborn among the Israelites are mine, both human and animal. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I

consecrated them for myself,  
<sup>18</sup> but I have taken the Levites  
in place of all the firstborn  
among the Israelites.

<sup>19</sup> Moreover, I have given the  
Levites as a gift to Aaron and  
his sons from among the  
Israelites, to do the service for  
the Israelites at the tent of  
meeting, and to make  
atonement for the Israelites,  
in order that there may be no  
plague among the Israelites  
for coming too close to the  
sanctuary.

<sup>20</sup> Moses and Aaron and  
the whole congregation of the  
Israelites did with the Levites  
accordingly; the Israelites did  
with the Levites just as the  
LORD had commanded Moses  
concerning them. <sup>21</sup> The  
Levites purified themselves  
from sin and washed their  
clothes; then Aaron presented  
them as an elevation offering  
before the LORD, and Aaron  
made atonement for them to  
cleanse them. <sup>22</sup> Thereafter  
the Levites went in to do their  
service in the tent of meeting  
in attendance on Aaron and  
his sons. As the LORD had  
commanded Moses

concerning the Levites, so they  
did with them.

<sup>23</sup> The LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying: <sup>24</sup> This applies  
to the Levites: from twenty-  
five years old and upward they  
shall begin to do duty in the  
service of the tent of meeting;  
<sup>25</sup> and from the age of fifty  
years they shall retire from the  
duty of the service and serve  
no more. <sup>26</sup> They may assist  
their brothers in the tent of  
meeting in carrying out their  
duties, but they shall perform  
no service. Thus you shall do  
with the Levites in assigning  
their duties.

*The Passover at Sinai*  
(Ex 12:1–20)

**9** The LORD spoke to Moses in  
the wilderness of Sinai, in the  
first month of the second year  
after they had come out of the  
land of Egypt, saying: <sup>2</sup> Let the  
Israelites keep the passover at  
its appointed time. <sup>3</sup> On the  
fourteenth day of this month,  
at twilight, you shall keep it at  
its appointed time; according  
to all its statutes and all its  
regulations you shall keep it.

**Mark 13:14-27 (NRSV)**

*The Desolating Sacrilege*

(Mt 24:15–28; Lk 21:20–24)

<sup>14</sup> “But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains; <sup>15</sup> the one on the housetop must not go down or enter the house to take anything away; <sup>16</sup> the one in the field must not turn back to get a coat. <sup>17</sup> Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! <sup>18</sup> Pray that it may not be in winter. <sup>19</sup> For in those days there will be suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, no, and never will be.

<sup>20</sup> And if the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days. <sup>21</sup> And if anyone says to you at that time, ‘Look! Here is the Messiah!’ or ‘Look! There he is!’—do not believe it.

<sup>22</sup> False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the

elect. <sup>23</sup> But be alert; I have already told you everything.

*The Coming of the Son of Man*


(Mt 24:29–31; Lk 21:25–28)

<sup>24</sup> “But in those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not  
give its light,  
<sup>25</sup> and the stars will be falling  
from heaven,  
and the powers in the  
heavens will be shaken.  
<sup>26</sup> Then they will see ‘the Son  
of Man coming in clouds’ with  
great power and glory. <sup>27</sup> Then  
he will send out the angels,  
and gather his elect from the  
four winds, from the ends of  
the earth to the ends of  
heaven.

**Psalm 50:7-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> “Hear, O my people, and I  
will speak,  
O Israel, I will testify  
against you.  
I am God, your God.  
<sup>8</sup> Not for your sacrifices do I  
rebuke you;  
your burnt offerings are  
continually before me.  
<sup>9</sup> I will not accept a bull from  
your house,  
or goats from your folds.

10 For every wild animal of  
the forest is mine,  
the cattle on a thousand  
hills.  
11 I know all the birds of the  
air,  
and all that moves in the  
field is mine.  
12 "If I were hungry, I would  
not tell you,  
for the world and all that  
is in it is mine.  
13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls,  
or drink the blood of  
goats?  
14 Offer to God a sacrifice of  
thanksgiving,  
and pay your vows to the  
Most High.



15 **Call on me in the day of  
trouble;  
I will deliver you, and  
you shall glorify me."**

16 But to the wicked God  
says:  
"What right have you to  
recite my statutes,  
or take my covenant on  
your lips?  
17 For you hate discipline,  
and you cast my words  
behind you.  
18 You make friends with a  
thief when you see  
one,

and you keep company  
with adulterers.

19 "You give your mouth free  
rein for evil,  
and your tongue frames  
deceit.

20 You sit and speak against  
your kin;  
you slander your own  
mother's child.

21 These things you have  
done and I have been  
silent;  
you thought that I was  
one just like yourself.  
But now I rebuke you, and  
lay the charge before  
you.

22 "Mark this, then, you who  
forget God,  
or I will tear you apart,  
and there will be no  
one to deliver.

23 Those who bring  
thanksgiving as their  
sacrifice honor me;  
to those who go the right  
way  
I will show the salvation  
of God."

**Proverbs 15:4 (NRSV)**

4 A gentle tongue is a tree of  
life,

but perverseness in it  
breaks the spirit.

## May 13



### Numbers 9:4-23 (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> So Moses told the Israelites that they should keep the passover. <sup>5</sup> They kept the passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai. Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the Israelites did. <sup>6</sup> Now there were certain people who were unclean through touching a corpse, so that they could not keep the passover on that day. They came before Moses and Aaron on that day, <sup>7</sup> and said to him, “Although we are unclean through touching a corpse, why must we be kept from presenting the LORD’s offering at its appointed time among the Israelites?” <sup>8</sup> Moses spoke to them, “Wait, so that I may

hear what the LORD will command concerning you.”

<sup>9</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>10</sup> Speak to the Israelites, saying: Anyone of you or your descendants who is unclean through touching a corpse, or is away on a journey, shall still keep the passover to the LORD. <sup>11</sup> In the second month on the fourteenth day, at twilight, they shall keep it; they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. <sup>12</sup> They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute for the passover they shall keep it. <sup>13</sup> But anyone who is clean and is not on a journey, and yet refrains from keeping the passover, shall be cut off from the people for not presenting the LORD’s offering at its appointed time; such a one shall bear the consequences for the sin. <sup>14</sup> Any alien residing among you who wishes to keep the passover to the LORD shall do so according to the statute of the passover and according to its regulation; you shall have one

statute for both the resident alien and the native.

*The Cloud and the Fire*

(Ex 13:21–22; 40:34–38)

<sup>15</sup> On the day the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant; and from evening until morning it was over the tabernacle, having the appearance of fire. <sup>16</sup> It was always so: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night. <sup>17</sup> Whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, then the Israelites would set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the Israelites would camp. <sup>18</sup> At the command of the LORD the Israelites would set out, and at the command of the LORD they would camp. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they would remain in camp. <sup>19</sup> Even when the cloud continued over the tabernacle many days, the Israelites would keep the charge of the LORD, and would not set out. <sup>20</sup> Sometimes the cloud would remain a few days over the tabernacle, and according to the command of

the LORD they would remain in camp; then according to the command of the LORD they would set out. <sup>21</sup> Sometimes the cloud would remain from evening until morning; and when the cloud lifted in the morning, they would set out, or if it continued for a day and a night, when the cloud lifted they would set out. <sup>22</sup> Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, resting upon it, the Israelites would remain in camp and would not set out; but when it lifted they would set out. <sup>23</sup> At the command of the LORD they would camp, and at the command of the LORD they would set out. They kept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by Moses.

**Mark 13:28-37 (NRSV)**

*The Lesson of the Fig Tree*

(Mt 24:32–35; Lk 21:29–33)

<sup>28</sup> “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup> So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he



is near, at the very gates.

<sup>30</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

*The Necessity for  
Watchfulness*

*(Mt 24:36–44; Lk 21:34–36)*

<sup>32</sup> “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup> Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup> It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup> Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup> or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup> And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

**Psalm 51:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Cleansing  
and Pardon*

To the leader. A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.
- 5 Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- 6 You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

<sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and  
I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be  
whiter than snow.  
<sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and  
gladness;  
let the bones that you  
have crushed rejoice.  
<sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my  
sins,  
and blot out all my  
iniquities.

**Proverbs 15:5–7 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> A fool despises a parent's  
instruction,  
but the one who heeds  
admonition is prudent.  
<sup>6</sup> In the house of the  
righteous there is  
much treasure,  
but trouble befalls the  
income of the wicked.  
<sup>7</sup> The lips of the wise spread  
knowledge;  
not so the minds of fools.

**May 14**



**Numbers 10:1-36 (NRSV)**

*The Silver Trumpets*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses,  
saying: <sup>2</sup> Make two silver  
trumpets; you shall make  
them of hammered work; and  
you shall use them for  
summoning the congregation,  
and for breaking camp. <sup>3</sup> When  
both are blown, the whole  
congregation shall assemble  
before you at the entrance of  
the tent of meeting. <sup>4</sup> But if  
only one is blown, then the  
leaders, the heads of the  
tribes of Israel, shall assemble  
before you. <sup>5</sup> When you blow  
an alarm, the camps on the  
east side shall set out; <sup>6</sup> when  
you blow a second alarm, the  
camps on the south side shall  
set out. An alarm is to be  
blown whenever they are to  
set out. <sup>7</sup> But when the  
assembly is to be gathered,  
you shall blow, but you shall  
not sound an alarm. <sup>8</sup> The sons  
of Aaron, the priests, shall  
blow the trumpets; this shall  
be a perpetual institution for  
you throughout your  
generations. <sup>9</sup> When you go to  
war in your land against the  
adversary who oppresses you,  
you shall sound an alarm with  
the trumpets, so that you may

be remembered before the LORD your God and be saved from your enemies. <sup>10</sup> Also on your days of rejoicing, at your appointed festivals, and at the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over your sacrifices of well-being; they shall serve as a reminder on your behalf before the LORD your God: I am the LORD your God.

*Departure from Sinai*

<sup>11</sup> In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the covenant. <sup>12</sup> Then the Israelites set out by stages from the wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. <sup>13</sup> They set out for the first time at the command of the LORD by Moses. <sup>14</sup> The standard of the camp of Judah set out first, company by company, and over the whole company was Nahshon son of Amminadab. <sup>15</sup> Over the company of the tribe of Issachar was Nethanel son of Zuar; <sup>16</sup> and over the company

of the tribe of Zebulun was Eliab son of Helon.

<sup>17</sup> Then the tabernacle was taken down, and the Gershonites and the Merarites, who carried the tabernacle, set out. <sup>18</sup> Next the standard of the camp of Reuben set out, company by company; and over the whole company was Elizur son of Shedeur. <sup>19</sup> Over the company of the tribe of Simeon was Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, <sup>20</sup> and over the company of the tribe of Gad was Eliasaph son of Deuel.

<sup>21</sup> Then the Kohathites, who carried the holy things, set out; and the tabernacle was set up before their arrival. <sup>22</sup> Next the standard of the Ephraimite camp set out, company by company, and over the whole company was Elishama son of Ammihud. <sup>23</sup> Over the company of the tribe of Manasseh was Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, <sup>24</sup> and over the company of the tribe of Benjamin was Abidan son of Gideoni.

<sup>25</sup> Then the standard of the camp of Dan, acting as the rear guard of all the camps, set

out, company by company, and over the whole company was Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.<sup>26</sup> Over the company of the tribe of Asher was Pagiël son of Ocran,<sup>27</sup> and over the company of the tribe of Naphtali was Ahira son of Enan.<sup>28</sup> This was the order of march of the Israelites, company by company, when they set out.

<sup>29</sup> Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you'; come with us, and we will treat you well; for the LORD has promised good to Israel."

<sup>30</sup> But he said to him, "I will not go, but I will go back to my own land and to my kindred."

<sup>31</sup> He said, "Do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us.

<sup>32</sup> Moreover, if you go with us, whatever good the LORD does for us, the same we will do for you."

<sup>33</sup> So they set out from the mount of the LORD three days' journey with the ark of the covenant of the LORD going

before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place for them,<sup>34</sup> the cloud of the LORD being over them by day when they set out from the camp.

<sup>35</sup> Whenever the ark set out, Moses would say, "Arise, O LORD, let your enemies be scattered, and your foes flee before you."

<sup>36</sup> And whenever it came to rest, he would say, "Return, O LORD of the ten thousand thousands of Israel."

### **Mark 14:1-11** (NRSV)

#### *The Plot to Kill Jesus*

(Mt 26:1-5; Lk 22:1-2; Jn 11:45-53)

<sup>1</sup> It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him;<sup>2</sup> for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."

#### *The Anointing at Bethany*

(Mt 26:6-13; Jn 12:1-8)

<sup>3</sup> While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a

woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head.

<sup>4</sup> But some were there who said to one another in anger, “Why was the ointment wasted in this way?” <sup>5</sup> For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.” And they scolded her. <sup>6</sup> But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. <sup>7</sup> For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. <sup>8</sup> She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. <sup>9</sup> Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”

*Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus*  
(Mt 26:14–16; Lk 22:3–6)

<sup>10</sup> Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray

him to them. <sup>11</sup> When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

**Psalm 51:10-19 (NRSV)**

- <sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart,  
O God,  
and put a new and right  
spirit within me.
- <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from  
your presence,  
and do not take your  
holy spirit from me.
- <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of  
your salvation,  
and sustain in me a  
willing spirit.
- <sup>13</sup> Then I will teach  
transgressors your  
ways,  
and sinners will return to  
you.
- <sup>14</sup> Deliver me from  
bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing  
aloud of your  
deliverance.
- <sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will  
declare your praise.

16 For you have no delight in sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

17 The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,

19 then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

### **Proverbs 15:8–10 (NRSV)**

8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but he loves the one who pursues righteousness.

10 There is severe discipline for one who forsakes the way,

but one who hates a rebuke will die.

## **May 15**



### **Numbers 11:1-23 (NRSV)**

#### *Complaining in the Desert*

<sup>1</sup> Now when the people complained in the hearing of the LORD about their misfortunes, the LORD heard it and his anger was kindled. Then the fire of the LORD burned against them, and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. <sup>2</sup> But the people cried out to Moses; and Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire abated. <sup>3</sup> So that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the LORD burned against them.

<sup>4</sup> The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, "If only we had meat to eat!" <sup>5</sup> We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the

melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic;<sup>6</sup> but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.”

<sup>7</sup> Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color was like the color of gum resin.<sup>8</sup> The people went around and gathered it, ground it in mills or beat it in mortars, then boiled it in pots and made cakes of it; and the taste of it was like the taste of cakes baked with oil.<sup>9</sup> When the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna would fall with it.

<sup>10</sup> Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, all at the entrances of their tents. Then the LORD became very angry, and Moses was displeased.<sup>11</sup> So Moses said to the LORD, “Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me?<sup>12</sup> Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child,’ to the

land that you promised on oath to their ancestors?

<sup>13</sup> Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they come weeping to me and say, ‘Give us meat to eat!’<sup>14</sup> I am not able to carry all this people alone, for they are too heavy for me.<sup>15</sup> If this is the way you are going to treat me, put me to death at once—if I have found favor in your sight—and do not let me see my misery.”

#### *The Seventy Elders*

<sup>16</sup> So the LORD said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their place there with you.<sup>17</sup> I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit that is on you and put it on them; and they shall bear the burden of the people along with you so that you will not bear it all by yourself.<sup>18</sup> And say to the people: Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat

meat; for you have wailed in the hearing of the LORD, saying, 'If only we had meat to eat! Surely it was better for us in Egypt.' Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. <sup>19</sup> You shall eat not only one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, <sup>20</sup> but for a whole month—until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you—because you have rejected the LORD who is among you, and have wailed before him, saying, 'Why did we ever leave Egypt?' " <sup>21</sup> But Moses said, "The people I am with number six hundred thousand on foot; and you say, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month!' <sup>22</sup> Are there enough flocks and herds to slaughter for them? Are there enough fish in the sea to catch for them?" <sup>23</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Is the LORD's power limited? Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not."

**Mark 14:12-21** (NRSV)

*The Passover with the Disciples*

(Mt 26:17–25; Lk 22:7–13;

Jn 13:21–30)

<sup>12</sup> On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" <sup>13</sup> So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, <sup>14</sup> and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' <sup>15</sup> He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." <sup>16</sup> So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

<sup>17</sup> When it was evening, he came with the twelve. <sup>18</sup> And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." <sup>19</sup> They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" <sup>20</sup> He said to



them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me.”<sup>21</sup> For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.”

**Psalm 52:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Judgment on the Deceitful*

To the leader. A Maskil of David, when Doeg the Edomite came to Saul and said to him, “David has come to the house of Ahimelech.”

- <sup>1</sup> Why do you boast, O mighty one,  
of mischief done against the godly?  
All day long<sup>2</sup> you are plotting destruction.  
Your tongue is like a sharp razor,  
you worker of treachery.
- <sup>3</sup> You love evil more than good,  
and lying more than speaking the truth.  
*Selah*
- <sup>4</sup> You love all words that devour,  
O deceitful tongue.
- <sup>5</sup> But God will break you down forever;

he will snatch and tear you from your tent;  
he will uproot you from the land of the living.

*Selah*

- <sup>6</sup> The righteous will see, and fear,  
and will laugh at the evildoer, saying,
- <sup>7</sup> “See the one who would not take refuge in God,  
but trusted in abundant riches,  
and sought refuge in wealth!”

**Proverbs 15:11 (NRSV)**

- <sup>11</sup> Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD,  
how much more human hearts!



**May 16**



**Numbers 11:24-12:16 (NRSV)**

- <sup>24</sup> So Moses went out and told the people the words of

the LORD; and he gathered seventy elders of the people, and placed them all around the tent. <sup>25</sup> Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.

<sup>26</sup> Two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested on them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. <sup>27</sup> And a young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." <sup>28</sup> And Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, one of his chosen men, said, "My lord Moses, stop them!" <sup>29</sup> But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit on them!" <sup>30</sup> And Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

### *The Quails*

<sup>31</sup> Then a wind went out from the LORD, and it brought quails from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, about two cubits deep on the ground. <sup>32</sup> So the people worked all that day and night and all the next day, gathering the quails; the least anyone gathered was ten homers; and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. <sup>33</sup> But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. <sup>34</sup> So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving. <sup>35</sup> From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazeroth.

### *Aaron and Miriam Jealous of Moses*

**12** While they were at Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because

of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had indeed married a Cushite woman); <sup>2</sup> and they said, “Has the LORD spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?” And the LORD heard it. <sup>3</sup> Now the man Moses was very humble, more so than anyone else on the face of the earth. <sup>4</sup> Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting.” So the three of them came out. <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the entrance of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forward. <sup>6</sup> And he said, “Hear my words:

When there are prophets  
among you,  
I the LORD make myself  
known to them in  
visions;  
I speak to them in  
dreams.

<sup>7</sup> Not so with my servant  
Moses;  
he is entrusted with all  
my house.

<sup>8</sup> With him I speak face to  
face—clearly, not in  
riddles;  
and he beholds the form  
of the LORD.

Why then were you not afraid  
to speak against my servant  
Moses?” <sup>9</sup> And the anger of  
the LORD was kindled against  
them, and he departed.

<sup>10</sup> When the cloud went  
away from over the tent,  
Miriam had become leprous,  
as white as snow. And Aaron  
turned towards Miriam and  
saw that she was leprous.

<sup>11</sup> Then Aaron said to Moses,  
“Oh, my lord, do not punish us  
for a sin that we have so  
foolishly committed. <sup>12</sup> Do not  
let her be like one stillborn,  
whose flesh is half consumed  
when it comes out of its  
mother’s womb.” <sup>13</sup> And  
Moses cried to the LORD, “O  
God, please heal her.” <sup>14</sup> But  
the LORD said to Moses, “If her  
father had but spit in her face,  
would she not bear her shame  
for seven days? Let her be  
shut out of the camp for seven  
days, and after that she may  
be brought in again.” <sup>15</sup> So  
Miriam was shut out of the  
camp for seven days; and the

people did not set out on the march until Miriam had been brought in again. <sup>16</sup> After that the people set out from Hazeroth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

**Mark 14:22-31 (NRSV)**

*The Institution of the  
Lord's Supper*  
(Mt 26:26-29; Lk 22:14-23;  
1 Cor 11:23-26)

<sup>22</sup> While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, **"Take; this is my body."**

<sup>23</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. <sup>24</sup> He said to them, **"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."** <sup>25</sup> Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

*Peter's Denial Foretold*  
(Mt 26:30-35; Lk 22:31-34;  
Jn 13:36-38)

<sup>26</sup> When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>27</sup> And Jesus said to them, **"You will all**

**become deserters; for it is written,**

**'I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep will be  
scattered.'**

<sup>28</sup> **But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."**

<sup>29</sup> Peter said to him, "Even though all become deserters, I will not." <sup>30</sup> Jesus said to him, **"Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times."** <sup>31</sup> But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same.

**Psalm 52:8-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> But I am like a green olive tree  
in the house of God.  
I trust in the steadfast love  
of God  
forever and ever.

<sup>9</sup> I will thank you forever,  
because of what you  
have done.  
In the presence of the  
faithful  
I will proclaim your  
name, for it is good.

**Proverbs 15:12–14** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Scoffers do not like to be rebuked;  
they will not go to the wise.

<sup>13</sup> A glad heart makes a cheerful countenance,  
but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.

<sup>14</sup> The mind of one who has understanding seeks knowledge,  
but the mouths of fools feed on folly.

**May 17**



**Numbers 13:1-33** (NRSV)

*Spies Sent into Canaan*  
(Deut 1:19–33)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses,  
<sup>2</sup> “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites; from each of their ancestral tribes you shall send a man, every one a leader among them.”

<sup>3</sup> So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according

to the command of the LORD, all of them leading men among the Israelites. <sup>4</sup> These were their names: From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur; <sup>5</sup> from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori; <sup>6</sup> from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh; <sup>7</sup> from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph; <sup>8</sup> from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun; <sup>9</sup> from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu; <sup>10</sup> from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi; <sup>11</sup> from the tribe of Joseph (that is, from the tribe of Manasseh), Gaddi son of Susi; <sup>12</sup> from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli; <sup>13</sup> from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael; <sup>14</sup> from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi; <sup>15</sup> from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Machi. <sup>16</sup> These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses changed the name of Hoshea son of Nun to Joshua.

<sup>17</sup> Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, “Go up there into the Negeb, and go up into

the hill country, <sup>18</sup> and see what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, <sup>19</sup> and whether the land they live in is good or bad, and whether the towns that they live in are unwallled or fortified, <sup>20</sup> and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be bold, and bring some of the fruit of the land." Now it was the season of the first ripe grapes.

<sup>21</sup> So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. <sup>22</sup> They went up into the Negeb, and came to Hebron; and Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the Anakites, were there. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) <sup>23</sup> And they came to the Wadi Eshcol, and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them. They also brought some pomegranates and figs. <sup>24</sup> That place was called the Wadi Eshcol, because of the cluster

that the Israelites cut down from there.

### *The Report of the Spies*

<sup>25</sup> At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. <sup>26</sup> And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the Israelites in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.

<sup>27</sup> And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us; it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

<sup>28</sup> Yet the people who live in the land are strong, and the towns are fortified and very large; and besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there.

<sup>29</sup> The Amalekites live in the land of the Negeb; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live by the sea, and along the Jordan."

<sup>30</sup> But Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it." <sup>31</sup> Then the

men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against this people, for they are stronger than we."

<sup>32</sup> So they brought to the Israelites an unfavorable report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land that we have gone through as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are of great size. <sup>33</sup> There we saw the Nephilim (the Anakites come from the Nephilim); and to ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

**Mark 14:32-52 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Prays in Gethsemane*  
(Mt 26:36-46; Lk 22:39-46)

<sup>32</sup> They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." <sup>33</sup> He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. <sup>34</sup> And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." <sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass

from him. <sup>36</sup> He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." <sup>37</sup> He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?" <sup>38</sup> Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." <sup>39</sup> And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. <sup>40</sup> And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. <sup>41</sup> He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup> Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

*The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus*

(Mt 26:47-56; Lk 22:47-53;  
Jn 18:1-11)

<sup>43</sup> Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd

with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. <sup>44</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard."

<sup>45</sup> So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him.

<sup>46</sup> Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. <sup>47</sup> But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. <sup>48</sup> Then Jesus said to them,

**"Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit?**

**<sup>49</sup> Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled."**

<sup>50</sup> All of them deserted him and fled.

<sup>51</sup> A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, <sup>52</sup> but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

### **Psalms 53:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Denunciation of Godlessness  
(Ps 14:1-7)*

To the leader: according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David.

<sup>1</sup> Fools say in their hearts,  
"There is no God."

They are corrupt, they  
commit abominable  
acts;

there is no one who does  
good.

<sup>2</sup> God looks down from  
heaven on humankind  
to see if there are any  
who are wise,  
who seek after God.

<sup>3</sup> They have all fallen away,  
they are all alike  
perverse;

there is no one who does  
good,

no, not one.

<sup>4</sup> Have they no knowledge,  
those evildoers,  
who eat up my people as  
they eat bread,  
and do not call upon  
God?

<sup>5</sup> There they shall be in great  
terror,  
in terror such as has not  
been.

For God will scatter the  
bones of the ungodly;  
they will be put to  
shame, for God has  
rejected them.



## Proverbs 15:15–17 (NRSV)

- <sup>15</sup> All the days of the poor are hard,  
but a cheerful heart has a continual feast.
- <sup>16</sup> Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it.
- <sup>17</sup> Better is a dinner of vegetables where love is than a fatted ox and hatred with it.

## May 18



## Numbers 14:1-25 (NRSV)

### *The People Rebel*

<sup>1</sup> Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. <sup>2</sup> And all the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron; the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! <sup>3</sup> Why is the LORD bringing us into this land to fall

by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become booty; would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?”

<sup>4</sup> So they said to one another, “Let us choose a captain, and go back to Egypt.”

<sup>5</sup> Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the Israelites.

<sup>6</sup> And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes <sup>7</sup> and said to all the congregation of the Israelites, “The land that we went

through as spies is an exceedingly good land. <sup>8</sup> If the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. <sup>9</sup> Only, do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they are no more than bread for us; their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.” <sup>10</sup> But the whole congregation threatened to stone them.

Then the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of

meeting to all the Israelites.

<sup>11</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? <sup>12</sup> I will strike them with pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.”

*Moses Intercedes  
for the People*

<sup>13</sup> But Moses said to the LORD, “Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for in your might you brought up this people from among them, <sup>14</sup> and they will tell the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you, O LORD, are in the midst of this people; for you, O LORD, are seen face to face, and your cloud stands over them and you go in front of them, in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. <sup>15</sup> Now if you kill this people all at one time, then the nations who have heard about you will say, <sup>16</sup> ‘It is because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land he swore to give them that he has slaughtered

them in the wilderness.’ <sup>17</sup> And now, therefore, let the power of the LORD be great in the way that you promised when you spoke, saying,

<sup>18</sup> ‘The LORD is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the parents upon the children to the third and the fourth generation.’

<sup>19</sup> Forgive the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have pardoned this people, from Egypt even until now.”

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said, “I do forgive, just as you have asked; <sup>21</sup> nevertheless—as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD— <sup>22</sup> none of the people who have seen my glory and the signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have tested me these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, <sup>23</sup> shall see the land that

I swore to give to their ancestors; none of those who despised me shall see it. <sup>24</sup> But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me wholeheartedly, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it. <sup>25</sup> Now, since the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.”

**Mark 14:53-65** (NRSV)

*Jesus before the Council*  
(Mt 26:57-68; Lk 22:66-71; Jn 18:12-14, 19-24)

<sup>53</sup> They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. <sup>54</sup> Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. <sup>55</sup> Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. <sup>56</sup> For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

<sup>57</sup> Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, <sup>58</sup> “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’ ” <sup>59</sup> But even on this point their testimony did not agree.

<sup>60</sup> Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?” <sup>61</sup> But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

<sup>62</sup> Jesus said, “**I am; and ‘you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,’ and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’ ”**

<sup>63</sup> Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? <sup>64</sup> You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?” All of them condemned him as deserving death. <sup>65</sup> Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him,

“Prophecy!” The guards also took him over and beat him.

**Psalms 53:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!  
When God restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

**Proverbs 15:18–19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Those who are hot-tempered stir up strife, but those who are slow to anger calm contention.

<sup>19</sup> The way of the lazy is overgrown with thorns, but the path of the upright is a level highway.

## May 19



**Numbers 14:26-15:16** (NRSV)

*An Attempted  
Invasion is Repulsed  
(Deut 1:41–45)*

<sup>26</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying:  
<sup>27</sup> How long shall this wicked congregation complain against me? I have heard the complaints of the Israelites, which they complain against me. <sup>28</sup> Say to them, “As I live,” says the LORD, “I will do to you the very things I heard you say: <sup>29</sup> your dead bodies shall fall in this very wilderness; and of all your number, included in the census, from twenty years old and upward, who have complained against me, <sup>30</sup> not one of you shall come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. <sup>31</sup> But your little ones, who you said would become booty, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have despised. <sup>32</sup> But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. <sup>33</sup> And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness for forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness. <sup>34</sup> According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty

days, for every day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years, and you shall know my displeasure.”<sup>35</sup> I the LORD have spoken; surely I will do thus to all this wicked congregation gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die.

<sup>36</sup> And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report about the land—<sup>37</sup> the men who brought an unfavorable report about the land died by a plague before the LORD.<sup>38</sup> But Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh alone remained alive, of those men who went to spy out the land.

<sup>39</sup> When Moses told these words to all the Israelites, the people mourned greatly.

<sup>40</sup> They rose early in the morning and went up to the heights of the hill country, saying, “Here we are. We will go up to the place that the LORD has promised, for we have sinned.”<sup>41</sup> But Moses said, “Why do you continue to

transgress the command of the LORD? That will not succeed.”<sup>42</sup> Do not go up, for the LORD is not with you; do not let yourselves be struck down before your enemies.

<sup>43</sup> For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will confront you there, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned back from following the LORD, the LORD will not be with you.”<sup>44</sup> But they presumed to go up to the heights of the hill country, even though the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, had not left the camp.

<sup>45</sup> Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and defeated them, pursuing them as far as Hormah.

### *Various Offerings*

**15** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to the Israelites and say to them: When you come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving you, <sup>3</sup> and you make an offering by fire to the LORD from the herd or from the flock—whether a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or as a freewill

offering or at your appointed festivals—to make a pleasing odor for the LORD, <sup>4</sup> then whoever presents such an offering to the LORD shall present also a grain offering, one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour, mixed with one-fourth of a hin of oil.

<sup>5</sup> Moreover, you shall offer one-fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering with the burnt offering or the sacrifice, for each lamb. <sup>6</sup> For a ram, you shall offer a grain offering, two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with one-third of a hin of oil; <sup>7</sup> and as a drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> When you offer a bull as a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or as an offering of well-being to the LORD,

<sup>9</sup> then you shall present with the bull a grain offering, three-tenths of an ephah of choice flour, mixed with half a hin of oil, <sup>10</sup> and you shall present as a drink offering half a hin of wine, as an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Thus it shall be done for each ox or ram, or for each of

the male lambs or the kids.

<sup>12</sup> According to the number that you offer, so you shall do with each and every one.

<sup>13</sup> Every native Israelite shall do these things in this way, in presenting an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> An alien who lives with you, or who takes up permanent residence among you, and wishes to offer an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD, shall do as you do. <sup>15</sup> As for the assembly, there shall be for both you and the resident alien a single statute, a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you and the alien shall be alike before the LORD. <sup>16</sup> You and the alien who resides with you shall have the same law and the same ordinance.

### **Mark 14:66-72 (NRSV)**

*Peter Denies Jesus*

*(Mt 26:69–75; Lk 22:54–62*

*Jn 18:15–18, 25–27)*

<sup>66</sup> While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. <sup>67</sup> When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man

from Nazareth.”<sup>68</sup> But he denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.” And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed.<sup>69</sup> And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.”<sup>70</sup> But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.”<sup>71</sup> But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.”<sup>72</sup> At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

### **Psalm 54:1-4** (NRSV)

#### *Prayer for Vindication*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites went and told Saul, “David is in hiding among us.”

- <sup>1</sup> Save me, O God, by your name,  
and vindicate me by your might.

- <sup>2</sup> Hear my prayer, O God;  
give ear to the words of  
my mouth.  
<sup>3</sup> For the insolent have risen  
against me,  
the ruthless seek my life;  
they do not set God  
before them. *Selah*  
<sup>4</sup> But surely, God is my  
helper;  
the Lord is the upholder  
of my life.

### **Proverbs 15:20–21** (NRSV)

- <sup>20</sup> A wise child makes a glad  
father,  
but the foolish despise  
their mothers.  
<sup>21</sup> Folly is a joy to one who  
has no sense,  
but a person of  
understanding walks  
straight ahead.

## **May 20**



### **Numbers 15:17-41** (NRSV)

- <sup>17</sup> The LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying: <sup>18</sup> Speak to the

Israelites and say to them: After you come into the land to which I am bringing you, <sup>19</sup> whenever you eat of the bread of the land, you shall present a donation to the LORD. <sup>20</sup> From your first batch of dough you shall present a loaf as a donation; you shall present it just as you present a donation from the threshing floor. <sup>21</sup> Throughout your generations you shall give to the LORD a donation from the first of your batch of dough.

<sup>22</sup> But if you unintentionally fail to observe all these commandments that the LORD has spoken to Moses— <sup>23</sup> everything that the LORD has commanded you by Moses, from the day the LORD gave commandment and thereafter, throughout your generations— <sup>24</sup> then if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, the whole congregation shall offer one young bull for a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the LORD, together with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one male goat for a sin

offering. <sup>25</sup> The priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the Israelites, and they shall be forgiven; it was unintentional, and they have brought their offering, an offering by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their error. <sup>26</sup> All the congregation of the Israelites shall be forgiven, as well as the aliens residing among them, because the whole people was involved in the error.

<sup>27</sup> An individual who sins unintentionally shall present a female goat a year old for a sin offering. <sup>28</sup> And the priest shall make atonement before the LORD for the one who commits an error, when it is unintentional, to make atonement for the person, who then shall be forgiven. <sup>29</sup> For both the native among the Israelites and the alien residing among them—you shall have the same law for anyone who acts in error. <sup>30</sup> But whoever acts high-handedly, whether a native or an alien, affronts the LORD, and shall be cut off from among the people. <sup>31</sup> Because of



having despised the word of the LORD and broken his commandment, such a person shall be utterly cut off and bear the guilt.

*Penalty for Violating  
the Sabbath  
(Ex 31:12–17)*

<sup>32</sup>When the Israelites were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the sabbath day. <sup>33</sup>Those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses, Aaron, and to the whole congregation. <sup>34</sup>They put him in custody, because it was not clear what should be done to him. <sup>35</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, “The man shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him outside the camp.” <sup>36</sup>The whole congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

*Fringes on Garments*

<sup>37</sup>The LORD said to Moses: <sup>38</sup>Speak to the Israelites, and tell them to make fringes on the corners of their garments throughout their generations and to put a blue cord on the

fringe at each corner. <sup>39</sup>You have the fringe so that, when you see it, you will remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and not follow the lust of your own heart and your own eyes. <sup>40</sup>So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and you shall be holy to your God. <sup>41</sup>I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

**Mark 15:1–24 (NRSV)**

*Jesus before Pilate*

*(Mt 27:1–2, 11–14; Lk 23:1–5,  
13–16; Jn 18:28–38a)*

<sup>1</sup>As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. <sup>2</sup>Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” He answered him, “**You say so.**” <sup>3</sup>Then the chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup>Pilate asked him again, “Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.” <sup>5</sup>But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

*Pilate Hands Jesus over to  
Be Crucified*

(Mt 27:15–26; Lk 23:18–25;  
Jn 18:38b–19:16)

<sup>6</sup> Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. <sup>7</sup> Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. <sup>8</sup> So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. <sup>9</sup> Then he answered them, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” <sup>10</sup> For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. <sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. <sup>12</sup> Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” <sup>13</sup> They shouted back, “Crucify him!” <sup>14</sup> Pilate asked them, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him!” <sup>15</sup> So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus,

he handed him over to be crucified.

*The Soldiers Mock Jesus*  
(Mt 27:27–31)

<sup>16</sup> Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began saluting him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” <sup>19</sup> They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup> After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

*The Crucifixion of Jesus*  
(Mt 27:32–44; Lk 23:26–43;  
Jn 19:16b–27)

<sup>21</sup> They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. <sup>22</sup> Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the

place of a skull). <sup>23</sup> And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

**Psalms 54:5-7** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> He will repay my enemies for their evil.  
In your faithfulness, put an end to them.  
<sup>6</sup> With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you;  
I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good.  
<sup>7</sup> For he has delivered me from every trouble,  
and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

**Proverbs 15:22-23** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Without counsel, plans go wrong,  
but with many advisers they succeed.  
<sup>23</sup> To make an apt answer is a joy to anyone,  
and a word in season, how good it is!

## May 21



**Numbers 16:1-40** (NRSV)

*Revolt of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*

<sup>1</sup> Now Korah son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, along with Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—descendants of Reuben—took <sup>2</sup> two hundred fifty Israelite men, leaders of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men, and they confronted Moses. <sup>3</sup> They assembled against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, “You have gone too far! All the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. So why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?” <sup>4</sup> When Moses heard it, he fell on his face. <sup>5</sup> Then he said to Korah and all his company, “In the morning the LORD will make known who is his, and who is holy, and who will be allowed to approach him; the one whom he will choose he will allow to approach him. <sup>6</sup> Do

this: take censers, Korah and all your company, <sup>7</sup> and tomorrow put fire in them, and lay incense on them before the LORD; and the man whom the LORD chooses shall be the holy one. You Levites have gone too far!” <sup>8</sup> Then Moses said to Korah, “Hear now, you Levites! <sup>9</sup> Is it too little for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to allow you to approach him in order to perform the duties of the LORD’s tabernacle, and to stand before the congregation and serve them? <sup>10</sup> He has allowed you to approach him, and all your brother Levites with you; yet you seek the priesthood as well!

<sup>11</sup> Therefore you and all your company have gathered together against the LORD. What is Aaron that you rail against him?”

<sup>12</sup> Moses sent for Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab; but they said, “We will not come! <sup>13</sup> Is it too little that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, that you must also lord it over us?

<sup>14</sup> It is clear you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Would you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come!”

<sup>15</sup> Moses was very angry and said to the LORD, “Pay no attention to their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, and I have not harmed any one of them.”

<sup>16</sup> And Moses said to Korah, “As for you and all your company, be present tomorrow before the LORD, you and they and Aaron; <sup>17</sup> and let each one of you take his censer, and put incense on it, and each one of you present his censer before the LORD, two hundred fifty censers; you also, and Aaron, each his censer.” <sup>18</sup> So each man took his censer, and they put fire in the censers and laid incense on them, and they stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron. <sup>19</sup> Then Korah assembled the whole congregation against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the

LORD appeared to the whole congregation.

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying:

<sup>21</sup> Separate yourselves from this congregation, so that I may consume them in a moment. <sup>22</sup> They fell on their faces, and said, “O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one person sin and you become angry with the whole congregation?”

<sup>23</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>24</sup> Say to the congregation: Get away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. <sup>25</sup> So Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram; the elders of Israel followed him. <sup>26</sup> He said to the congregation, “Turn away from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, or you will be swept away for all their sins.” <sup>27</sup> So they got away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrance of their tents, together with their wives, their children, and their little ones. <sup>28</sup> And Moses said, “This is how you shall know

that the LORD has sent me to do all these works; it has not been of my own accord: <sup>29</sup> If these people die a natural death, or if a natural fate comes on them, then the LORD has not sent me. <sup>30</sup> But if the LORD creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up, with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall know that these men have despised the LORD.”

<sup>31</sup> As soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground under them was split apart. <sup>32</sup> The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households—everyone who belonged to Korah and all their goods. <sup>33</sup> So they with all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol; the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. <sup>34</sup> All Israel around them fled at their outcry, for they said, “The earth will swallow us too!” <sup>35</sup> And fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred fifty men offering the incense.

<sup>36</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>37</sup> Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to take the censers out of the blaze; then scatter the fire far and wide. <sup>38</sup> For the censers of these sinners have become holy at the cost of their lives. Make them into hammered plates as a covering for the altar, for they presented them before the LORD and they became holy. Thus they shall be a sign to the Israelites. <sup>39</sup> So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers that had been presented by those who were burned; and they were hammered out as a covering for the altar— <sup>40</sup> a reminder to the Israelites that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, shall approach to offer incense before the LORD, so as not to become like Korah and his company—just as the LORD had said to him through Moses.

**Mark 15:25-32** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup> The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." <sup>27</sup> And with

him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup> Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save yourself, and come down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup> In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

**Psalm 55:1-11** (NRSV)

*Complaint about  
a Friend's Treachery*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Give ear to my prayer, O God;  
do not hide yourself  
from my supplication.
- <sup>2</sup> Attend to me, and answer me;  
I am troubled in my complaint.

I am distraught<sup>3</sup> by the  
noise of the enemy,  
because of the clamor of  
the wicked.

For they bring trouble  
upon me,  
and in anger they cherish  
enmity against me.

4 My heart is in anguish  
within me,  
the terrors of death have  
fallen upon me.

5 Fear and trembling come  
upon me,  
and horror overwhelms  
me.

6 And I say, "O that I had  
wings like a dove!  
I would fly away and be  
at rest;

7 truly, I would flee far  
away;  
I would lodge in the  
wilderness; *Selah*

8 I would hurry to find a  
shelter for myself  
from the raging wind and  
tempest."

9 Confuse, O Lord, confound  
their speech;  
for I see violence and  
strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go  
around it  
on its walls,

and iniquity and trouble  
are within it;

11 ruin is in its midst;  
oppression and fraud  
do not depart from its  
marketplace.

### **Proverbs 15:24–26 (NRSV)**

24 For the wise the path of  
life leads upward,  
in order to avoid Sheol  
below.

25 The LORD tears down the  
house of the proud,  
but maintains the  
widow's boundaries.

26 Evil plans are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
but gracious words are  
pure.

## **May 22**



### **Numbers 16:41–18:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>41</sup> On the next day,  
however, the whole  
congregation of the Israelites  
rebelled against Moses and

against Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD."<sup>42</sup> And when the congregation had assembled against them, Moses and Aaron turned toward the tent of meeting; the cloud had covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared.<sup>43</sup> Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting,<sup>44</sup> and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,<sup>45</sup> "Get away from this congregation, so that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces.<sup>46</sup> Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer, put fire on it from the altar and lay incense on it, and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them. For wrath has gone out from the LORD; the plague has begun."<sup>47</sup> So Aaron took it as Moses had ordered, and ran into the middle of the assembly, where the plague had already begun among the people. He put on the incense, and made atonement for the people.<sup>48</sup> He stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stopped.<sup>49</sup> Those who died by the plague were

fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the affair of Korah.<sup>50</sup> When the plague was stopped, Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

### *The Budding of Aaron's Rod*

**17** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:<sup>2</sup> Speak to the Israelites, and get twelve staffs from them, one for each ancestral house, from all the leaders of their ancestral houses. Write each man's name on his staff,<sup>3</sup> and write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi. For there shall be one staff for the head of each ancestral house.<sup>4</sup> Place them in the tent of meeting before the covenant, where I meet with you.<sup>5</sup> And the staff of the man whom I choose shall sprout; thus I will put a stop to the complaints of the Israelites that they continually make against you.<sup>6</sup> Moses spoke to the Israelites; and all their leaders gave him staffs, one for each leader, according to their ancestral houses, twelve staffs; and the staff of Aaron was among theirs.<sup>7</sup> So Moses



placed the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the covenant.

<sup>8</sup> When Moses went into the tent of the covenant on the next day, the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted. It put forth buds, produced blossoms, and bore ripe almonds. <sup>9</sup> Then Moses brought out all the staffs from before the LORD to all the Israelites; and they looked, and each man took his staff. <sup>10</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Put back the staff of Aaron before the covenant, to be kept as a warning to rebels, so that you may make an end of their complaints against me, or else they will die." <sup>11</sup> Moses did so; just as the LORD commanded him, so he did.

<sup>12</sup> The Israelites said to Moses, "We are perishing; we are lost, all of us are lost!

<sup>13</sup> Everyone who approaches the tabernacle of the LORD will die. Are we all to perish?"

### *Responsibility of Priests and Levites*

**18** The LORD said to Aaron: You and your sons and your ancestral house with you shall

bear responsibility for offenses connected with the sanctuary, while you and your sons alone shall bear responsibility for offenses connected with the priesthood. <sup>2</sup> So bring with you also your brothers of the tribe of Levi, your ancestral tribe, in order that they may be joined to you, and serve you while you and your sons with you are in front of the tent of the covenant. <sup>3</sup> They shall perform duties for you and for the whole tent. But they must not approach either the utensils of the sanctuary or the altar, otherwise both they and you will die. <sup>4</sup> They are attached to you in order to perform the duties of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent; no outsider shall approach you. <sup>5</sup> You yourselves shall perform the duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the altar, so that wrath may never again come upon the Israelites. <sup>6</sup> It is I who now take your brother Levites from among the Israelites; they are now yours as a gift, dedicated to the LORD, to perform the service of the tent of meeting. <sup>7</sup> But you and your sons with

you shall diligently perform your priestly duties in all that concerns the altar and the area behind the curtain. I give your priesthood as a gift; any outsider who approaches shall be put to death.

**Mark 15:33-47** (NRSV)

*The Death of Jesus*

(Mt 27:45-56; Lk 23:44-49;

Jn 19:28-30)

<sup>33</sup> When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>34</sup> At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" <sup>35</sup> When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." <sup>36</sup> And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." <sup>37</sup> Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in

this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

<sup>40</sup> There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome.

<sup>41</sup> These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

*The Burial of Jesus*

(Mt 27:57-61; Lk 23:50-56;

Jn 19:38-42)

<sup>42</sup> When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, <sup>43</sup> Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

<sup>44</sup> Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time.

<sup>45</sup> When he learned from the centurion that he was dead,

he granted the body to Joseph. <sup>46</sup> Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. <sup>47</sup> Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body was laid.

**Psalms 55:12-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> It is not enemies who taunt me—  
I could bear that;  
it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—  
I could hide from them.  
<sup>13</sup> But it is you, my equal,  
my companion, my familiar friend,  
<sup>14</sup> with whom I kept pleasant company;  
we walked in the house of God with the throng.  
<sup>15</sup> Let death come upon them;  
let them go down alive to Sheol;  
for evil is in their homes and in their hearts.  
<sup>16</sup> But I call upon God,

and the LORD will save me.  
<sup>17</sup> Evening and morning and at noon  
I utter my complaint and moan,  
and he will hear my voice.  
<sup>18</sup> He will redeem me unharmed  
from the battle that I wage,  
for many are arrayed against me.  
<sup>19</sup> God, who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*  
will hear, and will humble them—  
because they do not change,  
and do not fear God.  
<sup>20</sup> My companion laid hands on a friend  
and violated a covenant with me  
<sup>21</sup> with speech smoother than butter,  
but with a heart set on war;  
with words that were softer than oil,  
but in fact were drawn swords.  
<sup>22</sup> Cast your burden on the LORD,



and he will sustain you;  
he will never permit  
the righteous to be  
moved.

- 23 But you, O God, will cast  
them down  
into the lowest pit;  
the bloodthirsty and  
treacherous  
shall not live out half  
their days.  
But I will trust in you.

**Proverbs 15:27–28** (NRSV)

- 27 Those who are greedy for  
unjust gain make  
trouble for their  
households,  
but those who hate  
bribes will live.
- 28 The mind of the righteous  
ponders how to  
answer,  
but the mouth of the  
wicked pours out evil.

## May 23



**Numbers 18:8-32** (NRSV)

*The Priests' Portion*

<sup>8</sup>The LORD spoke to Aaron:  
I have given you charge of the  
offerings made to me, all the  
holy gifts of the Israelites; I  
have given them to you and  
your sons as a priestly portion  
due you in perpetuity. <sup>9</sup>This  
shall be yours from the most  
holy things, reserved from the  
fire: every offering of theirs  
that they render to me as a  
most holy thing, whether grain  
offering, sin offering, or guilt  
offering, shall belong to you  
and your sons. <sup>10</sup>As a most  
holy thing you shall eat it;  
every male may eat it; it shall  
be holy to you. <sup>11</sup>This also is  
yours: I have given to you,  
together with your sons and  
daughters, as a perpetual due,  
whatever is set aside from the  
gifts of all the elevation  
offerings of the Israelites;  
everyone who is clean in your  
house may eat them. <sup>12</sup>All the  
best of the oil and all the best  
of the wine and of the grain,  
the choice produce that they

give to the LORD, I have given to you. <sup>13</sup> The first fruits of all that is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours; everyone who is clean in your house may eat of it.

<sup>14</sup> Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours. <sup>15</sup> The first issue of the womb of all creatures, human and animal, which is offered to the LORD, shall be yours; but the firstborn of human beings you shall redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. <sup>16</sup> Their redemption price, reckoned from one month of age, you shall fix at five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary (that is, twenty gerahs). <sup>17</sup> But the firstborn of a cow, or the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat, you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall dash their blood on the altar, and shall turn their fat into smoke as an offering by fire for a pleasing odor to the LORD; <sup>18</sup> but their flesh shall be yours, just as the breast that is elevated and as the right thigh are yours. <sup>19</sup> All the holy offerings that the Israelites present to the LORD I

have given to you, together with your sons and daughters, as a perpetual due; it is a covenant of salt forever before the LORD for you and your descendants as well.

<sup>20</sup> Then the LORD said to Aaron: You shall have no allotment in their land, nor shall you have any share among them; I am your share and your possession among the Israelites.

<sup>21</sup> To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for a possession in return for the service that they perform, the service in the tent of meeting.

<sup>22</sup> From now on the Israelites shall no longer approach the tent of meeting, or else they will incur guilt and die. <sup>23</sup> But the Levites shall perform the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear responsibility for their own offenses; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations. But among the Israelites they shall have no allotment, <sup>24</sup> because I have given to the Levites as their portion the tithe of the Israelites, which they set apart as an offering to the LORD.

Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no allotment among the Israelites.

<sup>25</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>26</sup> You shall speak to the Levites, saying: When you receive from the Israelites the tithe that I have given you from them for your portion, you shall set apart an offering from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. <sup>27</sup> It shall be reckoned to you as your gift, the same as the grain of the threshing floor and the fullness of the wine press.

<sup>28</sup> Thus you also shall set apart an offering to the LORD from all the tithes that you receive from the Israelites; and from them you shall give the LORD's offering to the priest Aaron.

<sup>29</sup> Out of all the gifts to you, you shall set apart every offering due to the LORD; the best of all of them is the part to be consecrated. <sup>30</sup> Say also to them: When you have set apart the best of it, then the rest shall be reckoned to the Levites as produce of the threshing floor, and as produce of the wine press.

<sup>31</sup> You may eat it in any place,

you and your households; for it is your payment for your service in the tent of meeting.

<sup>32</sup> You shall incur no guilt by reason of it, when you have offered the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy gifts of the Israelites, on pain of death.

### **Mark 16:1-8 (NRSV)**

*The Resurrection of Jesus*  
(Mt 28:1-10; Lk 24:1-12; Jn 20:1-10)

<sup>1</sup> When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.

<sup>2</sup> And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup> They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"

<sup>4</sup> When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. <sup>5</sup> As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup> But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was

crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. <sup>7</sup> But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” <sup>8</sup> So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

THE SHORTER ENDING OF MARK  
[[And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.]]

**Psalm 56:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Trust in God under Persecution*

To the leader: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. Of David. A Miktam, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

<sup>1</sup> Be gracious to me, O God,  
for people trample on me;  
all day long foes oppress me;  
<sup>2</sup> my enemies trample on me all day long,

for many fight against me.  
O Most High, <sup>3</sup> when I am afraid,  
I put my trust in you.  
<sup>4</sup> In God, whose word I praise,  
in God I trust; I am not afraid;  
what can flesh do to me?  
<sup>5</sup> All day long they seek to injure my cause;  
all their thoughts are against me for evil.  
<sup>6</sup> They stir up strife, they lurk,  
they watch my steps.  
As they hoped to have my life,  
<sup>7</sup> so repay them for their crime;  
in wrath cast down the peoples, O God!  
<sup>8</sup> You have kept count of my tossings;  
put my tears in your bottle.  
Are they not in your record?  
<sup>9</sup> Then my enemies will retreat  
in the day when I call.  
This I know, that God is for me.



**Proverbs 15:29–30 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup> The LORD is far from the wicked,  
but he hears the prayer  
of the righteous.  
<sup>30</sup> The light of the eyes  
rejoices the heart,  
and good news refreshes  
the body.

**May 24**



**Numbers 19:1-22 (NRSV)**

*Ceremony of the Red Heifer*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup> This is a statute of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect, in which there is no blemish and on which no yoke has been laid. <sup>3</sup> You shall give it to the priest Eleazar, and it shall be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence. <sup>4</sup> The priest Eleazar shall take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven

times towards the front of the tent of meeting. <sup>5</sup> Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight; its skin, its flesh, and its blood, with its dung, shall be burned. <sup>6</sup> The priest shall take cedarwood, hyssop, and crimson material, and throw them into the fire in which the heifer is burning. <sup>7</sup> Then the priest shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterwards he may come into the camp; but the priest shall remain unclean until evening. <sup>8</sup> The one who burns the heifer shall wash his clothes in water and bathe his body in water; he shall remain unclean until evening. <sup>9</sup> Then someone who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the Israelites for the water for cleansing. It is a purification offering. <sup>10</sup> The one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

This shall be a perpetual statute for the Israelites and for the alien residing among



them. <sup>11</sup> Those who touch the dead body of any human being shall be unclean seven days.

<sup>12</sup> They shall purify themselves with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so be clean; but if they do not purify themselves on the third day and on the seventh day, they will not become clean. <sup>13</sup> All who touch a corpse, the body of a human being who has died, and do not purify themselves, defile the tabernacle of the LORD; such persons shall be cut off from Israel. Since water for cleansing was not dashed on them, they remain unclean; their uncleanness is still on them.

<sup>14</sup> This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent, and everyone who is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. <sup>15</sup> And every open vessel with no cover fastened on it is unclean. <sup>16</sup> Whoever in the open field touches one who has been killed by a sword, or who has died naturally, or a human bone, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. <sup>17</sup> For the unclean they

shall take some ashes of the burnt purification offering, and running water shall be added in a vessel; <sup>18</sup> then a clean person shall take hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle it on the tent, on all the furnishings, on the persons who were there, and on whoever touched the bone, the slain, the corpse, or the grave. <sup>19</sup> The clean person shall sprinkle the unclean ones on the third day and on the seventh day, thus purifying them on the seventh day. Then they shall wash their clothes and bathe themselves in water, and at evening they shall be clean. <sup>20</sup> Any who are unclean but do not purify themselves, those persons shall be cut off from the assembly, for they have defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. Since the water for cleansing has not been dashed on them, they are unclean.

<sup>21</sup> It shall be a perpetual statute for them. The one who sprinkles the water for cleansing shall wash his clothes, and whoever touches the water for cleansing shall be unclean until evening.

<sup>22</sup> Whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean, and anyone who touches it shall be unclean until evening.

**Mark 16:9-20** (NRSV)

THE LONGER ENDING OF MARK

*Jesus Appears to  
Mary Magdalene*  
(Jn 20:11-18)

<sup>9</sup> [[Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons.

<sup>10</sup> She went out and told those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. <sup>11</sup> But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

*Jesus Appears to Two Disciples*  
(Lk 24:13-43; Jn 20:19-23)

<sup>12</sup> After this he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. <sup>13</sup> And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

*Jesus Commissions  
the Disciples*

(Mt 28:16-20; Lk 24:44-49; Jn 20:19-23; Acts 1:6-8)

<sup>14</sup> Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table; and he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. <sup>16</sup> The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup> And these signs will accompany those who believe: by using my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; <sup>18</sup> they will pick up snakes in their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

*The Ascension of Jesus*  
(Lk 24:50-53)

<sup>19</sup> So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of

God. <sup>20</sup> And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.]]

<sup>32</sup> Those who ignore instruction despise themselves, but those who heed admonition gain understanding.

**Psalm 56:10-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> In God, whose word I praise,  
in the LORD, whose word I praise,  
<sup>11</sup> in God I trust; I am not afraid.  
What can a mere mortal do to me?  
<sup>12</sup> My vows to you I must perform, O God;  
I will render thank offerings to you.  
<sup>13</sup> For you have delivered my soul from death,  
and my feet from falling,  
so that I may walk before God  
in the light of life.

**Proverbs 15:31-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>31</sup> The ear that heeds wholesome admonition will lodge among the wise.

**May 25**



**Numbers 20:1-29 (NRSV)**

*The Waters of Meribah*  
(Ex 17:1-7)

<sup>1</sup> The Israelites, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. Miriam died there, and was buried there.

<sup>2</sup> Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and against Aaron.  
<sup>3</sup> The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Would that we had died when our kindred died before the LORD!"  
<sup>4</sup> Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness for us and our

livestock to die here? <sup>5</sup> Why have you brought us up out of Egypt, to bring us to this wretched place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; and there is no water to drink.” <sup>6</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went away from the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting; they fell on their faces, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them. <sup>7</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>8</sup> Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and your brother Aaron, and command the rock before their eyes to yield its water. Thus you shall bring water out of the rock for them; thus you shall provide drink for the congregation and their livestock.

<sup>9</sup> So Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he had commanded him.

<sup>10</sup> Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, “Listen, you rebels, shall we bring water for you out of this rock?” <sup>11</sup> Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff; water came out abundantly, and the

congregation and their livestock drank. <sup>12</sup> But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me, to show my holiness before the eyes of the Israelites, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.” <sup>13</sup> These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and by which he showed his holiness.

*Passage through  
Edom Refused*

<sup>14</sup> Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, “Thus says your brother Israel: You know all the adversity that has befallen us: <sup>15</sup> how our ancestors went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians oppressed us and our ancestors; <sup>16</sup> and when we cried to the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt; and here we are in Kadesh, a town on the edge of your territory. <sup>17</sup> Now let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, or

drink water from any well; we will go along the King's Highway, not turning aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory."

<sup>18</sup> But Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through, or we will come out with the sword against you." <sup>19</sup> The Israelites said to him, "We will stay on the highway; and if we drink of your water, we and our livestock, then we will pay for it. It is only a small matter; just let us pass through on foot." <sup>20</sup> But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against them with a large force, heavily armed. <sup>21</sup> Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through their territory; so Israel turned away from them.

### *The Death of Aaron*

<sup>22</sup> They set out from Kadesh, and the Israelites, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor. <sup>23</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom, <sup>24</sup> "Let Aaron be gathered to his people. For he shall not enter

the land that I have given to the Israelites, because you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah.

<sup>25</sup> Take Aaron and his son Eleazar, and bring them up Mount Hor; <sup>26</sup> strip Aaron of his vestments, and put them on his son Eleazar. But Aaron shall be gathered to his people, and shall die there."

<sup>27</sup> Moses did as the LORD had commanded; they went up Mount Hor in the sight of the whole congregation. <sup>28</sup> Moses stripped Aaron of his vestments, and put them on his son Eleazar; and Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. <sup>29</sup> When all the congregation saw that Aaron had died, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days.

### **Luke 1:1–7 (NRSV)**

#### *Dedication to Theophilus*

<sup>1</sup> Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup> just as they were handed on to us by those who from the

beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word,<sup>3</sup> I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,<sup>4</sup> so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

*The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold*

<sup>5</sup>In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.<sup>6</sup> Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord.<sup>7</sup> But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

**Psalm 57:1-3** (NRSV)

*Praise and Assurance  
under Persecution  
(Cp Ps 108:1–5)*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.

<sup>1</sup> Be merciful to me, O God,  
be merciful to me,  
for in you my soul takes  
refuge;  
in the shadow of your  
wings I will take refuge,  
until the destroying  
storms pass by.

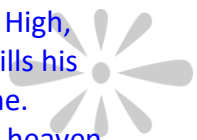
<sup>2</sup> I cry to God Most High,  
to God who fulfills his  
purpose for me.

<sup>3</sup> He will send from heaven  
and save me,  
he will put to shame  
those who trample on  
me. *Selah*

God will send forth his  
steadfast love and his  
faithfulness.

**Proverbs 15:33** (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> The fear of the LORD is  
instruction in wisdom,  
and humility goes before  
honor.



# May 26



**Numbers 21:1-30 (NRSV)**

### *The Bronze Serpent*

<sup>1</sup> When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim, he fought against Israel and took some of them captive.

<sup>2</sup> Then Israel made a vow to the LORD and said, "If you will indeed give this people into our hands, then we will utterly destroy their towns." <sup>3</sup> The LORD listened to the voice of Israel, and handed over the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their towns; so the place was called Hormah.

<sup>4</sup> From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup> The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD sent

poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup> The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." <sup>9</sup> So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

### *The Journey to Moab*

<sup>10</sup> The Israelites set out, and camped in Oboth. <sup>11</sup> They set out from Oboth, and camped at Iye-abarim, in the wilderness bordering Moab toward the sunrise. <sup>12</sup> From there they set out, and camped in the Wadi Zered. <sup>13</sup> From there they set out, and camped on the other side of the Arnon, in the wilderness that extends from the boundary of the Amorites; for

the Arnon is the boundary of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.<sup>14</sup> Wherefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD,

“Waheb in Suphah and the wadis.

The Arnon<sup>15</sup> and the slopes of the wadis that extend to the seat of Ar, and lie along the border of Moab.”

<sup>16</sup> From there they continued to Beer; that is the well of which the LORD said to Moses, “Gather the people together, and I will give them water.”<sup>17</sup> Then Israel sang this song:

“Spring up, O well!—Sing to it!—

<sup>18</sup> the well that the leaders sank, that the nobles of the people dug, with the scepter, with the staff.”

From the wilderness to Mattanah,<sup>19</sup> from Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth,<sup>20</sup> and from Bamoth to the valley lying in the region of Moab by the top of Pisgah that overlooks the wasteland.

### *King Sihon Defeated*

(Deut 2:26–37)

<sup>21</sup> Then Israel sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, saying,<sup>22</sup> “Let me pass through your land; we will not turn aside into field or vineyard; we will not drink the water of any well; we will go by the King’s Highway until we have passed through your territory.”<sup>23</sup> But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel to the wilderness; he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel.<sup>24</sup> Israel put him to the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as to the Ammonites; for the boundary of the Ammonites was strong.<sup>25</sup> Israel took all these towns, and Israel settled in all the towns of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all its villages.<sup>26</sup> For Heshbon was the city of King Sihon of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and captured all his land as far as the Arnon.<sup>27</sup> Therefore the ballad singers say,



“Come to Heshbon, let it  
be built;  
let the city of Sihon be  
established.

<sup>28</sup> For fire came out from  
Heshbon,  
flame from the city of  
Sihon.  
It devoured Ar of Moab,  
and swallowed up the  
heights of the Arnon.

<sup>29</sup> Woe to you, O Moab!  
You are undone, O  
people of Chemosh!  
He has made his sons  
fugitives,  
and his daughters  
captives,  
to an Amorite king,  
Sihon.

<sup>30</sup> So their posterity perished  
from Heshbon to Dibon,  
and we laid waste until  
fire spread to  
Medeba.”

**Luke 1:8-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Once when he was  
serving as priest before God  
and his section was on duty,  
<sup>9</sup> he was chosen by lot,  
according to the custom of the  
priesthood, to enter the  
sanctuary of the Lord and  
offer incense. <sup>10</sup> Now at the

time of the incense offering,  
the whole assembly of the  
people was praying outside.

<sup>11</sup> Then there appeared to him  
an angel of the Lord, standing  
at the right side of the altar of  
incense. <sup>12</sup> When Zechariah  
saw him, he was terrified; and  
fear overwhelmed him. <sup>13</sup> But  
the angel said to him, “Do not  
be afraid, Zechariah, for your  
prayer has been heard. Your  
wife Elizabeth will bear you a  
son, and you will name him  
John. <sup>14</sup> You will have joy and  
gladness, and many will  
rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he  
will be great in the sight of the  
Lord. He must never drink  
wine or strong drink; even  
before his birth he will be  
filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>16</sup> He  
will turn many of the people of  
Israel to the Lord their God.

<sup>17</sup> With the spirit and power of  
Elijah he will go before him, to  
turn the hearts of parents to  
their children, and the  
disobedient to the wisdom of  
the righteous, to make ready a  
people prepared for the Lord.”

<sup>18</sup> Zechariah said to the angel,  
“How will I know that this is  
so? For I am an old man, and  
my wife is getting on in years.”

<sup>19</sup> The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

<sup>20</sup> But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”

<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. <sup>22</sup> When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak.

<sup>23</sup> When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

<sup>24</sup> After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, <sup>25</sup> “This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

### **Psalm 57:4-11 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> I lie down among lions  
that greedily devour  
human prey;  
their teeth are spears and  
arrows,  
their tongues sharp  
swords.

<sup>5</sup> Be exalted, O God, above  
the heavens.  
Let your glory be over all  
the earth.

<sup>6</sup> They set a net for my  
steps;  
my soul was bowed  
down.  
They dug a pit in my path,  
but they have fallen into  
it themselves. *Selah*

<sup>7</sup> My heart is steadfast, O  
God,  
my heart is steadfast.  
I will sing and make  
melody.

<sup>8</sup> Awake, my soul!  
Awake, O harp and lyre!  
I will awake the dawn.

<sup>9</sup> I will give thanks to you, O  
Lord, among the  
peoples;  
I will sing praises to you  
among the nations.

<sup>10</sup> For your steadfast love is  
as high as the heavens;  
your faithfulness extends  
to the clouds.



<sup>11</sup> Be exalted, O God, above  
the heavens.  
Let your glory be over all  
the earth.

**Proverbs 16:1–3 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> The plans of the mind  
belong to mortals,  
but the answer of the  
tongue is from the  
LORD.  
<sup>2</sup> All one's ways may be pure  
in one's own eyes,  
but the LORD weighs the  
spirit.  
<sup>3</sup> Commit your work to the  
LORD, and your plans  
will be established.

**May 27**



**Numbers 21:31-22:20 (NRSV)**

<sup>31</sup> Thus Israel settled in the  
land of the Amorites. <sup>32</sup> Moses  
sent to spy out Jazer; and they  
captured its villages, and  
dispossessed the Amorites  
who were there.

*King Og Defeated*  
(Deut 3:1–22)

<sup>33</sup> Then they turned and  
went up the road to Bashan;  
and King Og of Bashan came  
out against them, he and all  
his people, to battle at Edrei.  
<sup>34</sup> But the LORD said to Moses,  
“Do not be afraid of him; for I  
have given him into your hand,  
with all his people, and all his  
land. You shall do to him as  
you did to King Sihon of the  
Amorites, who ruled in  
Heshbon.” <sup>35</sup> So they killed  
him, his sons, and all his  
people, until there was no  
survivor left; and they took  
possession of his land.

*Balak Summons Balaam*  
*to Curse Israel*

**22** The Israelites set out, and  
camped in the plains of Moab  
across the Jordan from  
Jericho. <sup>2</sup> Now Balak son of  
Zippor saw all that Israel had  
done to the Amorites. <sup>3</sup> Moab  
was in great dread of the  
people, because they were so  
numerous; Moab was  
overcome with fear of the  
people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> And Moab  
said to the elders of Midian,  
“This horde will now lick up all

that is around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field.” Now Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time.<sup>5</sup> He sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor at Pethor, which is on the Euphrates, in the land of Amaw, to summon him, saying, “A people has come out of Egypt; they have spread over the face of the earth, and they have settled next to me.<sup>6</sup> Come now, curse this people for me, since they are stronger than I; perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land; for I know that whomever you bless is blessed, and whomever you curse is cursed.”

<sup>7</sup> So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the fees for divination in their hand; and they came to Balaam, and gave him Balak’s message.<sup>8</sup> He said to them, “Stay here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, just as the LORD speaks to me”; so the officials of Moab stayed with Balaam.<sup>9</sup> God came to Balaam and said, “Who are these men with you?”<sup>10</sup> Balaam said to God, “King Balak son of Zippor of

Moab, has sent me this message:<sup>11</sup> ‘A people has come out of Egypt and has spread over the face of the earth; now come, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.’ ”<sup>12</sup> God said to Balaam, “You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.”<sup>13</sup> So Balaam rose in the morning, and said to the officials of Balak, “Go to your own land, for the LORD has refused to let me go with you.”<sup>14</sup> So the officials of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, “Balaam refuses to come with us.”

<sup>15</sup> Once again Balak sent officials, more numerous and more distinguished than these.<sup>16</sup> They came to Balaam and said to him, “Thus says Balak son of Zippor: ‘Do not let anything hinder you from coming to me; <sup>17</sup> for I will surely do you great honor, and whatever you say to me I will do; come, curse this people for me.’ ”<sup>18</sup> But Balaam replied to the servants of Balak, “Although Balak were to give me his house full of silver and

gold, I could not go beyond the command of the LORD my God, to do less or more. <sup>19</sup> You remain here, as the others did, so that I may learn what more the LORD may say to me.”

<sup>20</sup> That night God came to Balaam and said to him, “If the men have come to summon you, get up and go with them; but do only what I tell you to do.”

**Luke 1:26-38 (NRSV)**

*The Birth of Jesus Foretold*

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

<sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

<sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

<sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”

<sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.

<sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

**Psalms 58:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Vengeance*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam.

<sup>1</sup> Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods?

Do you judge people  
fairly?  
<sup>2</sup> No, in your hearts you  
devise wrongs;  
your hands deal out  
violence on earth.  
<sup>3</sup> The wicked go astray from  
the womb;  
they err from their birth,  
speaking lies.  
<sup>4</sup> They have venom like the  
venom of a serpent,  
like the deaf adder that  
stops its ear,  
<sup>5</sup> so that it does not hear the  
voice of charmers  
or of the cunning  
enchanter.  
<sup>6</sup> O God, break the teeth in  
their mouths;  
tear out the fangs of the  
young lions, O LORD!  
<sup>7</sup> Let them vanish like water  
that runs away;  
like grass let them be  
trodden down and  
wither.  
<sup>8</sup> Let them be like the snail  
that dissolves into  
slime;  
like the untimely birth  
that never sees the  
sun.  
<sup>9</sup> Sooner than your pots can  
feel the heat of thorns,

whether green or ablaze,  
may he sweep them  
away!

**Proverbs 16:4–5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The LORD has made  
everything for its  
purpose,  
even the wicked for the  
day of trouble.  
<sup>5</sup> All those who are arrogant  
are an abomination to  
the LORD;  
be assured, they will not  
go unpunished.

**May 28**



**Numbers 22:21-41 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> So Balaam got up in the  
morning, saddled his donkey,  
and went with the officials of  
Moab.

*Balaam, the Donkey,  
and the Angel*

<sup>22</sup> God's anger was kindled  
because he was going, and the  
angel of the LORD took his

stand in the road as his adversary. Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. <sup>23</sup> The donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand; so the donkey turned off the road, and went into the field; and Balaam struck the donkey, to turn it back onto the road. <sup>24</sup> Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. <sup>25</sup> When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it scraped against the wall, and scraped Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck it again. <sup>26</sup> Then the angel of the LORD went ahead, and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. <sup>27</sup> When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. <sup>28</sup> Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" <sup>29</sup> Balaam said to

the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me! I wish I had a sword in my hand! I would kill you right now!" <sup>30</sup> But the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I been in the habit of treating you this way?" And he said, "No."

<sup>31</sup> Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed down, falling on his face. <sup>32</sup> The angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? I have come out as an adversary, because your way is perverse before me. <sup>33</sup> The donkey saw me, and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let it live." <sup>34</sup> Then Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now therefore, if it is displeasing to you, I will return

home.”<sup>35</sup> The angel of the LORD said to Balaam, “Go with the men; but speak only what I tell you to speak.” So Balaam went on with the officials of Balak.

<sup>36</sup>When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at Ir-moab, on the boundary formed by the Arnon, at the farthest point of the boundary.<sup>37</sup> Balak said to Balaam, “Did I not send to summon you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?”<sup>38</sup> Balaam said to Balak, “I have come to you now, but do I have power to say just anything? The word God puts in my mouth, that is what I must say.”<sup>39</sup> Then Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth.<sup>40</sup> Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent them to Balaam and to the officials who were with him.

#### *Balaam’s First Oracle*

<sup>41</sup>On the next day Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-baal; and from there he could see part of the people of Israel.

#### **Luke 1:39-56 (NRSV)**

##### *Mary Visits Elizabeth*

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,<sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.<sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit<sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.<sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?<sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy.<sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

##### *Mary’s Song of Praise*

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said,  
“My soul magnifies the  
Lord,  
<sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in  
God my Savior,



48 for he has looked with  
favor on the lowliness  
of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all  
generations will call me  
blessed;  
49 for the Mighty One has  
done great things for  
me,  
and holy is his name.  
50 His mercy is for those who  
fear him  
from generation to  
generation.  
51 He has shown strength  
with his arm;  
he has scattered the  
proud in the thoughts  
of their hearts.  
52 He has brought down the  
powerful from their  
thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
53 he has filled the hungry  
with good things,  
and sent the rich away  
empty.  
54 He has helped his servant  
Israel,  
in remembrance of his  
mercy,  
55 according to the promise  
he made to our  
ancestors,

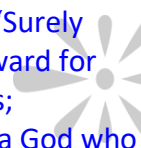
to Abraham and to his  
descendants forever.”

<sup>56</sup> And Mary remained with  
her about three months and  
then returned to her home.

**Psalm 58:10-11** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> The righteous will rejoice  
when they see  
vengeance done;  
they will bathe their feet  
in the blood of the  
wicked.

<sup>11</sup> People will say, “Surely  
there is a reward for  
the righteous;  
surely there is a God who  
judges on earth.”



**Proverbs 16:6-7** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> By loyalty and faithfulness  
iniquity is atoned for,  
and by the fear of the  
LORD one avoids evil.

<sup>7</sup> When the ways of people  
please the LORD,  
he causes even their  
enemies to be at peace  
with them.

# May 29



## Numbers 23:1-30 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me." <sup>2</sup> Balak did as Balaam had said; and Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar. <sup>3</sup> Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stay here beside your burnt offerings while I go aside. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet me. Whatever he shows me I will tell you." And he went to a bare height.

<sup>4</sup> Then God met Balaam; and Balaam said to him, "I have arranged the seven altars, and have offered a bull and a ram on each altar." <sup>5</sup> The LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and this is what you must say." <sup>6</sup> So he returned to Balak, who was standing beside his burnt offerings with all the officials of Moab. <sup>7</sup> Then Balaam uttered his oracle, saying:

"Balak has brought me  
from Aram,

the king of Moab from  
the eastern mountains:  
'Come, curse Jacob for me;  
Come, denounce Israel!'

<sup>8</sup> How can I curse whom  
God has not cursed?  
How can I denounce  
those whom the LORD  
has not denounced?  
<sup>9</sup> For from the top of the  
crag I see him,  
from the hills I behold  
him;  
Here is a people living  
alone,  
and not reckoning itself  
among the nations!  
<sup>10</sup> Who can count the dust of  
Jacob,  
or number the dust-  
cloud of Israel?  
Let me die the death of the  
upright,  
and let my end be like  
his!"

<sup>11</sup> Then Balak said to  
Balaam, "What have you done  
to me? I brought you to curse  
my enemies, but now you  
have done nothing but bless  
them." <sup>12</sup> He answered, "Must  
I not take care to say what the  
LORD puts into my mouth?"

*Balaam's Second Oracle*

<sup>13</sup> So Balak said to him, "Come with me to another place from which you may see them; you shall see only part of them, and shall not see them all; then curse them for me from there." <sup>14</sup> So he took him to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah. He built seven altars, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

<sup>15</sup> Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here beside your burnt offerings, while I meet the LORD over there." <sup>16</sup> The LORD met Balaam, put a word into his mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and this is what you shall say." <sup>17</sup> When he came to him, he was standing beside his burnt offerings with the officials of Moab. Balak said to him, "What has the LORD said?" <sup>18</sup> Then Balaam uttered his oracle, saying:

"Rise, Balak, and hear;  
listen to me, O son of  
Zippor:

<sup>19</sup> God is not a human being,  
that he should lie,  
or a mortal, that he  
should change his  
mind.

Has he promised, and will  
he not do it?

Has he spoken, and will  
he not fulfill it?

<sup>20</sup> See, I received a command  
to bless;

he has blessed, and I  
cannot revoke it.

<sup>21</sup> He has not beheld  
misfortune in Jacob;  
nor has he seen trouble  
in Israel.

The LORD their God is with  
them,  
acclaimed as a king  
among them.

<sup>22</sup> God, who brings them out  
of Egypt,  
is like the horns of a wild  
ox for them.

<sup>23</sup> Surely there is no  
enchantment against  
Jacob,  
no divination against  
Israel;

now it shall be said of  
Jacob and Israel,  
'See what God has  
done!'

<sup>24</sup> Look, a people rising up  
like a lioness,  
and rousing itself like a  
lion!

It does not lie down until it  
has eaten the prey

and drunk the blood of  
the slain.”

<sup>25</sup> Then Balak said to  
Balaam, “Do not curse them at  
all, and do not bless them at  
all.” <sup>26</sup> But Balaam answered  
Balak, “Did I not tell you,  
‘Whatever the LORD says, that  
is what I must do?’”

<sup>27</sup> So Balak said to Balaam,  
“Come now, I will take you to  
another place; perhaps it will  
please God that you may curse  
them for me from there.” <sup>28</sup> So  
Balak took Balaam to the top  
of Peor, which overlooks the  
wasteland. <sup>29</sup> Balaam said to  
Balak, “Build me seven altars  
here, and prepare seven bulls  
and seven rams for me.” <sup>30</sup> So  
Balak did as Balaam had said,  
and offered a bull and a ram  
on each altar.

### **Luke 1:57-66 (NRSV)**

#### *The Birth of John the Baptist*

<sup>57</sup> Now the time came for  
Elizabeth to give birth, and she  
bore a son. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbors  
and relatives heard that the  
Lord had shown his great  
mercy to her, and they  
rejoiced with her.

<sup>59</sup> On the eighth day they  
came to circumcise the child,

and they were going to name  
him Zechariah after his father.

<sup>60</sup> But his mother said, “No; he  
is to be called John.” <sup>61</sup> They  
said to her, “None of your  
relatives has this name.”

<sup>62</sup> Then they began motioning  
to his father to find out what  
name he wanted to give him.

<sup>63</sup> He asked for a writing tablet  
and wrote, “His name is John.”  
And all of them were amazed.

<sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was  
opened and his tongue freed,  
and he began to speak,  
praising God. <sup>65</sup> Fear came  
over all their neighbors, and all  
these things were talked about  
throughout the entire hill  
country of Judea. <sup>66</sup> All who  
heard them pondered them  
and said, “What then will this  
child become?” For, indeed,  
the hand of the Lord was with  
him.

### **Psalms 59:1-13 (NRSV)**

#### *Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of  
David. A Miktam, when Saul ordered  
his house to be watched in order to  
kill him.

<sup>1</sup> Deliver me from my  
enemies, O my God;

protect me from those  
who rise up against  
me.  
2 Deliver me from those who  
work evil;  
from the bloodthirsty  
save me.  
3 Even now they lie in wait  
for my life;  
the mighty stir up strife  
against me.  
For no transgression or sin  
of mine, O LORD,  
4 for no fault of mine, they  
run and make ready.  
Rouse yourself, come to  
my help and see!  
5 You, LORD God of hosts,  
are God of Israel.  
Awake to punish all the  
nations;  
spare none of those who  
treacherously plot evil.  
*Selah*  
6 Each evening they come  
back,  
howling like dogs  
and prowling about the  
city.  
7 There they are, bellowing  
with their mouths,  
with sharp words on  
their lips—  
for “Who,” they think,  
“will hear us?”

8 But you laugh at them, O  
LORD;  
you hold all the nations  
in derision.  
9 O my strength, I will watch  
for you;  
for you, O God, are my  
fortress.  
10 My God in his steadfast  
love will meet me;  
my God will let me look  
in triumph on my  
enemies.  
11 Do not kill them, or my  
people may forget;  
make them totter by  
your power, and bring  
them down,  
O Lord, our shield.  
12 For the sin of their mouths,  
the words of their lips,  
let them be trapped in  
their pride.  
For the cursing and lies  
that they utter,  
13 consume them in wrath;  
consume them until they  
are no more.  
Then it will be known to  
the ends of the earth  
that God rules over  
Jacob. *Selah*

**Proverbs 16:8–9 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Better is a little with  
righteousness  
than large income with  
injustice.  
<sup>9</sup> The human mind plans the  
way,  
but the LORD directs the  
steps.

**May 30**



**Numbers 24:1-25 (NRSV)**

*Balaam's Third Oracle*

<sup>1</sup> Now Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, so he did not go, as at other times, to look for omens, but set his face toward the wilderness. <sup>2</sup> Balaam looked up and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. Then the spirit of God came upon him, <sup>3</sup> and he uttered his oracle, saying:

“The oracle of Balaam son  
of Beor,  
the oracle of the man  
whose eye is clear,

<sup>4</sup> the oracle of one who  
hears the words of  
God,  
who sees the vision of  
the Almighty,  
who falls down, but with  
eyes uncovered:  
<sup>5</sup> how fair are your tents, O  
Jacob,  
your encampments, O  
Israel!  
<sup>6</sup> Like palm groves that  
stretch far away,  
like gardens beside a  
river,  
like aloes that the LORD has  
planted,  
like cedar trees beside  
the waters.  
<sup>7</sup> Water shall flow from his  
buckets,  
and his seed shall have  
abundant water,  
his king shall be higher  
than Agag,  
and his kingdom shall be  
exalted.  
<sup>8</sup> God who brings him out of  
Egypt,  
is like the horns of a wild  
ox for him;  
he shall devour the nations  
that are his foes  
and break their bones.

He shall strike with his  
arrows.

<sup>9</sup> He crouched, he lay down  
like a lion,  
and like a lioness; who  
will rouse him up?  
Blessed is everyone who  
blesses you,  
and cursed is everyone  
who curses you.”

<sup>10</sup> Then Balak’s anger was  
kindled against Balaam, and  
he struck his hands together.  
Balak said to Balaam, “I  
summoned you to curse my  
enemies, but instead you have  
blessed them these three  
times. <sup>11</sup> Now be off with you!  
Go home! I said, ‘I will reward  
you richly,’ but the LORD has  
denied you any reward.”

<sup>12</sup> And Balaam said to Balak,  
“Did I not tell your messengers  
whom you sent to me, <sup>13</sup> ‘If  
Balak should give me his house  
full of silver and gold, I would  
not be able to go beyond the  
word of the LORD, to do either  
good or bad of my own will;  
what the LORD says, that is  
what I will say’? <sup>14</sup> So now, I  
am going to my people; let me  
advise you what this people  
will do to your people in days  
to come.”

### *Balaam’s Fourth Oracle*

<sup>15</sup> So he uttered his oracle,  
saying:  
“The oracle of Balaam son  
of Beor,  
the oracle of the man  
whose eye is clear,  
<sup>16</sup> the oracle of one who  
hears the words of  
God,  
and knows the  
knowledge of the Most  
High,  
who sees the vision of the  
Almighty,  
who falls down, but with  
his eyes uncovered:  
<sup>17</sup> I see him, but not now;  
I behold him, but not  
near—  
a star shall come out of  
Jacob,  
and a scepter shall rise  
out of Israel;  
it shall crush the  
borderlands of Moab,  
and the territory of all  
the Shethites.  
<sup>18</sup> Edom will become a  
possession,  
Seir a possession of its  
enemies,  
while Israel does  
valiantly.  
<sup>19</sup> One out of Jacob shall rule,

and destroy the survivors  
of Ir.”

<sup>20</sup> Then he looked on  
Amalek, and uttered his  
oracle, saying:

“First among the nations  
was Amalek,  
but its end is to perish  
forever.”

<sup>21</sup> Then he looked on the  
Kenite, and uttered his oracle,  
saying:

“Enduring is your dwelling  
place,  
and your nest is set in  
the rock;

<sup>22</sup> yet Kain is destined for  
burning.  
How long shall Asshur  
take you away  
captive?”

<sup>23</sup> Again he uttered his  
oracle, saying:

“Alas, who shall live when  
God does this?

<sup>24</sup> But ships shall come  
from Kittim  
and shall afflict Asshur and  
Eber;  
and he also shall perish  
forever.”

<sup>25</sup> Then Balaam got up and  
went back to his place, and  
Balak also went his way.

**Luke 1:67-80** (NRSV)

*Zechariah’s Prophecy*

<sup>67</sup> Then his father

Zechariah was filled with the  
Holy Spirit and spoke this  
prophecy:

<sup>68</sup> “Blessed be the Lord God  
of Israel,

for he has looked  
favorably on his people  
and redeemed them.

<sup>69</sup> He has raised up a mighty  
savior for us  
in the house of his  
servant David,

<sup>70</sup> as he spoke through the  
mouth of his holy

prophets from of old,  
<sup>71</sup> that we would be saved  
from our enemies and  
from the hand of all  
who hate us.

<sup>72</sup> Thus he has shown the  
mercy promised to our  
ancestors,  
and has remembered his  
holy covenant,

<sup>73</sup> the oath that he swore to  
our ancestor Abraham,  
to grant us <sup>74</sup> that we,  
being rescued from the  
hands of our enemies,  
might serve him without  
fear, <sup>75</sup> in holiness and  
righteousness



before him all our days.  
76 And you, child, will be  
called the prophet of  
the Most High;  
for you will go before the  
Lord to prepare his  
ways,  
77 to give knowledge of  
salvation to his people  
by the forgiveness of  
their sins.  
78 By the tender mercy of our  
God,  
the dawn from on high  
will break upon us,  
79 to give light to those who  
sit in darkness and in  
the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the  
way of peace.”

80 The child grew and  
became strong in spirit, and he  
was in the wilderness until the  
day he appeared publicly to  
Israel.

**Psalms 59:14-17 (NRSV)**

14 Each evening they come  
back,  
howling like dogs  
and prowling about the  
city.  
15 They roam about for food,  
and growl if they do not  
get their fill.

16 But I will sing of your  
might;  
I will sing aloud of your  
steadfast love in the  
morning.  
For you have been a  
fortress for me  
and a refuge in the day  
of my distress.  
17 O my strength, I will sing  
praises to you,  
for you, O God, are my  
fortress,  
the God who shows me  
steadfast love.

**Proverbs 16:10–11 (NRSV)**

10 Inspired decisions are on  
the lips of a king;  
his mouth does not sin in  
judgment.  
11 Honest balances and scales  
are the LORD'S;  
all the weights in the bag  
are his work.



## May 31



### Numbers 25:1-18 (NRSV)

#### *Worship of Baal of Peor*

<sup>1</sup> While Israel was staying at Shittim, the people began to have sexual relations with the women of Moab. <sup>2</sup> These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. <sup>3</sup> Thus Israel yoked itself to the Baal of Peor, and the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel.

<sup>4</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Take all the chiefs of the people, and impale them in the sun before the LORD, in order that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." <sup>5</sup> And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you shall kill any of your people who have yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor."

<sup>6</sup> Just then one of the Israelites came and brought a Midianite woman into his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the Israelites,

while they were weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>7</sup> When Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he got up and left the congregation. Taking a spear in his hand, <sup>8</sup> he went after the Israelite man into the tent, and pierced the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, through the belly. So the plague was stopped among the people of Israel. <sup>9</sup> Nevertheless those that died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>11</sup> "Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the Israelites by manifesting such zeal among them on my behalf that in my jealousy I did not consume the Israelites. <sup>12</sup> Therefore say, 'I hereby grant him my covenant of peace. <sup>13</sup> It shall be for him and for his descendants after him a covenant of perpetual priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the Israelites.' "

<sup>14</sup> The name of the slain Israelite man, who was killed with the Midianite woman,

was Zimri son of Salu, head of an ancestral house belonging to the Simeonites.<sup>15</sup> The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi daughter of Zur, who was the head of a clan, an ancestral house in Midian.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD said to Moses,  
<sup>17</sup>“Harass the Midianites, and defeat them; <sup>18</sup>for they have harassed you by the trickery with which they deceived you in the affair of Peor, and in the affair of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister; she was killed on the day of the plague that resulted from Peor.”

## **Luke 2:1-20** (NRSV)

### *The Birth of Jesus*

(Mt 1:18–25)

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the

house and family of David.

<sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### *The Shepherds and the Angels*

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the

heavenly host, praising God  
and saying,

<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the  
highest heaven,  
and on earth peace  
among those whom he  
favors!”

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left  
them and gone into heaven,  
the shepherds said to one  
another, “Let us go now to  
Bethlehem and see this thing  
that has taken place, which  
the Lord has made known to  
us.” <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste  
and found Mary and Joseph,  
and the child lying in the  
manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw  
this, they made known what  
had been told them about this  
child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it  
were amazed at what the  
shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But  
Mary treasured all these  
words and pondered them in  
her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds  
returned, glorifying and  
praising God for all they had  
heard and seen, as it had been  
told them.

**Psalm 60:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for National Victory  
after Defeat  
(Cp Ps 108:6–13)*

To the leader: according to the Lily  
of the Covenant. A Miktam of David;  
for instruction; when he struggled  
with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-  
zobah, and when Joab on his return  
killed twelve thousand Edomites in  
the Valley of Salt.

- <sup>1</sup> O God, you have rejected  
us, broken our  
defenses;  
you have been angry;  
now restore us!
- <sup>2</sup> You have caused the land  
to quake; you have  
torn it open;  
repair the cracks in it, for  
it is tottering.
- <sup>3</sup> You have made your  
people suffer hard  
things;  
you have given us wine  
to drink that made us  
reel.
- <sup>4</sup> You have set up a banner  
for those who fear you,  
to rally to it out of  
bowshot. *Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> Give victory with your right  
hand, and answer us,  
so that those whom you  
love may be rescued.

**Proverbs 16:12–13** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> It is an abomination to kings to do evil, for the throne is established by righteousness.

<sup>13</sup> Righteous lips are the delight of a king, and he loves those who speak what is right.

**June 1**



**Numbers 26:1-37** (NRSV)

*A Census of the  
New Generation*

<sup>1</sup> After the plague the LORD said to Moses and to Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, <sup>2</sup> “Take a census of the whole congregation of the Israelites, from twenty years old and upward, by their ancestral houses, everyone in Israel able to go to war.” <sup>3</sup> Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho, saying, <sup>4</sup> “Take a census of the

people, from twenty years old and upward,” as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Israelites, who came out of the land of Egypt, were:

<sup>5</sup> Reuben, the firstborn of Israel. The descendants of Reuben: of Hanoch, the clan of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the clan of the Palluites; <sup>6</sup> of Hezron, the clan of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the clan of the Carmites. <sup>7</sup> These are the clans of the Reubenites; the number of those enrolled was forty-three thousand seven hundred thirty. <sup>8</sup> And the descendants of Pallu: Eliab. <sup>9</sup> The descendants of Eliab: Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are the same Dathan and Abiram, chosen from the congregation, who rebelled against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they rebelled against the LORD, <sup>10</sup> and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up along with Korah, when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred fifty men; and they became a warning.

<sup>11</sup> Notwithstanding, the sons of Korah did not die.

<sup>12</sup> The descendants of Simeon by their clans: of Nemuel, the clan of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the clan of the Jaminites; of Jachin, the clan of the Jachinites; <sup>13</sup> of Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites; of Shaul, the clan of the Shaulites. <sup>14</sup> These are the clans of the Simeonites, twenty-two thousand two hundred.

<sup>15</sup> The children of Gad by their clans: of Zephon, the clan of the Zephonites; of Haggi, the clan of the Haggites; of Shuni, the clan of the Shunites; <sup>16</sup> of Ozni, the clan of the Oznites; of Eri, the clan of the Erites; <sup>17</sup> of Arod, the clan of the Arodites; of Areli, the clan of the Arelites. <sup>18</sup> These are the clans of the Gadites: the number of those enrolled was forty thousand five hundred.

<sup>19</sup> The sons of Judah: Er and Onan; Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. <sup>20</sup> The descendants of Judah by their clans were: of Shelah, the clan of the Shelanites; of Perez, the clan of the Perezites; of Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites.

<sup>21</sup> The descendants of Perez

were: of Hezron, the clan of the Hezronites; of Hamul, the clan of the Hamulites. <sup>22</sup> These are the clans of Judah: the number of those enrolled was seventy-six thousand five hundred.

<sup>23</sup> The descendants of Issachar by their clans: of Tola, the clan of the Tolaites; of Puvah, the clan of the Punites; <sup>24</sup> of Jashub, the clan of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the clan of the Shimronites.

<sup>25</sup> These are the clans of Issachar: sixty-four thousand three hundred enrolled.

<sup>26</sup> The descendants of Zebulun by their clans: of Sered, the clan of the Seredites; of Elon, the clan of the Elonites; of Jahleel, the clan of the Jahleelites. <sup>27</sup> These are the clans of the Zebulunites; the number of those enrolled was sixty thousand five hundred.

<sup>28</sup> The sons of Joseph by their clans: Manasseh and Ephraim. <sup>29</sup> The descendants of Manasseh: of Machir, the clan of the Machirites; and Machir was the father of Gilead; of Gilead, the clan of the Gileadites. <sup>30</sup> These are the

descendants of Gilead: of Iezer, the clan of the Iezerites; of Helek, the clan of the Helekites;<sup>31</sup> and of Asriel, the clan of the Asrielites; and of Shechem, the clan of the Shechemites;<sup>32</sup> and of Shemida, the clan of the Shemidaites; and of Hopher, the clan of the Hopherites.

<sup>33</sup> Now Zelophehad son of Hopher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.<sup>34</sup> These are the clans of Manasseh; the number of those enrolled was fifty-two thousand seven hundred.

<sup>35</sup> These are the descendants of Ephraim according to their clans: of Shuthelah, the clan of the Shuthelahites; of Becher, the clan of the Becherites; of Tahan, the clan of the Tahanites.<sup>36</sup> And these are the descendants of Shuthelah: of Eran, the clan of the Eranites.

<sup>37</sup> These are the clans of the Ephraimites: the number of those enrolled was thirty-two thousand five hundred. These

are the descendants of Joseph by their clans.

### **Luke 2:21-35 (NRSV)**

#### *Jesus Is Named*

<sup>21</sup> After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

#### *Jesus Is Presented in the Temple*

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord<sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"),<sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.<sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy

Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup> "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." <sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

**Psalm 60:6-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> God has promised in his sanctuary:  
"With exultation I will divide up Shechem, and portion out the Vale of Succoth.  
<sup>7</sup> Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim is my helmet; Judah is my scepter.  
<sup>8</sup> Moab is my washbasin; on Edom I hurl my shoe; over Philistia I shout in triumph."  
<sup>9</sup> Who will bring me to the fortified city?  
Who will lead me to Edom?  
<sup>10</sup> Have you not rejected us, O God?  
You do not go out, O God, with our armies.  
<sup>11</sup> O grant us help against the foe,  
for human help is worthless.  
<sup>12</sup> With God we shall do valiantly;  
it is he who will tread down our foes.

**Proverbs 16:14-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> A king's wrath is a messenger of death,



and whoever is wise will  
appease it.

<sup>15</sup> In the light of a king's face  
there is life,  
and his favor is like the  
clouds that bring the  
spring rain.

## June 2



### Numbers 26:38-51 (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup> The descendants of Benjamin by their clans: of Bela, the clan of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the clan of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram, the clan of the Ahiramites; <sup>39</sup> of Shephupham, the clan of the Shuphamites; of Hupham, the clan of the Huphamites. <sup>40</sup> And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the clan of the Ardites; of Naaman, the clan of the Naamites. <sup>41</sup> These are the descendants of Benjamin by their clans; the number of those enrolled was forty-five thousand six hundred.

<sup>42</sup> These are the descendants of Dan by their clans: of Shuham, the clan of the Shuhamites. These are the clans of Dan by their clans.

<sup>43</sup> All the clans of the Shuhamites: sixty-four thousand four hundred enrolled.

<sup>44</sup> The descendants of Asher by their families: of Imnah, the clan of the Imnites; of Ishvi, the clan of the Ishvites; of Beriah, the clan of the Beriites. <sup>45</sup> Of the descendants of Beriah: of Heber, the clan of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the clan of the Malchielites. <sup>46</sup> And the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah. <sup>47</sup> These are the clans of the Asherites: the number of those enrolled was fifty-three thousand four hundred.

<sup>48</sup> The descendants of Naphtali by their clans: of Jahzeel, the clan of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the clan of the Gunites; <sup>49</sup> of Jezer, the clan of the Jezerites; of Shillem, the clan of the Shillemites. <sup>50</sup> These are the Naphtalites by their clans: the number of those enrolled was

forty-five thousand four hundred.

<sup>51</sup>This was the number of the Israelites enrolled: six hundred and one thousand seven hundred thirty.

**Luke 2:36-40** (NRSV)

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

*The Return to Nazareth*

<sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

**Psalms 61:1-3** (NRSV)

*Assurance of God's Protection*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. Of David.

- 1 Hear my cry, O God;  
listen to my prayer.
- 2 From the end of the earth I  
call to you,  
when my heart is faint.  
Lead me to the rock  
that is higher than I;
- 3 for you are my refuge,  
a strong tower against  
the enemy.

**Proverbs 16:16-17** (NRSV)

- <sup>16</sup> How much better to get  
wisdom than gold!  
To get understanding is  
to be chosen rather  
than silver.
- <sup>17</sup> The highway of the upright  
avoids evil; those who  
guard their way  
preserve their lives.



## June 3



### Numbers 26:52-27:11 (NRSV)

<sup>52</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>53</sup>To these the land shall be apportioned for inheritance according to the number of names. <sup>54</sup>To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance; every tribe shall be given its inheritance according to its enrollment.

<sup>55</sup>But the land shall be apportioned by lot; according to the names of their ancestral tribes they shall inherit.

<sup>56</sup>Their inheritance shall be apportioned according to lot between the larger and the smaller.

<sup>57</sup>This is the enrollment of the Levites by their clans: of Gershon, the clan of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the clan of the Kohathites; of Merari, the clan of the Merarites. <sup>58</sup>These are the clans of Levi: the clan of the Libnites, the clan of the Hebronites, the clan of the Mahlites, the clan of the

Mushites, the clan of the Korahites. Now Kohath was the father of Amram. <sup>59</sup>The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and she bore to Amram: Aaron, Moses, and their sister Miriam. <sup>60</sup>To Aaron were born Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. <sup>61</sup>But Nadab and Abihu died when they offered unholy fire before the LORD. <sup>62</sup>The number of those enrolled was twenty-three thousand, every male one month old and upward; for they were not enrolled among the Israelites because there was no allotment given to them among the Israelites.

<sup>63</sup>These were those enrolled by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who enrolled the Israelites in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho. <sup>64</sup>Among these there was not one of those enrolled by Moses and Aaron the priest, who had enrolled the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. <sup>65</sup>For the LORD had said of them, "They shall die in the wilderness." Not one of them was left, except Caleb son of

Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

*The Daughters of Zelophehad*

**27** Then the daughters of Zelophehad came forward. Zelophehad was son of Hopher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh son of Joseph, a member of the Manassite clans. The names of his daughters were: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. <sup>2</sup> They stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders, and all the congregation, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and they said, <sup>3</sup> “Our father died in the wilderness; he was not among the company of those who gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah, but died for his own sin; and he had no sons. <sup>4</sup> Why should the name of our father be taken away from his clan because he had no son? Give to us a possession among our father’s brothers.”

<sup>5</sup> Moses brought their case before the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>7</sup> The daughters of Zelophehad

are right in what they are saying; you shall indeed let them possess an inheritance among their father’s brothers and pass the inheritance of their father on to them. <sup>8</sup> You shall also say to the Israelites, “If a man dies, and has no son, then you shall pass his inheritance on to his daughter. <sup>9</sup> If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. <sup>10</sup> If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father’s brothers. <sup>11</sup> And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the nearest kinsman of his clan, and he shall possess it. It shall be for the Israelites a statute and ordinance, as the LORD commanded Moses.”

**Luke 2:41-52 (NRSV)**

*The Boy Jesus in the Temple*

<sup>41</sup> Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. <sup>43</sup> When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in

Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. <sup>44</sup> Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup> When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." <sup>49</sup> He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand what he said to them. <sup>51</sup> Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

<sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

**Psalm 61:4-8** (NRSV)

- <sup>4</sup> Let me abide in your tent forever,  
find refuge under the shelter of your wings.  
*Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> For you, O God, have heard my vows;  
you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.
- <sup>6</sup> Prolong the life of the king;  
may his years endure to all generations!
- <sup>7</sup> May he be enthroned forever before God;  
appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him!
- <sup>8</sup> So I will always sing praises to your name,  
as I pay my vows day after day.

**Proverbs 16:18** (NRSV)

- <sup>18</sup> Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.



## June 4



### Numbers 27:12-28:15 (NRSV)

#### *Joshua Appointed Moses' Successor* (Deut 31:1–8)

<sup>12</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Go up this mountain of the Abarim range, and see the land that I have given to the Israelites. <sup>13</sup>When you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was, <sup>14</sup>because you rebelled against my word in the wilderness of Zin when the congregation quarreled with me. You did not show my holiness before their eyes at the waters.” (These are the waters of Meribath-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.) <sup>15</sup>Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, <sup>16</sup>“Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint someone over the congregation <sup>17</sup>who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep

without a shepherd.” <sup>18</sup>So the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand upon him; <sup>19</sup>have him stand before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation, and commission him in their sight. <sup>20</sup>You shall give him some of your authority, so that all the congregation of the Israelites may obey. <sup>21</sup>But he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the decision of the Urim before the LORD; at his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the Israelites with him, the whole congregation.” <sup>22</sup>So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation; <sup>23</sup>he laid his hands on him and commissioned him—as the LORD had directed through Moses.

#### *Daily Offerings* (Ex 29:38–46)

**28** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup>Command the

Israelites, and say to them: My offering, the food for my offerings by fire, my pleasing odor, you shall take care to offer to me at its appointed time.<sup>3</sup> And you shall say to them, This is the offering by fire that you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs a year old without blemish, daily, as a regular offering.<sup>4</sup> One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight;<sup>5</sup> also one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil.<sup>6</sup> It is a regular burnt offering, ordained at Mount Sinai for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.<sup>7</sup> Its drink offering shall be one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; in the sanctuary you shall pour out a drink offering of strong drink to the LORD.<sup>8</sup> The other lamb you shall offer at twilight with a grain offering and a drink offering like the one in the morning; you shall offer it as an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

### *Sabbath Offerings*

<sup>9</sup> On the sabbath day: two male lambs a year old without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, and its drink offering—<sup>10</sup> this is the burnt offering for every sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

### *Monthly Offerings*

<sup>11</sup> At the beginnings of your months you shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish;<sup>12</sup> also three-tenths of an ephah of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; and two-tenths of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram;<sup>13</sup> and one-tenth of choice flour mixed with oil as a grain offering for every lamb—a burnt offering of pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.<sup>14</sup> Their drink offerings shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, one-third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb. This is the burnt offering of every month

throughout the months of the year. <sup>15</sup> And there shall be one male goat for a sin offering to the LORD; it shall be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

**Luke 3:1-14** (NRSV)

*The Proclamation of  
John the Baptist*

(Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8; Jn 1:19-28)

<sup>1</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,  
“The voice of one crying  
out in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the  
Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;  
<sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> He said to them,



“Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.”

<sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

**Psalm 62:1-8** (NRSV)

*Song of Trust in God Alone*

To the leader: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> For God alone my soul waits in silence;  
from him comes my salvation.

<sup>2</sup> **He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall never be shaken.**

<sup>3</sup> How long will you assail a person,  
will you batter your victim, all of you,  
as you would a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

<sup>4</sup> Their only plan is to bring down a person of prominence.  
They take pleasure in falsehood;  
they bless with their mouths,

but inwardly they curse.

*Selah*

<sup>5</sup> For God alone my soul waits in silence,  
for my hope is from him.

<sup>6</sup> He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

<sup>7</sup> On God rests my deliverance and my honor;  
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.

<sup>8</sup> Trust in him at all times, O people;  
pour out your heart before him;  
God is a refuge for us.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 16:19–20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> It is better to be of a lowly spirit among the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.

<sup>20</sup> Those who are attentive to a matter will prosper, and happy are those who trust in the LORD.

## June 5



### Numbers 28:16-29:11 (NRSV)

#### *Offerings at Passover*

(Lev 23:5–14)

<sup>16</sup> On the fourteenth day of the first month there shall be a passover offering to the LORD.

<sup>17</sup> And on the fifteenth day of this month is a festival; seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. <sup>18</sup> On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall not work at your occupations.

<sup>19</sup> You shall offer an offering by fire, a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old; see that they are without blemish. <sup>20</sup> Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah shall you offer for a bull, and two-tenths for a ram; <sup>21</sup> one-tenth shall you offer for each of the seven lambs; <sup>22</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you. <sup>23</sup> You shall offer these in addition to the burnt offering of the morning, which belongs to the regular

burnt offering. <sup>24</sup> In the same way you shall offer daily, for seven days, the food of an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD; it shall be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. <sup>25</sup> And on the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations.

#### *Offerings at the Festival of Weeks*

(Lev 23:15–22)

<sup>26</sup> On the day of the first fruits, when you offer a grain offering of new grain to the LORD at your festival of weeks, you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations.

<sup>27</sup> You shall offer a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, seven male lambs a year old. <sup>28</sup> Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for each bull, two-tenths for one ram, <sup>29</sup> one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; <sup>30</sup> with one male goat, to make atonement for you. <sup>31</sup> In addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, you shall offer

them and their drink offering.  
They shall be without blemish.

*Offerings at the  
Festival of Trumpets  
(Lev 23:23–25)*

**29** On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. It is a day for you to blow the trumpets,<sup>2</sup> and you shall offer a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the LORD: one young bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish.<sup>3</sup> Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of one ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram,<sup>4</sup> and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs;<sup>5</sup> with one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you.<sup>6</sup> These are in addition to the burnt offering of the new moon and its grain offering, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to the ordinance for them, a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.

*Offerings on the  
Day of Atonement  
(Lev 23:26–32)*

<sup>7</sup> On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation, and deny yourselves; you shall do no work.<sup>8</sup> You shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD, a pleasing odor: one young bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old. They shall be without blemish.<sup>9</sup> Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram,<sup>10</sup> one-tenth for each of the seven lambs;<sup>11</sup> with one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the sin offering of atonement, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

**Luke 3:15-22 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,<sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong

of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>18</sup> So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. <sup>19</sup> But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, <sup>20</sup> added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

### *The Baptism of Jesus*

*(Mt 3:13–17; Mk 1:9–11; Jn 1:29–34)*

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

### **Psalm 62:9-12** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Those of low estate are but a breath,

those of high estate are a delusion;  
in the balances they go up;  
they are together lighter  
than a breath.

- <sup>10</sup> Put no confidence in extortion,  
and set no vain hopes on robbery;  
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.
- <sup>11</sup> Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God,  
<sup>12</sup> and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.  
For you repay to all according to their work.

### **Proverbs 16:21–23** (NRSV)

- <sup>21</sup> The wise of heart is called perceptive,  
and pleasant speech increases persuasiveness.
- <sup>22</sup> Wisdom is a fountain of life to one who has it,  
but folly is the punishment of fools.
- <sup>23</sup> The mind of the wise makes their speech judicious,



and adds persuasiveness  
to their lips.

## June 6



### Numbers 29:12-40 (NRSV)

*Offerings at the  
Festival of Booths*  
(Lev 23:33-44)

<sup>12</sup> On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. You shall celebrate a festival to the LORD seven days. <sup>13</sup> You shall offer a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD: thirteen young bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old. They shall be without blemish. <sup>14</sup> Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, <sup>15</sup> and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs; <sup>16</sup> also one male goat

for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering.

<sup>17</sup> On the second day: twelve young bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>18</sup> with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>19</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

<sup>20</sup> On the third day: eleven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>21</sup> with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>22</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

<sup>23</sup> On the fourth day: ten bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>24</sup> with the grain

offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>25</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering.

<sup>26</sup> On the fifth day: nine bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>27</sup> with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>28</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

<sup>29</sup> On the sixth day: eight bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>30</sup> with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>31</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offerings.

<sup>32</sup> On the seventh day: seven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>33</sup> with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>34</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

<sup>35</sup> On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall not work at your occupations. <sup>36</sup> You shall offer a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD: one bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish, <sup>37</sup> and the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; <sup>38</sup> also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

<sup>39</sup> These you shall offer to the LORD at your appointed festivals, in addition to your votive offerings and your

freewill offerings, as your burnt offerings, your grain offerings, your drink offerings, and your offerings of well-being.

<sup>40</sup> So Moses told the Israelites everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

**Luke 3:23-28 (NRSV)**

*The Ancestors of Jesus*

(Gen 5:1–32; 11:10–26; Ruth 4:18–22; 1 Chr 1:1–4, 24–27, 34; 2:1–15; Mt 1:2–16)

<sup>23</sup> Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, <sup>24</sup> son of Matthat, son of Levi, son of Melchi, son of Jannai, son of Joseph, <sup>25</sup> son of Mattathias, son of Amos, son of Nahum, son of Esli, son of Naggai, <sup>26</sup> son of Maath, son of Mattathias, son of Semein, son of Josech, son of Joda, <sup>27</sup> son of Joanan, son of Rhesa, son of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, son of Neri, <sup>28</sup> son of Melchi, son of Addi, son of Cosam, son of Elmadam, son of Er,

**Psalm 63:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Comfort and Assurance in  
God's Presence*

A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

<sup>1</sup> O God, you are my God, I seek you,  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary  
land where there is no  
water.

<sup>2</sup> So I have looked upon you  
in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power  
and glory.

<sup>3</sup> Because your steadfast  
love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.

<sup>4</sup> So I will bless you as long  
as I live;  
I will lift up my hands  
and call on your name.

<sup>5</sup> My soul is satisfied as with  
a rich feast,  
and my mouth praises  
you with joyful lips

**Proverbs 16:24 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> Pleasant words are like a  
honeycomb,  
sweetness to the soul  
and health to the body.



June 7



**Numbers 30:1-31:24** (NRSV)

*Vows Made by Women*

<sup>1</sup> Then Moses said to the heads of the tribes of the Israelites: This is what the LORD has commanded. <sup>2</sup> When a man makes a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

<sup>3</sup> When a woman makes a vow to the LORD, or binds herself by a pledge, while within her father's house, in her youth, <sup>4</sup> and her father hears of her vow or her pledge by which she has bound herself, and says nothing to her; then all her vows shall stand, and any pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand. <sup>5</sup> But if her father expresses disapproval to her at the time that he hears of it, no vow of hers, and no pledge by which she has bound herself, shall stand; and the LORD will forgive her, because

her father had expressed to her his disapproval.

<sup>6</sup> If she marries, while obligated by her vows or any thoughtless utterance of her lips by which she has bound herself, <sup>7</sup> and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her at the time that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. <sup>8</sup> But if, at the time that her husband hears of it, he expresses disapproval to her, then he shall nullify the vow by which she was obligated, or the thoughtless utterance of her lips, by which she bound herself; and the LORD will forgive her. <sup>9</sup> (But every vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall be binding upon her.) <sup>10</sup> And if she made a vow in her husband's house, or bound herself by a pledge with an oath, <sup>11</sup> and her husband heard it and said nothing to her, and did not express disapproval to her, then all her vows shall stand, and any pledge by which she bound herself shall stand.

<sup>12</sup> But if her husband nullifies



them at the time that he hears them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning her pledge of herself, shall not stand. Her husband has nullified them, and the LORD will forgive her. <sup>13</sup> Any vow or any binding oath to deny herself, her husband may allow to stand, or her husband may nullify. <sup>14</sup> But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he validates all her vows, or all her pledges, by which she is obligated; he has validated them, because he said nothing to her at the time that he heard of them. <sup>15</sup> But if he nullifies them some time after he has heard of them, then he shall bear her guilt.

<sup>16</sup> These are the statutes that the LORD commanded Moses concerning a husband and his wife, and a father and his daughter while she is still young and in her father's house.

### *War against Midian*

**31** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Avenge the Israelites on the Midianites; afterward

you shall be gathered to your people." <sup>3</sup> So Moses said to the people, "Arm some of your number for the war, so that they may go against Midian, to execute the LORD's vengeance on Midian. <sup>4</sup> You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war."

<sup>5</sup> So out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe were conscripted, twelve thousand armed for battle.

<sup>6</sup> Moses sent them to the war, a thousand from each tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for sounding the alarm in his hand. <sup>7</sup> They did battle against Midian, as the LORD had commanded Moses, and killed every male. <sup>8</sup> They killed the kings of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian, in addition to others who were slain by them; and they also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword. <sup>9</sup> The Israelites took the women of Midian and their little ones captive; and they took all their cattle, their flocks, and all their goods as booty. <sup>10</sup> All their towns where

they had settled, and all their encampments, they burned,<sup>11</sup> but they took all the spoil and all the booty, both people and animals.<sup>12</sup> Then they brought the captives and the booty and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the Israelites, at the camp on the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

### *Return from the War*

<sup>13</sup> Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation went to meet them outside the camp.<sup>14</sup> Moses became angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war.<sup>15</sup> Moses said to them, "Have you allowed all the women to live?"<sup>16</sup> These women here, on Balaam's advice, made the Israelites act treacherously against the LORD in the affair of Peor, so that the plague came among the congregation of the LORD.<sup>17</sup> Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has

known a man by sleeping with him.<sup>18</sup> But all the young girls who have not known a man by sleeping with him, keep alive for yourselves.<sup>19</sup> Camp outside the camp seven days; whoever of you has killed any person or touched a corpse, purify yourselves and your captives on the third and on the seventh day.<sup>20</sup> You shall purify every garment, every article of skin, everything made of goats' hair, and every article of wood."

<sup>21</sup> Eleazar the priest said to the troops who had gone to battle: "This is the statute of the law that the LORD has commanded Moses:<sup>22</sup> gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead—<sup>23</sup> everything that can withstand fire, shall be passed through fire, and it shall be clean. Nevertheless it shall also be purified with the water for purification; and whatever cannot withstand fire, shall be passed through the water.<sup>24</sup> You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you shall be clean; afterward you may come into the camp."

**Luke 3:29-4:13** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup>son of Joshua, son of Eliezer, son of Jorim, son of Matthat, son of Levi, <sup>30</sup>son of Simeon, son of Judah, son of Joseph, son of Jonam, son of Eliakim, <sup>31</sup>son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mattatha, son of Nathan, son of David, <sup>32</sup>son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, son of Sala, son of Nahshon, <sup>33</sup>son of Amminadab, son of Admin, son of Arni, son of Hezron, son of Perez, son of Judah, <sup>34</sup>son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Terah, son of Nahor, <sup>35</sup>son of Serug, son of Reu, son of Peleg, son of Eber, son of Shelah, <sup>36</sup>son of Cainan, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah, son of Lamech, <sup>37</sup>son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, <sup>38</sup>son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.

*The Temptation of Jesus*  
(Mt 4:1–11; Mk 1:12–13)

**4** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, <sup>2</sup>where for forty days he was tempted by the

devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.”

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered him, “**It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’**”

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.

<sup>6</sup>And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup>If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” <sup>8</sup>Jesus

answered him, “**It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’**”

<sup>9</sup>Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, <sup>10</sup>for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’  
<sup>11</sup>and

'On their hands they will  
bear you up,  
so that you will not dash  
your foot against a  
stone.' "

<sup>12</sup> Jesus answered him, "It is  
said, 'Do not put the Lord your  
God to the test.' " <sup>13</sup> When the  
devil had finished every test,  
he departed from him until an  
opportune time.

### Psalm 63:6-11 (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> when I think of you on my  
bed,  
and meditate on you in  
the watches of the  
night;  
<sup>7</sup> for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of  
your wings I sing for  
joy.

<sup>8</sup> My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds  
me.

<sup>9</sup> But those who seek to  
destroy my life  
shall go down into the  
depths of the earth;  
<sup>10</sup> they shall be given over to  
the power of the  
sword,  
they shall be prey for  
jackals.

<sup>11</sup> But the king shall rejoice in  
God;  
all who swear by him  
shall exult,  
for the mouths of liars  
will be stopped.

### Proverbs 16:25 (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Sometimes there is a way  
that seems to be right, but in  
the end it is the way to death.

## June 8



### Numbers 31:25-54 (NRSV)

#### *Disposition of Captives and Booty*

<sup>25</sup> The LORD spoke to  
Moses, saying, <sup>26</sup> "You and  
Eleazar the priest and the  
heads of the ancestral houses  
of the congregation make an  
inventory of the booty  
captured, both human and  
animal. <sup>27</sup> Divide the booty  
into two parts, between the  
warriors who went out to  
battle and all the  
congregation. <sup>28</sup> From the

share of the warriors who went out to battle, set aside as tribute for the LORD, one item out of every five hundred, whether persons, oxen, donkeys, sheep, or goats.

<sup>29</sup> Take it from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest as an offering to the LORD. <sup>30</sup> But from the Israelites' half you shall take one out of every fifty, whether persons, oxen, donkeys, sheep, or goats—all the animals—and give them to the Levites who have charge of the tabernacle of the LORD."

<sup>31</sup> Then Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD had commanded Moses:

<sup>32</sup> The booty remaining from the spoil that the troops had taken totaled six hundred seventy-five thousand sheep, <sup>33</sup> seventy-two thousand oxen, <sup>34</sup> sixty-one thousand donkeys, <sup>35</sup> and thirty-two thousand persons in all, women who had not known a man by sleeping with him.

<sup>36</sup> The half-share, the portion of those who had gone out to war, was in number three hundred thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep and goats, <sup>37</sup> and the LORD's

tribute of sheep and goats was six hundred seventy-five.

<sup>38</sup> The oxen were thirty-six thousand, of which the LORD's tribute was seventy-two.

<sup>39</sup> The donkeys were thirty thousand five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute was sixty-one. <sup>40</sup> The persons were sixteen thousand, of which the LORD's tribute was thirty-two persons. <sup>41</sup> Moses gave the tribute, the offering for the LORD, to Eleazar the priest, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>42</sup> As for the Israelites' half, which Moses separated from that of the troops, <sup>43</sup> the congregation's half was three hundred thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep and goats, <sup>44</sup> thirty-six thousand oxen, <sup>45</sup> thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, <sup>46</sup> and sixteen thousand persons. <sup>47</sup> From the Israelites' half Moses took one of every fifty, both of persons and of animals, and gave them to the Levites who had charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>48</sup> Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, approached Moses, <sup>49</sup> and said to Moses, “Your servants have counted the warriors who are under our command, and not one of us is missing. <sup>50</sup> And we have brought the LORD’s offering, what each of us found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and pendants, to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD.” <sup>51</sup> Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all in the form of crafted articles. <sup>52</sup> And all the gold of the offering that they offered to the LORD, from the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred fifty shekels. <sup>53</sup> (The troops had all taken plunder for themselves.) <sup>54</sup> So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tent of meeting as a memorial for the Israelites before the LORD.

### **Luke 4:14-30 (NRSV)**


#### *The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry* (Mt 4:17; Mk 1:14–15)

<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. <sup>15</sup> He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

#### *The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth* (Mt 13:54–58; Mk 6:1–6)

<sup>16</sup> When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to  
proclaim release to the captives



and recovery of sight to  
the blind,  
to let the oppressed go  
free,  
19 to proclaim the year of the  
Lord's favor."

20 And he rolled up the scroll,  
gave it back to the attendant,  
and sat down. The eyes of all  
in the synagogue were fixed  
on him. 21 Then he began to  
say to them, "Today this  
scripture has been fulfilled in  
your hearing." 22 All spoke well  
of him and were amazed at  
the gracious words that came  
from his mouth. They said, "Is  
not this Joseph's son?" 23 He  
said to them, "Doubtless you  
will quote to me this proverb,  
'Doctor, cure yourself!' And  
you will say, 'Do here also in  
your hometown the things  
that we have heard you did at  
Capernaum.'" 24 And he said,  
"Truly I tell you, no prophet is  
accepted in the prophet's  
hometown. 25 But the truth is,  
there were many widows in  
Israel in the time of Elijah,  
when the heaven was shut up  
three years and six months,  
and there was a severe famine  
over all the land; 26 yet Elijah  
was sent to none of them

except to a widow at  
Zarephath in Sidon." 27 There  
were also many lepers in Israel  
in the time of the prophet  
Elisha, and none of them was  
cleansed except Naaman the  
Syrian." 28 When they heard  
this, all in the synagogue were  
filled with rage. 29 They got up,  
drove him out of the town,  
and led him to the brow of the  
hill on which their town was  
built, so that they might hurl  
him off the cliff. 30 But he  
passed through the midst of  
them and went on his way.

#### **Psalm 64:1-9 (NRSV)**

##### *Prayer for Protection from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- 1 Hear my voice, O God, in  
my complaint;  
preserve my life from the  
dread enemy.
- 2 Hide me from the secret  
plots of the wicked,  
from the scheming of  
evildoers,
- 3 who whet their tongues  
like swords,  
who aim bitter words  
like arrows,
- 4 shooting from ambush at  
the blameless;

they shoot suddenly and  
without fear.

<sup>5</sup> They hold fast to their evil  
purpose;  
they talk of laying snares  
secretly,  
thinking, “Who can see us?”

<sup>6</sup> Who can search out our  
crimes?

We have thought out a  
cunningly conceived  
plot.”

For the human heart and  
mind are deep.

<sup>7</sup> But God will shoot his  
arrow at them;  
they will be wounded  
suddenly.

<sup>8</sup> Because of their tongue he  
will bring them to ruin;  
all who see them will  
shake with horror.

<sup>9</sup> Then everyone will fear;  
they will tell what God  
has brought about,  
and ponder what he has  
done.

**Proverbs 16:26–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> The appetite of workers  
works for them;  
their hunger urges them  
on.

<sup>27</sup> Scoundrels concoct evil,

and their speech is like a  
scorching fire.

## June 9



**Numbers 32:1-42 (NRSV)**

*Conquest and Division  
of Transjordan  
(Deut 3:12–22)*

<sup>1</sup> Now the Reubenites and the Gadites owned a very great number of cattle. When they saw that the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead was a good place for cattle, <sup>2</sup> the Gadites and the Reubenites came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, <sup>3</sup> “Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon—<sup>4</sup> the land that the LORD subdued before the congregation of Israel—is a land for cattle; and your servants have cattle.” <sup>5</sup> They continued, “If we have found favor in your sight, let this land



be given to your servants for a possession; do not make us cross the Jordan.”

<sup>6</sup> But Moses said to the Gadites and to the Reubenites, “Shall your brothers go to war while you sit here? <sup>7</sup> Why will you discourage the hearts of the Israelites from going over into the land that the LORD has given them? <sup>8</sup> Your fathers did this, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. <sup>9</sup> When they went up to the Wadi Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the hearts of the Israelites from going into the land that the LORD had given them. <sup>10</sup> The LORD’s anger was kindled on that day and he swore, saying, <sup>11</sup> ‘Surely none of the people who came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, because they have not unreservedly followed me— <sup>12</sup> none except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they have unreservedly followed the LORD.’ <sup>13</sup> And the LORD’s anger was kindled against Israel, and

he made them wander in the wilderness for forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD had disappeared. <sup>14</sup> And now you, a brood of sinners, have risen in place of your fathers, to increase the LORD’s fierce anger against Israel! <sup>15</sup> If you turn away from following him, he will again abandon them in the wilderness; and you will destroy all this people.”

<sup>16</sup> Then they came up to him and said, “We will build sheepfolds here for our flocks, and towns for our little ones, <sup>17</sup> but we will take up arms as a vanguard before the Israelites, until we have brought them to their place. Meanwhile our little ones will stay in the fortified towns because of the inhabitants of the land. <sup>18</sup> We will not return to our homes until all the Israelites have obtained their inheritance. <sup>19</sup> We will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on this side of the Jordan to the east.”

<sup>20</sup> So Moses said to them, “If you do this—if you take up arms to go before the LORD for the war,<sup>21</sup> and all those of you who bear arms cross the Jordan before the LORD, until he has driven out his enemies from before him<sup>22</sup> and the land is subdued before the LORD—then after that you may return and be free of obligation to the LORD and to Israel, and this land shall be your possession before the LORD.<sup>23</sup> But if you do not do this, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out.<sup>24</sup> Build towns for your little ones, and folds for your flocks; but do what you have promised.”

<sup>25</sup> Then the Gadites and the Reubenites said to Moses, “Your servants will do as my lord commands.<sup>26</sup> Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock shall remain there in the towns of Gilead;<sup>27</sup> but your servants will cross over, everyone armed for war, to do battle for the LORD, just as my lord orders.”

<sup>28</sup> So Moses gave command concerning them to

Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the heads of the ancestral houses of the Israelite tribes.<sup>29</sup> And Moses said to them, “If the Gadites and the Reubenites, everyone armed for battle before the LORD, will cross over the Jordan with you and the land shall be subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession;<sup>30</sup> but if they will not cross over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.”<sup>31</sup> The Gadites and the Reubenites answered, “As the LORD has spoken to your servants, so we will do.<sup>32</sup> We will cross over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us on this side of the Jordan.”

<sup>33</sup> Moses gave to them—to the Gadites and to the Reubenites and to the half-tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph—the kingdom of King Sihon of the Amorites and the kingdom of King Og of Bashan, the land and its towns, with the territories of the

surrounding towns. <sup>34</sup> And the Gadites rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, <sup>35</sup> Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, <sup>36</sup> Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran, fortified cities, and folds for sheep. <sup>37</sup> And the Reubenites rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, <sup>38</sup> Nebo, and Baalmeon (some names being changed), and Sibmah; and they gave names to the towns that they rebuilt. <sup>39</sup> The descendants of Machir son of Manasseh went to Gilead, captured it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were there; <sup>40</sup> so Moses gave Gilead to Machir son of Manasseh, and he settled there. <sup>41</sup> Jair son of Manasseh went and captured their villages, and renamed them Havvoth-jair. <sup>42</sup> And Nobah went and captured Kenath and its villages, and renamed it Nobah after himself.

**Luke 4:31-44** (NRSV)

*The Man with an  
Unclean Spirit*

(Mk 1:21-28)

<sup>31</sup> He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching them on the sabbath. <sup>32</sup> They were

astounded at his teaching, because he spoke with authority. <sup>33</sup> In the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, <sup>34</sup> "Let us alone! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." <sup>35</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "**Be silent, and come out of him!**" When the demon had thrown him down before them, he came out of him without having done him any harm. <sup>36</sup> They were all amazed and kept saying to one another, "What kind of utterance is this? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and out they come!" <sup>37</sup> And a report about him began to reach every place in the region.

*Healings at Simon's House*

(Mt 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-34)

<sup>38</sup> After leaving the synagogue he entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked him about her. <sup>39</sup> Then he stood

over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began to serve them.

<sup>40</sup> As the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him; and he laid his hands on each of them and cured them.

<sup>41</sup> Demons also came out of many, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Messiah.

*Jesus Preaches in the Synagogues*

*(Mt 4:23–25; Mk 1:35–39)*

<sup>42</sup> At daybreak he departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowds were looking for him; and when they reached him, they wanted to prevent him from leaving them. <sup>43</sup> But he said to them, **“I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.”** <sup>44</sup> So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea.

**Psalm 64:10** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him. Let all the upright in heart glory.



**Proverbs 16:28–30** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> A perverse person spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.  
<sup>29</sup> The violent entice their neighbors, and lead them in a way that is not good.  
<sup>30</sup> One who winks the eyes plans perverse things; one who compresses the lips brings evil to pass.

**June 10**



**Numbers 33:1-39** (NRSV)

*The Stages of Israel's Journey from Egypt*

<sup>1</sup> These are the stages by which the Israelites went out of the land of Egypt in military formation under the

leadership of Moses and Aaron.<sup>2</sup> Moses wrote down their starting points, stage by stage, by command of the LORD; and these are their stages according to their starting places.<sup>3</sup> They set out from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the passover the Israelites went out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians,<sup>4</sup> while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down among them. The LORD executed judgments even against their gods.

<sup>5</sup> So the Israelites set out from Rameses, and camped at Succoth.<sup>6</sup> They set out from Succoth, and camped at Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness.<sup>7</sup> They set out from Etham, and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, which faces Baal-zephon; and they camped before Migdol.<sup>8</sup> They set out from Pi-hahiroth, passed through the sea into the wilderness, went a three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and camped at Marah.<sup>9</sup> They set out from Marah and

came to Elim; at Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there.<sup>10</sup> They set out from Elim and camped by the Red Sea.<sup>11</sup> They set out from the Red Sea and camped in the wilderness of Sin.<sup>12</sup> They set out from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah.<sup>13</sup> They set out from Dophkah and camped at Alush.<sup>14</sup> They set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.<sup>15</sup> They set out from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai.<sup>16</sup> They set out from the wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah.<sup>17</sup> They set out from Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.<sup>18</sup> They set out from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.<sup>19</sup> They set out from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez.<sup>20</sup> They set out from Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah.<sup>21</sup> They set out from Libnah and camped at Rissah.<sup>22</sup> They set out from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.<sup>23</sup> They set out from Kehelathah and camped

at Mount Shepher. <sup>24</sup> They set out from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. <sup>25</sup> They set out from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. <sup>26</sup> They set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. <sup>27</sup> They set out from Tahath and camped at Terah. <sup>28</sup> They set out from Terah and camped at Mithkah. <sup>29</sup> They set out from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. <sup>30</sup> They set out from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth. <sup>31</sup> They set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan. <sup>32</sup> They set out from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad. <sup>33</sup> They set out from Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah. <sup>34</sup> They set out from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. <sup>35</sup> They set out from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber. <sup>36</sup> They set out from Ezion-geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin (that is, Kadesh). <sup>37</sup> They set out from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the edge of the land of Edom.

<sup>38</sup> Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and died there in the fortieth year after the

Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month. <sup>39</sup> Aaron was one hundred twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

### **Luke 5:1-11 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Calls the First Disciples*  
(Mt 4:18–22; Mk 1:16–20)

<sup>1</sup> Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, <sup>2</sup> he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. <sup>4</sup> When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, **“Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.”** <sup>5</sup> Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” <sup>6</sup> When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break.

<sup>7</sup> So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!"

<sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken;

<sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people."

<sup>11</sup> When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

### **Psalms 65:1-4 (NRSV)**

#### *Thanksgiving for Earth's Bounty*

To the leader. A Psalm of David. A Song.

- <sup>1</sup> Praise is due to you,  
O God, in Zion;  
and to you shall vows be  
performed,  
<sup>2</sup> O you who answer  
prayer!  
To you all flesh shall come.  
<sup>3</sup> When deeds of iniquity  
overwhelm us,

you forgive our  
transgressions.

- <sup>4</sup> Happy are those whom  
you choose and bring  
near  
to live in your courts.  
We shall be satisfied with  
the goodness of your  
house,  
your holy temple.

### **Proverbs 16:31-33 (NRSV)**

- <sup>31</sup> **Gray hair is a crown of  
glory;  
it is gained in a righteous  
life.**
- <sup>32</sup> One who is slow to anger is  
better than the mighty,  
and one whose temper is  
controlled than one  
who captures a city.
- <sup>33</sup> The lot is cast into the lap,  
but the decision is the  
LORD's alone.



## June 11



### Numbers 33:40-34:29 (NRSV)

<sup>40</sup>The Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the Israelites.

<sup>41</sup>They set out from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.

<sup>42</sup>They set out from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. <sup>43</sup>They set out from Punon and camped at Oboth. <sup>44</sup>They set out from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, in the territory of Moab. <sup>45</sup>They set out from Iyim and camped at Dibon-gad. <sup>46</sup>They set out from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim. <sup>47</sup>They set out from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo.

<sup>48</sup>They set out from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho; <sup>49</sup>they camped by the Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab.

### *Directions for the Conquest of Canaan*

<sup>50</sup>In the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>51</sup>Speak to the Israelites, and say to them: When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, <sup>52</sup>you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their figured stones, destroy all their cast images, and demolish all their high places. <sup>53</sup>You shall take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given you the land to possess. <sup>54</sup>You shall apportion the land by lot according to your clans; to a large one you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small one you shall give a small inheritance; the inheritance shall belong to the person on whom the lot falls; according to your ancestral tribes you shall inherit. <sup>55</sup>But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides; they shall trouble you in the land where you are



settling. <sup>56</sup> And I will do to you as I thought to do to them.

*The Boundaries of the Land*

**34** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Command the Israelites, and say to them: When you enter the land of Canaan (this is the land that shall fall to you for an inheritance, the land of Canaan, defined by its boundaries), <sup>3</sup> your south sector shall extend from the wilderness of Zin along the side of Edom. Your southern boundary shall begin from the end of the Dead Sea on the east; <sup>4</sup> your boundary shall turn south of the ascent of Akkrabbim, and cross to Zin, and its outer limit shall be south of Kadesh-barnea; then it shall go on to Hazar-addar, and cross to Azmon; <sup>5</sup> the boundary shall turn from Azmon to the Wadi of Egypt, and its termination shall be at the Sea.

<sup>6</sup> For the western boundary, you shall have the Great Sea and its coast; this shall be your western boundary.

<sup>7</sup> This shall be your northern boundary: from the Great Sea you shall mark out your line to Mount Hor; <sup>8</sup> from Mount Hor you shall mark it out to Lebo-hamath, and the outer limit of the boundary shall be at Zedad; <sup>9</sup> then the boundary shall extend to Ziphron, and its end shall be at Hazar-enan; this shall be your northern boundary.

<sup>10</sup> You shall mark out your eastern boundary from Hazar-enan to Shepham; <sup>11</sup> and the boundary shall continue down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain; and the boundary shall go down, and reach the eastern slope of the sea of Chinnereth; <sup>12</sup> and the boundary shall go down to the Jordan, and its end shall be at the Dead Sea. This shall be your land with its boundaries all around.

<sup>13</sup> Moses commanded the Israelites, saying: This is the land that you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe; <sup>14</sup> for the tribe of the Reubenites by their ancestral houses and the tribe of the

Gadites by their ancestral houses have taken their inheritance, and also the half-tribe of Manasseh; <sup>15</sup> the two tribes and the half-tribe have taken their inheritance beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise.

### *Tribal Leaders*

<sup>16</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>17</sup> These are the names of the men who shall apportion the land to you for inheritance: the priest Eleazar and Joshua son of Nun. <sup>18</sup> You shall take one leader of every tribe to apportion the land for inheritance. <sup>19</sup> These are the names of the men: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh. <sup>20</sup> Of the tribe of the Simeonites, Shemuel son of Ammihud. <sup>21</sup> Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad son of Chislon. <sup>22</sup> Of the tribe of the Danites a leader, Bukki son of Jogli. <sup>23</sup> Of the Josephites: of the tribe of the Manassites a leader, Hanniel son of Ephod, <sup>24</sup> and of the tribe of the Ephraimites a leader, Kemuel son of Shiphtan. <sup>25</sup> Of the tribe of the Zebulunites a leader, Eli-zaphan son of Parnach.

<sup>26</sup> Of the tribe of the Issacharites a leader, Paltiel son of Azzan. <sup>27</sup> And of the tribe of the Asherites a leader, Ahihud son of Shelomi. <sup>28</sup> Of the tribe of the Naphtalites a leader, Pedahel son of Ammihud. <sup>29</sup> These were the ones whom the LORD commanded to apportion the inheritance for the Israelites in the land of Canaan.


### **Luke 5:12-16 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Cleanses a Leper*  
(Mt 8:1-4; Mk 1:40-45)

<sup>12</sup> Once, when he was in one of the cities, there was a man covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." <sup>13</sup> Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do choose. Be made clean." Immediately the leprosy left him. <sup>14</sup> And he ordered him to tell no one. "Go," he said, "and show yourself to the priest, and, as Moses commanded, make an offering for your cleansing, for a testimony to them." <sup>15</sup> But now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad;

many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. <sup>16</sup> But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.

**Psalms 65:5-13** (NRSV)



<sup>5</sup> By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,  
O God of our salvation;  
you are the hope of all the ends of the earth  
and of the farthest seas.

<sup>6</sup> By your strength you established the mountains;  
you are girded with might.  
<sup>7</sup> You silence the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves,  
the tumult of the peoples.

<sup>8</sup> Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;  
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.

<sup>9</sup> You visit the earth and water it,  
you greatly enrich it;

the river of God is full of water;  
you provide the people with grain,  
for so you have prepared it.

<sup>10</sup> You water its furrows abundantly,  
settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers,  
and blessing its growth.  
<sup>11</sup> You crown the year with your bounty;  
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.  
<sup>12</sup> The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,  
<sup>13</sup> the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.

**Proverbs 17:1** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Better is a dry morsel with quiet  
than a house full of feasting with strife.

## June 12



### Numbers 35:1-34 (NRSV)

#### *Cities for the Levites*

<sup>1</sup> In the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

<sup>2</sup> Command the Israelites to give, from the inheritance that they possess, towns for the Levites to live in; you shall also give to the Levites pasture lands surrounding the towns.

<sup>3</sup> The towns shall be theirs to live in, and their pasture lands shall be for their cattle, for their livestock, and for all their animals. <sup>4</sup> The pasture lands of the towns, which you shall give to the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the town outward a thousand cubits all around. <sup>5</sup> You shall measure, outside the town, for the east side two thousand cubits, for the south side two thousand cubits, for the west side two thousand cubits, and for the north side two thousand cubits, with the town in the middle; this shall belong to them as pasture land for their towns.

<sup>6</sup> The towns that you give to the Levites shall include the six cities of refuge, where you shall permit a slayer to flee, and in addition to them you shall give forty-two towns.

<sup>7</sup> The towns that you give to the Levites shall total forty-eight, with their pasture lands.

<sup>8</sup> And as for the towns that you shall give from the possession of the Israelites, from the larger tribes you shall take many, and from the smaller tribes you shall take few; each, in proportion to the inheritance that it obtains, shall give of its towns to the Levites.

#### *Cities of Refuge*

(Deut 19:1–13; Josh 20:1–9)

<sup>9</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>10</sup> Speak to the Israelites, and say to them:

When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan,

<sup>11</sup> then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, so that a slayer who kills a person without intent may flee there.

<sup>12</sup> The cities shall be for you a refuge from the avenger, so that the slayer may not die until there is a trial before the congregation.

<sup>13</sup> The cities that you designate shall be six cities of refuge for you: <sup>14</sup> you shall designate three cities beyond the Jordan, and three cities in the land of Canaan, to be cities of refuge. <sup>15</sup> These six cities shall serve as refuge for the Israelites, for the resident or transient alien among them, so that anyone who kills a person without intent may flee there.

*Concerning Murder  
and Blood Revenge*

<sup>16</sup> But anyone who strikes another with an iron object, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death. <sup>17</sup> Or anyone who strikes another with a stone in hand that could cause death, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death. <sup>18</sup> Or anyone who strikes another with a weapon of wood in hand that could cause death, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death. <sup>19</sup> The avenger of blood is the one who shall put the murderer to death; when they meet, the avenger of blood

shall execute the sentence.

<sup>20</sup> Likewise, if someone pushes another from hatred, or hurls something at another, lying in wait, and death ensues, <sup>21</sup> or in enmity strikes another with the hand, and death ensues, then the one who struck the blow shall be put to death; that person is a murderer; the avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death, when they meet.

<sup>22</sup> But if someone pushes another suddenly without enmity, or hurls any object without lying in wait, <sup>23</sup> or, while handling any stone that could cause death, unintentionally drops it on another and death ensues, though they were not enemies, and no harm was intended, <sup>24</sup> then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these ordinances; <sup>25</sup> and the congregation shall rescue the slayer from the avenger of blood. Then the congregation shall send the slayer back to the original city of refuge. The slayer shall live in it until the

death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.

<sup>26</sup> But if the slayer shall at any time go outside the bounds of the original city of refuge, <sup>27</sup> and is found by the avenger of blood outside the bounds of the city of refuge, and is killed by the avenger, no bloodguilt shall be incurred. <sup>28</sup> For the slayer must remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest; but after the death of the high priest the slayer may return home.

<sup>29</sup> These things shall be a statute and ordinance for you throughout your generations wherever you live.

<sup>30</sup> If anyone kills another, the murderer shall be put to death on the evidence of witnesses; but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of a single witness.

<sup>31</sup> Moreover you shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer who is subject to the death penalty; a murderer must be put to death. <sup>32</sup> Nor shall you accept ransom for one who has fled to a city of refuge, enabling the fugitive to return to live in the land before the death of the high

priest. <sup>33</sup> You shall not pollute the land in which you live; for blood pollutes the land, and no expiation can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it. <sup>34</sup> You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the Israelites.

### **Luke 5:17-28 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals a Paralytic*

*(Mt 9:2-8; Mk 2:1-12)*

<sup>17</sup> One day, while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting near by (they had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem); and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. <sup>18</sup> Just then some men came, carrying a paralyzed man on a bed. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; <sup>19</sup> but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. <sup>20</sup> When he saw their faith, he said, "**Friend, your sins are forgiven you.**" <sup>21</sup> Then

the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, “Who is this who is speaking blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”<sup>22</sup> When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, “**Why do you raise such questions in your hearts?**<sup>23</sup> **Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk’?**<sup>24</sup> **But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**”—he said to the one who was paralyzed—“**I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home.**”<sup>25</sup> Immediately he stood up before them, took what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God.<sup>26</sup> Amazement seized all of them, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, “We have seen strange things today.”

*Jesus Calls Levi*

(Mt 9:9–13; Mk 2:13–17)

<sup>27</sup> After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “**Follow**

**me.**”<sup>28</sup> And he got up, left everything, and followed him.

**Psalm 66:1-7** (NRSV)

*Praise for God’s Goodness to Israel*

To the leader. A Song. A Psalm.

- 1 Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth;
- 2 sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise.
- 3 Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! Because of your great power, your enemies cringe before you.
- 4 All the earth worships you; they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name.” *Selah*
- 5 Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds among mortals.
- 6 He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot.
- 7 There we rejoiced in him, who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—

let the rebellious not  
exalt themselves.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 17:2–3** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> A slave who deals wisely  
will rule over a child  
who acts shamefully,  
and will share the  
inheritance as one of  
the family.

<sup>3</sup> *The crucible is for silver,  
and the furnace is for  
gold,  
but the LORD tests the  
heart.*

**June 13**



**Numbers 36:1–13** (NRSV)

*Marriage of Female Heirs*

<sup>1</sup> The heads of the ancestral  
houses of the clans of the  
descendants of Gilead son of  
Machir son of Manasseh, of  
the Josephite clans, came  
forward and spoke in the  
presence of Moses and the  
leaders, the heads of the  
ancestral houses of the

Israelites; <sup>2</sup> they said, “The  
LORD commanded my lord to  
give the land for inheritance  
by lot to the Israelites; and my  
lord was commanded by the  
LORD to give the inheritance of  
our brother Zelophehad to his  
daughters. <sup>3</sup> But if they are  
married into another Israelite  
tribe, then their inheritance  
will be taken from the  
inheritance of our ancestors  
and added to the inheritance  
of the tribe into which they  
marry; so it will be taken away  
from the allotted portion of  
our inheritance. <sup>4</sup> And when  
the jubilee of the Israelites  
comes, then their inheritance  
will be added to the  
inheritance of the tribe into  
which they have married; and  
their inheritance will be taken  
from the inheritance of our  
ancestral tribe.”

<sup>5</sup> Then Moses commanded  
the Israelites according to the  
word of the LORD, saying, “The  
descendants of the tribe of  
Joseph are right in what they  
are saying. <sup>6</sup> This is what the  
LORD commands concerning  
the daughters of Zelophehad,  
‘Let them marry whom they  
think best; only it must be into



a clan of their father's tribe that they are married,<sup>7</sup> so that no inheritance of the Israelites shall be transferred from one tribe to another; for all Israelites shall retain the inheritance of their ancestral tribes.<sup>8</sup> Every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the Israelites shall marry one from the clan of her father's tribe, so that all Israelites may continue to possess their ancestral inheritance.<sup>9</sup> No inheritance shall be transferred from one tribe to another; for each of the tribes of the Israelites shall retain its own inheritance.' "

<sup>10</sup>The daughters of Zelophehad did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>11</sup>Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, married sons of their father's brothers.<sup>12</sup> They were married into the clans of the descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father's clan.

<sup>13</sup>These are the commandments and the ordinances that the LORD

commanded through Moses to the Israelites in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

**Luke 5:29-39** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup>Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house; and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting at the table with them.

<sup>30</sup>The Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

<sup>31</sup>Jesus answered, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick;<sup>32</sup> I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance."

*The Question about Fasting*

(Mt 9:14–17; Mk 2:18–22)

<sup>33</sup>Then they said to him, "John's disciples, like the disciples of the Pharisees, frequently fast and pray, but your disciples eat and drink.'"

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, "You cannot make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?<sup>35</sup> The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will

fast in those days.”<sup>36</sup> He also told them a parable: “No one tears a piece from a new garment and sews it on an old garment; otherwise the new will be torn, and the piece from the new will not match the old.”<sup>37</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.<sup>38</sup> But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.<sup>39</sup> And no one after drinking old wine desires new wine, but says, ‘The old is good.’ ”

**Psalms 66:8-20** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Bless our God, O peoples,  
let the sound of his  
praise be heard,  
<sup>9</sup> who has kept us among  
the living,  
and has not let our feet  
slip.  
<sup>10</sup> For you, O God, have  
tested us;  
you have tried us as  
silver is tried.  
<sup>11</sup> You brought us into the  
net;  
you laid burdens on our  
backs;

<sup>12</sup> you let people ride over  
our heads;  
we went through fire  
and through water;  
yet you have brought us  
out to a spacious place.  
<sup>13</sup> I will come into your house  
with burnt offerings;  
I will pay you my vows,  
<sup>14</sup> those that my lips uttered  
and my mouth promised  
when I was in trouble.  
<sup>15</sup> I will offer to you burnt  
offerings of fatlings,  
with the smoke of the  
sacrifice of rams;  
I will make an offering of  
bulls and goats.

*Selah*

<sup>16</sup> Come and hear, all you  
who fear God,  
and I will tell what he has  
done for me.  
<sup>17</sup> I cried aloud to him,  
and he was extolled with  
my tongue.  
<sup>18</sup> If I had cherished iniquity  
in my heart,  
the Lord would not have  
listened.  
<sup>19</sup> But truly God has listened;  
he has given heed to the  
words of my prayer.  
<sup>20</sup> Blessed be God,

because he has not  
rejected my prayer  
or removed his steadfast  
love from me.

**Proverbs 17:4–5** (NRSV)

- <sup>4</sup> An evildoer listens to  
wicked lips;  
and a liar gives heed to a  
mischievous tongue.
- <sup>5</sup> Those who mock the poor  
insult their Maker;  
those who are glad at  
calamity will not go  
unpunished.

**June 14**



**Deuteronomy 1:1–46** (NRSV)

*Events at Horeb Recalled*

<sup>1</sup> These are the words that  
Moses spoke to all Israel  
beyond the Jordan—in the  
wilderness, on the plain  
opposite Suph, between Paran  
and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth,  
and Di-zahab. <sup>2</sup> (By the way of  
Mount Seir it takes eleven  
days to reach Kadesh-barnea  
from Horeb.) <sup>3</sup> In the fortieth

year, on the first day of the  
eleventh month, Moses spoke  
to the Israelites just as the  
LORD had commanded him to  
speak to them. <sup>4</sup> This was after  
he had defeated King Sihon of  
the Amorites, who reigned in  
Heshbon, and King Og of  
Bashan, who reigned in  
Ashtaroth and in Edrei. <sup>5</sup> Beyond the Jordan in the  
land of Moab, Moses  
undertook to expound this law  
as follows:

<sup>6</sup> The LORD our God spoke  
to us at Horeb, saying, “You  
have stayed long enough at  
this mountain. <sup>7</sup> Resume your  
journey, and go into the hill  
country of the Amorites as  
well as into the neighboring  
regions—the Arabah, the hill  
country, the Shephelah, the  
Negeb, and the seacoast—the  
land of the Canaanites and the  
Lebanon, as far as the great  
river, the river Euphrates.  
<sup>8</sup> See, I have set the land  
before you; go in and take  
possession of the land that I  
swore to your ancestors, to  
Abraham, to Isaac, and to  
Jacob, to give to them and to  
their descendants after them.”

*Appointment of Tribal Leaders*  
(Ex 18:13–27)

<sup>9</sup> At that time I said to you, “I am unable by myself to bear you.” <sup>10</sup> The LORD your God has multiplied you, so that today you are as numerous as the stars of heaven. <sup>11</sup> May the LORD, the God of your ancestors, increase you a thousand times more and bless you, as he has promised you! <sup>12</sup> But how can I bear the heavy burden of your disputes all by myself? <sup>13</sup> Choose for each of your tribes individuals who are wise, discerning, and reputable to be your leaders.” <sup>14</sup> You answered me, “The plan you have proposed is a good one.” <sup>15</sup> So I took the leaders of your tribes, wise and reputable individuals, and installed them as leaders over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officials, throughout your tribes. <sup>16</sup> I charged your judges at that time: “Give the members of your community a fair hearing, and judge rightly between one person and another, whether citizen or resident alien. <sup>17</sup> You must not

be partial in judging: hear out the small and the great alike; you shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God’s. Any case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.” <sup>18</sup> So I charged you at that time with all the things that you should do.

*Israel’s Refusal to  
Enter the Land*  
(Num 13:1–33)

<sup>19</sup> Then, just as the LORD our God had ordered us, we set out from Horeb and went through all that great and terrible wilderness that you saw, on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, until we reached Kadesh-barnea. <sup>20</sup> I said to you, “You have reached the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. <sup>21</sup> See, the LORD your God has given the land to you; go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you; do not fear or be dismayed.”

<sup>22</sup> All of you came to me and said, “Let us send men ahead of us to explore the land for us and bring back a report to us regarding the

route by which we should go up and the cities we will come to.”<sup>23</sup> The plan seemed good to me, and I selected twelve of you, one from each tribe.

<sup>24</sup> They set out and went up into the hill country, and when they reached the Valley of Eshcol they spied it out<sup>25</sup> and gathered some of the land’s produce, which they brought down to us. They brought back a report to us, and said, “It is a good land that the LORD our God is giving us.”

<sup>26</sup> But you were unwilling to go up. You rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; <sup>27</sup> you grumbled in your tents and said, “It is because the LORD hates us that he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to hand us over to the Amorites to destroy us.

<sup>28</sup> Where are we headed? Our kindred have made our hearts melt by reporting, ‘The people are stronger and taller than we; the cities are large and fortified up to heaven! We actually saw there the offspring of the Anakim!’ ” <sup>29</sup> I said to you, “Have no dread or fear of them.” <sup>30</sup> The LORD your God, who goes before you, is

the one who will fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your very eyes,<sup>31</sup> and in the wilderness, where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you traveled until you reached this place.<sup>32</sup> But in spite of this, you have no trust in the LORD your God,<sup>33</sup> who goes before you on the way to seek out a place for you to camp, in fire by night, and in the cloud by day, to show you the route you should take.”

*The Penalty for  
Israel’s Rebellion  
(Num 14:20–45)*

<sup>34</sup> When the LORD heard your words, he was wrathful and swore:<sup>35</sup> “Not one of these—not one of this evil generation—shall see the good land that I swore to give to your ancestors,<sup>36</sup> except Caleb son of Jephunneh. He shall see it, and to him and to his descendants I will give the land on which he set foot, because of his complete fidelity to the LORD.”<sup>37</sup> Even with me the LORD was angry on your account, saying, “You also shall not enter there.

<sup>38</sup> Joshua son of Nun, your assistant, shall enter there; encourage him, for he is the one who will secure Israel's possession of it. <sup>39</sup> And as for your little ones, who you thought would become booty, your children, who today do not yet know right from wrong, they shall enter there; to them I will give it, and they shall take possession of it. <sup>40</sup> But as for you, journey back into the wilderness, in the direction of the Red Sea."

<sup>41</sup> You answered me, "We have sinned against the LORD! We are ready to go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us." So all of you strapped on your battle gear, and thought it easy to go up into the hill country. <sup>42</sup> The LORD said to me, "Say to them, 'Do not go up and do not fight, for I am not in the midst of you; otherwise you will be defeated by your enemies.' "

<sup>43</sup> Although I told you, you would not listen. You rebelled against the command of the LORD and presumptuously went up into the hill country.

<sup>44</sup> The Amorites who lived in that hill country then came

out against you and chased you as bees do. They beat you down in Seir as far as Hormah. <sup>45</sup> When you returned and wept before the LORD, the LORD would neither heed your voice nor pay you any attention.

### *The Desert Years*

<sup>46</sup> After you had stayed at Kadesh as many days as you did,

### **Luke 6:1-11 (NRSV)**

#### *The Question*

#### *about the Sabbath*

*(Mt 12:1-8; Mk 2:23-28)*

<sup>1</sup> One sabbath while Jesus was going through the grainfields, his disciples plucked some heads of grain, rubbed them in their hands, and ate them.

<sup>2</sup> But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?"

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? <sup>4</sup> He entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and gave some to his companions?" <sup>5</sup> Then he said



to them, “The Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.”

*The Man with  
a Withered Hand*  
(Mt 12:9–14; Mk 3:1–6)

<sup>6</sup> On another sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. <sup>7</sup> The scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would cure on the sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against him. <sup>8</sup> Even though he knew what they were thinking, he said to the man who had the withered hand, “**Come and stand here.**” He got up and stood there. <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “**I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to destroy it?**” <sup>10</sup> After looking around at all of them, he said to him, “**Stretch out your hand.**” He did so, and his hand was restored. <sup>11</sup> But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

**Psalm 67:1-3** (NRSV)

*The Nations Called  
to Praise God*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

<sup>1</sup> May God be gracious to us  
and bless us  
and make his face to  
shine upon us, *Selah*  
<sup>2</sup> that your way may be  
known upon earth,  
your saving power  
among all nations.  
<sup>3</sup> Let the peoples praise you,  
O God;  
let all the peoples praise  
you.

**Proverbs 17:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Grandchildren are the  
crown of the aged,  
and the glory of children  
is their parents.

**June 15**



**Deuteronomy 2:1–37** (NRSV)

we [*the Israelites*] journeyed back into the wilderness, in the direction of the Red Sea, as the LORD had told me and skirted Mount Seir for many days. <sup>2</sup> Then the LORD said to

me: <sup>3</sup> “You have been skirting this hill country long enough. Head north, <sup>4</sup> and charge the people as follows: You are about to pass through the territory of your kindred, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you, so, be very careful <sup>5</sup> not to engage in battle with them, for I will not give you even so much as a foot’s length of their land, since I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession. <sup>6</sup> You shall purchase food from them for money, so that you may eat; and you shall also buy water from them for money, so that you may drink. <sup>7</sup> Surely the LORD your God has blessed you in all your undertakings; he knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing.” <sup>8</sup> So we passed by our kin, the descendants of Esau who live in Seir, leaving behind the route of the Arabah, and leaving behind Elath and Ezion-geber.

When we had headed out along the route of the

wilderness of Moab, <sup>9</sup> the LORD said to me: “Do not harass Moab or engage them in battle, for I will not give you any of its land as a possession, since I have given Ar as a possession to the descendants of Lot.” <sup>10</sup> (The Emim—a large and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim—had formerly inhabited it. <sup>11</sup> Like the Anakim, they are usually reckoned as Rephaim, though the Moabites call them Emim. <sup>12</sup> Moreover, the Horim had formerly inhabited Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them, destroying them and settling in their place, as Israel has done in the land that the LORD gave them as a possession.) <sup>13</sup> “Now then, proceed to cross over the Wadi Zered.”

So we crossed over the Wadi Zered. <sup>14</sup> And the length of time we had traveled from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the Wadi Zered was thirty-eight years, until the entire generation of warriors had perished from the camp, as the LORD had sworn concerning them. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, the LORD’s own hand was



against them, to root them out from the camp, until all had perished.

<sup>16</sup> Just as soon as all the warriors had died off from among the people, <sup>17</sup> the LORD spoke to me, saying, <sup>18</sup> “Today you are going to cross the boundary of Moab at Ar.

<sup>19</sup> When you approach the frontier of the Ammonites, do not harass them or engage them in battle, for I will not give the land of the Ammonites to you as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot.” <sup>20</sup> (It also is usually reckoned as a land of Rephaim. Rephaim formerly inhabited it, though the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, <sup>21</sup> a strong and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them from before the Ammonites so that they could dispossess them and settle in their place. <sup>22</sup> He did the same for the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir, by destroying the Horim before them so that they could dispossess them and settle in their place even to this day.

<sup>23</sup> As for the Avvim, who had lived in settlements in the vicinity of Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and settled in their place.)

<sup>24</sup> “Proceed on your journey and cross the Wadi Arnon. See, I have handed over to you King Sihon the Amorite of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to take possession by engaging him in battle. <sup>25</sup> This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under heaven; when they hear report of you, they will tremble and be in anguish because of you.”

*Defeat of King Sihon*  
(Num 21:21–32)

<sup>26</sup> So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to King Sihon of Heshbon with the following terms of peace: <sup>27</sup> “If you let me pass through your land, I will travel only along the road; I will turn aside neither to the right nor to the left. <sup>28</sup> You shall sell me food for money, so that I may eat, and supply me water for money, so that I may drink. Only allow me to pass through on foot— <sup>29</sup> just

as the descendants of Esau who live in Seir have done for me and likewise the Moabites who live in Ar—until I cross the Jordan into the land that the LORD our God is giving us.”

<sup>30</sup> But King Sihon of Heshbon was not willing to let us pass through, for the LORD your God had hardened his spirit and made his heart defiant in order to hand him over to you, as he has now done.

<sup>31</sup> The LORD said to me, “See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin now to take possession of his land.” <sup>32</sup> So when Sihon came out against us, he and all his people for battle at Jahaz, <sup>33</sup> the LORD our God gave him over to us; and we struck him down, along with his offspring and all his people. <sup>34</sup> At that time we captured all his towns, and in each town we utterly destroyed men, women, and children. We left not a single survivor. <sup>35</sup> Only the livestock we kept as spoil for ourselves, as well as the plunder of the towns that we had captured. <sup>36</sup> From Aroer on the edge of the Wadi Arnon (including the town that is in

the wadi itself) as far as Gilead, there was no citadel too high for us. The LORD our God gave everything to us. <sup>37</sup> You did not encroach, however, on the land of the Ammonites, avoiding the whole upper region of the Wadi Jabbok as well as the towns of the hill country, just as the LORD our God had charged.

**Luke 6:12-19 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Chooses  
the Twelve Apostles  
(Mt 10:1-4; Mk 3:13-19a)*

<sup>12</sup> Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. <sup>13</sup> And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: <sup>14</sup> Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, <sup>15</sup> and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, <sup>16</sup> and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

*Jesus Teaches and Heals*  
(Mt 4:23–25; Mk 1:35–39; Lk 4:44)

<sup>17</sup> He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>18</sup> They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. <sup>19</sup> And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

**Psalm 67:4-7** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Let the nations be glad  
and sing for joy,  
for you judge the  
peoples with equity  
and guide the nations  
upon earth. *Selah*

<sup>5</sup> Let the peoples praise you,  
O God;  
let all the peoples praise  
you.

<sup>6</sup> The earth has yielded its  
increase;  
God, our God, has  
blessed us.

<sup>7</sup> May God continue to bless  
us;

let all the ends of the  
earth revere him.

**Proverbs 17:7–8** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Fine speech is not  
becoming to a fool;  
still less is false speech to  
a ruler.

<sup>8</sup> A bribe is like a magic  
stone in the eyes of  
those who give it;  
wherever they turn they  
prosper.

**June 16**



**Deuteronomy 3:1–29** (NRSV)

*Defeat of King Og*  
(Num 21:33–35)

When we headed up the road to Bashan, King Og of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, for battle at Edrei. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to me, “Do not fear him, for I have handed him over to you, along with his people and his land. Do to him as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon.” <sup>3</sup> So

the LORD our God also handed over to us King Og of Bashan and all his people. We struck him down until not a single survivor was left. <sup>4</sup> At that time we captured all his towns; there was no citadel that we did not take from them—sixty towns, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. <sup>5</sup> All these were fortress towns with high walls, double gates, and bars, besides a great many villages. <sup>6</sup> And we utterly destroyed them, as we had done to King Sihon of Heshbon, in each city utterly destroying men, women, and children. <sup>7</sup> But all the livestock and the plunder of the towns we kept as spoil for ourselves.

<sup>8</sup> So at that time we took from the two kings of the Amorites the land beyond the Jordan, from the Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon <sup>9</sup> (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites call it Senir), <sup>10</sup> all the towns of the tableland, the whole of Gilead, and all of Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, towns of Og's kingdom in Bashan.

<sup>11</sup> (Now only King Og of Bashan

was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. In fact his bed, an iron bed, can still be seen in Rabbah of the Ammonites. By the common cubit it is nine cubits long and four cubits wide.) <sup>12</sup> As for the land that we took possession of at that time, I gave to the Reubenites and Gadites the territory north of Aroer, that is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, as well as half the hill country of Gilead with its towns, <sup>13</sup> and I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, Og's kingdom. (The whole region of Argob: all that portion of Bashan used to be called a land of Rephaim; <sup>14</sup> Jair the Manassite acquired the whole region of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and he named them—that is, Bashan—after himself, Havvoth-jair, as it is to this day.) <sup>15</sup> To Machir I gave Gilead. <sup>16</sup> And to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave the territory from Gilead as far as the Wadi Arnon, with the middle of the wadi as a boundary, and up to the Jabbok, the wadi being

boundary of the Ammonites;  
<sup>17</sup> the Arabah also, with the  
Jordan and its banks, from  
Chinnereth down to the sea of  
the Arabah, the Dead Sea,  
with the lower slopes of  
Pisgah on the east.

<sup>18</sup> At that time, I charged  
you as follows: “Although the  
LORD your God has given you  
this land to occupy, all your  
troops shall cross over armed  
as the vanguard of your  
Israelite kin. <sup>19</sup> Only your  
wives, your children, and your  
livestock—I know that you  
have much livestock—shall  
stay behind in the towns that I  
have given to you. <sup>20</sup> When the  
LORD gives rest to your  
kindred, as to you, and they  
too have occupied the land  
that the LORD your God is  
giving them beyond the  
Jordan, then each of you may  
return to the property that I  
have given to you.” <sup>21</sup> And I  
charged Joshua as well at that  
time, saying: “Your own eyes  
have seen everything that the  
LORD your God has done to  
these two kings; so the LORD  
will do to all the kingdoms into  
which you are about to cross.  
<sup>22</sup> Do not fear them, for it is

the LORD your God who fights  
for you.”

*Moses Views Canaan  
from Pisgah*

<sup>23</sup> At that time, too, I  
entreated the LORD, saying:  
<sup>24</sup> “O Lord GOD, you have only  
begun to show your servant  
your greatness and your  
might; what god in heaven or  
on earth can perform deeds  
and mighty acts like yours!  
<sup>25</sup> Let me cross over to see the  
good land beyond the Jordan,  
that good hill country and the  
Lebanon.” <sup>26</sup> But the LORD was  
angry with me on your  
account and would not heed  
me. The LORD said to me,  
“Enough from you! Never  
speak to me of this matter  
again! <sup>27</sup> Go up to the top of  
Pisgah and look around you to  
the west, to the north, to the  
south, and to the east. Look  
well, for you shall not cross  
over this Jordan. <sup>28</sup> But charge  
Joshua, and encourage and  
strengthen him, because it is  
he who shall cross over at the  
head of this people and who  
shall secure their possession  
of the land that you will see.”


<sup>29</sup> So we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor.

**Luke 6:20-38** (NRSV)

*Blessings and Woes*

(Mt 5:1-12)

<sup>20</sup> Then he looked up at his disciples and said:



“Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup> “Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup> “Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

<sup>24</sup> “But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

<sup>25</sup> “Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now,

for you will mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup> “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

*Love for Enemies*

(Mt 5:43-48)

<sup>27</sup> “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

<sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

<sup>29</sup> If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt.

<sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you.

<sup>32</sup> “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup> If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to

sinners, to receive as much again.<sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.<sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

### *Judging Others*

(Mt 7:1–5)

<sup>37</sup> “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven;<sup>38</sup> give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

### **Psalm 68:1-6** (NRSV)

#### *Praise and Thanksgiving*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm. A Song.

- <sup>1</sup> Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee before him.
- <sup>2</sup> As smoke is driven away, so drive them away;

as wax melts before the fire,  
let the wicked perish before God.

- <sup>3</sup> But let the righteous be joyful;  
let them exult before God;  
let them be jubilant with joy.
- <sup>4</sup> Sing to God, sing praises to his name;  
lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds—  
his name is the LORD—  
be exultant before him.
- <sup>5</sup> Father of orphans and protector of widows  
is God in his holy habitation.
- <sup>6</sup> God gives the desolate a home to live in;  
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,  
but the rebellious live in a parched land.

### **Proverbs 17:9–11** (NRSV)

- <sup>9</sup> One who forgives an affront fosters friendship,  
but one who dwells on disputes will alienate a friend.

- <sup>10</sup> A rebuke strikes deeper  
into a discerning  
person  
than a hundred blows  
into a fool.
- <sup>11</sup> Evil people seek only  
rebellion,  
but a cruel messenger  
will be sent against  
them.

## June 17



### Deuteronomy 4:1–20 (NRSV)

#### *Moses Commands Obedience*

So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. <sup>2</sup> You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you. <sup>3</sup> You have seen for yourselves what the

LORD did with regard to the Baal of Peor—how the LORD your God destroyed from among you everyone who followed the Baal of Peor, <sup>4</sup> while those of you who held fast to the LORD your God are all alive today.

<sup>5</sup> See, just as the LORD my God has charged me, I now teach you statutes and ordinances for you to observe in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. <sup>6</sup> You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!” <sup>7</sup> For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? <sup>8</sup> And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

<sup>9</sup> But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life;

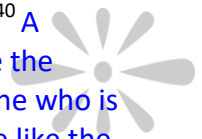


make them known to your children and your children's children—<sup>10</sup> how you once stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, "Assemble the people for me, and I will let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me as long as they live on the earth, and may teach their children so";<sup>11</sup> you approached and stood at the foot of the mountain while the mountain was blazing up to the very heavens, shrouded in dark clouds.<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice.<sup>13</sup> He declared to you his covenant, which he charged you to observe, that is, the ten commandments; and he wrote them on two stone tablets.<sup>14</sup> And the LORD charged me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances for you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy.<sup>15</sup> Since you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire, take care and watch yourselves

closely,<sup>16</sup> so that you do not act corruptly by making an idol for yourselves, in the form of any figure—the likeness of male or female,<sup>17</sup> the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air,<sup>18</sup> the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.<sup>19</sup> And when you look up to the heavens and see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, do not be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples everywhere under heaven.<sup>20</sup> But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron-smelter, out of Egypt, to become a people of his very own possession, as you are now.

#### **Luke 6:39-49 (NRSV)**

<sup>39</sup> He also told them a parable: "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?"<sup>40</sup> A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the



teacher. <sup>41</sup> Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? <sup>42</sup> Or how can you say to your neighbor, 'Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye.

*A Tree and Its Fruit*  
(Mt 7:15–20)

<sup>43</sup> "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; <sup>44</sup> for each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. <sup>45</sup> The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.

*The Two Foundations*  
(Mt 7:21–27)

<sup>46</sup> "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I tell you? <sup>47</sup> I will show you what

someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. <sup>48</sup> That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. <sup>49</sup> But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house."

**Psalm 68:7-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, *Selah*  
<sup>8</sup> the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.  
<sup>9</sup> Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad;

you restored your  
heritage when it  
languished;  
10 your flock found a dwelling  
in it;  
in your goodness, O God,  
you provided for the  
needy.  
11 The Lord gives the  
command;  
great is the company of  
those who bore the  
tidings:  
12 “The kings of the armies,  
they flee, they flee!”  
The women at home  
divide the spoil,  
13 though they stay among  
the sheepfolds—  
the wings of a dove  
covered with silver,  
its pinions with green  
gold.  
14 When the Almighty  
scattered kings there,  
snow fell on Zalmon.  
15 O mighty mountain,  
mountain of Bashan;  
O many-peaked  
mountain, mountain of  
Bashan!  
16 Why do you look with  
envy, O many-peaked  
mountain,

at the mount that God  
desired for his abode,  
where the LORD will  
reside forever?  
17 With mighty chariotry,  
twice ten thousand,  
thousands upon  
thousands,  
the Lord came from Sinai  
into the holy place.  
18 You ascended the high  
mount,  
leading captives in your  
train  
and receiving gifts from  
people,  
even from those who rebel  
against the LORD God’s  
abiding there.

**Proverbs 17:12–13 (NRSV)**

12 Better to meet a she-bear  
robbed of its cubs  
than to confront a fool  
immersed in folly.  
13 Evil will not depart from  
the house  
of one who returns evil  
for good.

## June 18



### Deuteronomy 4:21–49 (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup>The LORD was angry with me because of you, and he vowed that I should not cross the Jordan and that I should not enter the good land that the LORD your God is giving for your possession. <sup>22</sup>For I am going to die in this land without crossing over the Jordan, but you are going to cross over to take possession of that good land. <sup>23</sup>So be careful not to forget the covenant that the LORD your God made with you, and not to make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. <sup>24</sup>For the LORD your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.

<sup>25</sup>When you have had children and children's children, and become complacent in the land, if you act corruptly by making an idol in the form of anything, thus doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, and provoking him to anger, <sup>26</sup>I

call heaven and earth to witness against you today that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to occupy; you will not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed.

<sup>27</sup>The LORD will scatter you among the peoples; only a few of you will be left among the nations where the LORD will lead you. <sup>28</sup>There you will serve other gods made by human hands, objects of wood and stone that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

<sup>29</sup>From there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul. <sup>30</sup>In your distress, when all these things have happened to you in time to come, you will return to the LORD your God and heed him.

<sup>31</sup>Because the LORD your God is a merciful God, he will neither abandon you nor destroy you; he will not forget the covenant with your ancestors that he swore to them.

<sup>32</sup>For ask now about former ages, long before your own, ever since the day that

God created human beings on the earth; ask from one end of heaven to the other: has anything so great as this ever happened or has its like ever been heard of? <sup>33</sup> Has any people ever heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have heard, and lived?

<sup>34</sup> Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by terrifying displays of power, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? <sup>35</sup> To you it was shown so that you would acknowledge that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him. <sup>36</sup> From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, while you heard his words coming out of the fire. <sup>37</sup> And because he loved your ancestors, he chose their descendants after them. He brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power, <sup>38</sup> driving out before you nations greater and

mightier than yourselves, to bring you in, giving you their land for a possession, as it is still today. <sup>39</sup> So acknowledge today and take to heart that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. <sup>40</sup> Keep his statutes and his commandments, which I am commanding you today for your own well-being and that of your descendants after you, so that you may long remain in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for all time.

*Cities of Refuge  
East of the Jordan*

<sup>41</sup> Then Moses set apart on the east side of the Jordan three cities <sup>42</sup> to which a homicide could flee, someone who unintentionally kills another person, the two not having been at enmity before; the homicide could flee to one of these cities and live: <sup>43</sup> Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland belonging to the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead belonging to the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan belonging to the Manassites.

*Transition to  
the Second Address*

<sup>44</sup> This is the law that Moses set before the Israelites. <sup>45</sup> These are the decrees and the statutes and ordinances that Moses spoke to the Israelites when they had come out of Egypt, <sup>46</sup> beyond the Jordan in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned at Heshbon, whom Moses and the Israelites defeated when they came out of Egypt. <sup>47</sup> They occupied his land and the land of King Og of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites on the eastern side of the Jordan: <sup>48</sup> from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, as far as Mount Sirion (that is, Hermon), <sup>49</sup> together with all the Arabah on the east side of the Jordan as far as the Sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah.

**Luke 7:1-10** (NRSV)

*Jesus Heals  
a Centurion's Servant  
(Mt 8:5-13)*

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered

Capernaum. <sup>2</sup> A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. <sup>3</sup> When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. <sup>4</sup> When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, <sup>5</sup> for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us." <sup>6</sup> And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; <sup>7</sup> therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. <sup>8</sup> For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." <sup>9</sup> When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel

have I found such faith.”

<sup>10</sup> When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

**Psalms 68:19-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation.

*Selah*

<sup>20</sup> Our God is a God of salvation, and to God, the Lord, belongs escape from death.

<sup>21</sup> But God will shatter the heads of his enemies, the hairy crown of those who walk in their guilty ways.

<sup>22</sup> The Lord said, “I will bring them back from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

<sup>23</sup> so that you may bathe your feet in blood, so that the tongues of your dogs may have their share from the foe.”

<sup>24</sup> Your solemn processions are seen, O God,

the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary—

<sup>25</sup> the singers in front, the musicians last, between them girls playing tambourines:

<sup>26</sup> “Bless God in the great congregation, the LORD, O you who are of Israel’s fountain!”

<sup>27</sup> There is Benjamin, the least of them, in the lead, the princes of Judah in a body, the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.

<sup>28</sup> Summon your might, O God; show your strength, O God, as you have done for us before.

<sup>29</sup> Because of your temple at Jerusalem kings bear gifts to you.

<sup>30</sup> Rebuke the wild animals that live among the reeds, the herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples. Trample under foot those who lust after tribute; scatter the peoples who delight in war.

31 Let bronze be brought  
from Egypt;  
let Ethiopia hasten to  
stretch out its hands to  
God.

**Proverbs 17:14–15** (NRSV)

14 The beginning of strife is  
like letting out water;  
so stop before the  
quarrel breaks out.

15 One who justifies the  
wicked and one who  
condemns the  
righteous  
are both alike an  
abomination to the  
LORD.

## June 19



**Deuteronomy 5:1–31** (NRSV)

*The Ten Commandments*  
(Ex 20:1–17)

Moses convened all Israel,  
and said to them:

Hear, O Israel, the statutes  
and ordinances that I am  
addressing to you today; you  
shall learn them and observe

them diligently. <sup>2</sup> The LORD our  
God made a covenant with us  
at Horeb. <sup>3</sup> Not with our  
ancestors did the LORD make  
this covenant, but with us,  
who are all of us here alive  
today. <sup>4</sup> The LORD spoke with  
you face to face at the  
mountain, out of the fire. <sup>5</sup> (At  
that time I was standing  
between the LORD and you to  
declare to you the words of  
the LORD; for you were afraid  
because of the fire and did not  
go up the mountain.) And he  
said:

<sup>6</sup> I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you out of the  
land of Egypt, out of the house  
of slavery; <sup>7</sup> you shall have no  
other gods before me.

<sup>8</sup> You shall not make for  
yourself an idol, whether in  
the form of anything that is in  
heaven above, or that is on  
the earth beneath, or that is in  
the water under the earth.

<sup>9</sup> You shall not bow down to  
them or worship them; for I  
the LORD your God am a  
jealous God, punishing  
children for the iniquity of  
parents, to the third and  
fourth generation of those  
who reject me, <sup>10</sup> but showing



steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>11</sup> You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

<sup>12</sup> Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.

<sup>13</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>14</sup> But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you.

<sup>15</sup> Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

<sup>16</sup> Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your

God commanded you, so that your days may be long and that it may go well with you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

<sup>17</sup> You shall not murder.

<sup>18</sup> Neither shall you commit adultery.

<sup>19</sup> Neither shall you steal.

<sup>20</sup> Neither shall you bear false witness against your neighbor.

<sup>21</sup> Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife.

Neither shall you desire your neighbor's house, or field, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*Moses the Mediator  
of God's Will*

*(Ex 20:18–21)*

<sup>22</sup> These words the LORD spoke with a loud voice to your whole assembly at the mountain, out of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, and he added no more. He wrote them on two stone tablets, and gave them to me.

<sup>23</sup> When you heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you approached me, all the heads of your tribes and

your elders; <sup>24</sup> and you said, “Look, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the fire. Today we have seen that God may speak to someone and the person may still live. <sup>25</sup> So now why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, we shall die. <sup>26</sup> For who is there of all flesh that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and remained alive? <sup>27</sup> Go near, you yourself, and hear all that the LORD our God will say. Then tell us everything that the LORD our God tells you, and we will listen and do it.”

<sup>28</sup> The LORD heard your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: “I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you; they are right in all that they have spoken. <sup>29</sup> If only they had such a mind as this, to fear me and to keep all my commandments always, so that it might go well with them and with their children forever! <sup>30</sup> Go say to them,

‘Return to your tents.’ <sup>31</sup> But you, stand here by me, and I will tell you all the commandments, the statutes and the ordinances, that you shall teach them, so that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to possess.”

### **Luke 7:11-23 (NRSV)**

#### *Jesus Raises the Widow's Son at Nain*

<sup>11</sup> Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. <sup>12</sup> As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. <sup>13</sup> When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, “**Do not weep.**” <sup>14</sup> Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “**Young man, I say to you, rise!**” <sup>15</sup> The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. <sup>16</sup> Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has

risen among us!” and “God has looked favorably on his people!”<sup>17</sup> This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

*Messengers from  
John the Baptist  
(Mt 11:2–19)*

<sup>18</sup> The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples<sup>19</sup> and sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?”<sup>20</sup> When the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ ”<sup>21</sup> Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind.

<sup>22</sup> **And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them.”<sup>23</sup> And**

**blested is anyone who takes no offense at me.”**

**Psalm 68:32-35** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;  
sing praises to the Lord,  
*Selah*

<sup>33</sup> O rider in the heavens, the ancient heavens;  
listen, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.

<sup>34</sup> Ascribe power to God,  
whose majesty is over Israel;  
and whose power is in the skies.

<sup>35</sup> **Awesome is God in his sanctuary,  
the God of Israel;  
he gives power and strength to his people.  
Blessed be God!**

**Proverbs 17:16** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Why should fools have a price in hand  
to buy wisdom, when they have no mind to learn?

**June 20**



**Deuteronomy 5:32–6:25**  
(NRSV)

<sup>32</sup>You must therefore be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn to the right or to the left. <sup>33</sup>You must follow exactly the path that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you are to possess.

*The Great Commandment*

**6** Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, <sup>2</sup> so that you and your children and your children’s children may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. <sup>3</sup> Hear

therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

<sup>4</sup> Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. <sup>6</sup> Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. <sup>7</sup> Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. <sup>8</sup> Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, <sup>9</sup> and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

*Caution against Disobedience*

<sup>10</sup> When the LORD your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—a land with fine, large cities that you did not build,

<sup>11</sup> houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you have eaten your fill, <sup>12</sup> take care that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>13</sup> The LORD your God you shall fear; him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear. <sup>14</sup> Do not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who are all around you, <sup>15</sup> because the LORD your God, who is present with you, is a jealous God. The anger of the LORD your God would be kindled against you and he would destroy you from the face of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Do not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah. <sup>17</sup> You must diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his decrees, and his statutes that he has commanded you. <sup>18</sup> Do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, so that it may go well with you, and so that you

may go in and occupy the good land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give you, <sup>19</sup> thrusting out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has promised.

<sup>20</sup> When your children ask you in time to come, “What is the meaning of the decrees and the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded you?” <sup>21</sup> then you shall say to your children, “We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. <sup>22</sup> The LORD displayed before our eyes great and awesome signs and wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household. <sup>23</sup> He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land that he promised on oath to our ancestors. <sup>24</sup> Then the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive, as is now the case. <sup>25</sup> If we diligently observe this entire commandment before the LORD our God, as he has



commanded us, we will be in the right.”

**Luke 7:24-35 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup>When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind?

<sup>25</sup>What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who put on fine clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces. <sup>26</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup>This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>28</sup>I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” <sup>29</sup>(And all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God, because they had been baptized with John’s baptism. <sup>30</sup>But by

refusing to be baptized by him, the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God’s purpose for themselves.)

<sup>31</sup>“To what then will I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? <sup>32</sup>They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another,

‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep.’

<sup>33</sup>For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon’; <sup>34</sup>the Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ <sup>35</sup>Nevertheless, wisdom is vindicated by all her children.”

**69:1-13 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance from Persecution*

To the leader: according to Lilies. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> Save me, O God,  
for the waters have  
come up to my neck.  
<sup>2</sup> I sink in deep mire,

where there is no  
    foothold;  
I have come into deep  
    waters,  
    and the flood sweeps  
    over me.  
3 I am weary with my crying;  
    my throat is parched.  
My eyes grow dim  
    with waiting for my God.  
4 More in number than the  
    hairs of my head  
    are those who hate me  
    without cause;  
many are those who would  
    destroy me,  
    my enemies who accuse  
    me falsely.  
What I did not steal  
    must I now restore?  
5 O God, you know my folly;  
    the wrongs I have done  
    are not hidden from  
    you.  
6 Do not let those who hope  
    in you be put to shame  
    because of me,  
    O Lord God of hosts;  
do not let those who seek  
    you be dishonored  
    because of me,  
    O God of Israel.  
7 It is for your sake that I  
    have borne reproach,

    that shame has covered  
    my face.  
8 I have become a stranger  
    to my kindred,  
    an alien to my mother's  
    children.  
9 It is zeal for your house  
    that has consumed me;  
    the insults of those who  
    insult you have fallen  
    on me.  
10 When I humbled my soul  
    with fasting,  
    they insulted me for  
    doing so.  
11 When I made sackcloth my  
    clothing,  
    I became a byword to  
    them.  
12 I am the subject of gossip  
    for those who sit in the  
    gate,  
    and the drunkards make  
    songs about me.  
13 But as for me, my prayer is  
    to you, O LORD.  
    At an acceptable time, O  
    God,  
    in the abundance of your  
    steadfast love, answer  
    me.  
With your faithful help

**Proverbs 17:17–18** (NRSV)

17 A friend loves at all times,

and kinsfolk are born to share adversity.

<sup>18</sup> It is senseless to give a pledge, to become surety for a neighbor.

## June 21



**Deuteronomy 7:1–26** (NRSV)

*A Chosen People*

(Ex 34:10–16)

When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are about to enter and occupy, and he clears away many nations before you—the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations mightier and more numerous than you—<sup>2</sup> and when the LORD your God gives them over to you and you defeat them, then you must utterly destroy them. Make no covenant with them and show them no mercy.<sup>3</sup> Do not intermarry with them, giving your

daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons,<sup>4</sup> for that would turn away your children from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly.<sup>5</sup> But this is how you must deal with them: break down their altars, smash their pillars, hew down their sacred poles, and burn their idols with fire.<sup>6</sup> For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

<sup>7</sup> It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the LORD set his heart on you and chose you—for you were the fewest of all peoples.<sup>8</sup> It was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.<sup>9</sup> **Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful**



God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,<sup>10</sup> and who repays in their own person those who reject him. He does not delay but repays in their own person those who reject him.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, observe diligently the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that I am commanding you today.

*Blessings for Obedience*  
(Lev 26:1–13; Deut 28:1–14)

<sup>12</sup> If you heed these ordinances, by diligently observing them, the LORD your God will maintain with you the covenant loyalty that he swore to your ancestors;<sup>13</sup> he will love you, bless you, and multiply you; he will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock, in the land that he swore to your ancestors to give you.<sup>14</sup> You shall be the most blessed of peoples, with neither sterility nor barrenness among you or your livestock.<sup>15</sup> The LORD will

turn away from you every illness; all the dread diseases of Egypt that you experienced, he will not inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you.<sup>16</sup> You shall devour all the peoples that the LORD your God is giving over to you, showing them no pity; you shall not serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

<sup>17</sup> If you say to yourself, “These nations are more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?”<sup>18</sup> do not be afraid of them. Just remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt,<sup>19</sup> the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs and wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. The LORD your God will do the same to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.

<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the LORD your God will send the pestilence against them, until even the survivors and the fugitives are destroyed.<sup>21</sup> Have no dread of them, for the LORD your God, who is present with you, is a great and awesome God.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD your God will clear

away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to make a quick end of them, otherwise the wild animals would become too numerous for you. <sup>23</sup> But the LORD your God will give them over to you, and throw them into great panic, until they are destroyed. <sup>24</sup> He will hand their kings over to you and you shall blot out their name from under heaven; no one will be able to stand against you, until you have destroyed them. <sup>25</sup> The images of their gods you shall burn with fire. Do not covet the silver or the gold that is on them and take it for yourself, because you could be ensnared by it; for it is abhorrent to the LORD your God. <sup>26</sup> Do not bring an abhorrent thing into your house, or you will be set apart for destruction like it. You must utterly detest and abhor it, for it is set apart for destruction.

**Luke 7:36-50 (NRSV)**

*A Sinful Woman Forgiven*

<sup>36</sup> One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the

Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. <sup>37</sup> And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. <sup>38</sup> She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner." <sup>40</sup> Jesus spoke up and said to him, "**Simon, I have something to say to you.**" "Teacher," he replied, "speak." <sup>41</sup> "**A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.** <sup>42</sup> **When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?**" <sup>43</sup> Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "**You have judged**

rightly.”<sup>44</sup> Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair.”<sup>45</sup> You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet.<sup>46</sup> You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.”<sup>48</sup> Then he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”<sup>49</sup> But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”<sup>50</sup> And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

**Psalms 69:14-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> rescue me  
 from sinking in the mire;  
 let me be delivered from  
 my enemies  
 and from the deep  
 waters.

- <sup>15</sup> Do not let the flood sweep over me,  
 or the deep swallow me up,  
 or the Pit close its mouth over me.
- <sup>16</sup> Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good;  
 according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.
- <sup>17</sup> Do not hide your face from your servant,  
 for I am in distress—  
 make haste to answer me.
- <sup>18</sup> Draw near to me, redeem me,  
 set me free because of my enemies.

**Proverbs 17:19-21 (NRSV)**

- <sup>19</sup> One who loves transgression loves strife;  
 one who builds a high threshold invites broken bones.
- <sup>20</sup> The crooked of mind do not prosper,  
 and the perverse of tongue fall into calamity.

<sup>21</sup> The one who begets a fool gets trouble; the parent of a fool has no joy.

## June 22



### Deuteronomy 8:1–20 (NRSV)

#### *A Warning Not to Forget God in Prosperity*

This entire commandment that I command you today you must diligently observe, so that you may live and increase, and go in and occupy the land that the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors. <sup>2</sup> Remember the long way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments. <sup>3</sup> He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were

acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>4</sup> The clothes on your back did not wear out and your feet did not swell these forty years. <sup>5</sup> Know then in your heart that as a parent disciplines a child so the LORD your God disciplines you. <sup>6</sup> Therefore keep the commandments of the LORD your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him. <sup>7</sup> For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, <sup>8</sup> a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, <sup>9</sup> a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. <sup>10</sup> You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

<sup>11</sup> Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God,

by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. <sup>12</sup> When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, <sup>15</sup> who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, <sup>16</sup> and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. <sup>17</sup> Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” <sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing

today. <sup>19</sup> If you do forget the LORD your God and follow other gods to serve and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. <sup>20</sup> Like the nations that the LORD is destroying before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

**Luke 8:1-3 (NRSV)**

*Some Women*

*Accompany Jesus*

<sup>1</sup> Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, <sup>2</sup> as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, <sup>3</sup> and Joanna, the wife of Herod’s steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

**Psalm 69:19-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> You know the insults I receive,

and my shame and  
dishonor;  
my foes are all known to  
you.  
20 Insults have broken my  
heart,  
so that I am in despair.  
I looked for pity, but there  
was none;  
and for comforters, but I  
found none.  
21 They gave me poison for  
food,  
and for my thirst they  
gave me vinegar to  
drink.  
22 Let their table be a trap for  
them,  
a snare for their allies.  
23 Let their eyes be darkened  
so that they cannot  
see,  
and make their loins  
tremble continually.  
24 Pour out your indignation  
upon them,  
and let your burning  
anger overtake them.  
25 May their camp be a  
desolation;  
let no one live in their  
tents.  
26 For they persecute those  
whom you have struck  
down,

and those whom you  
have wounded, they  
attack still more.  
27 Add guilt to their guilt;  
may they have no  
acquittal from you.  
28 Let them be blotted out of  
the book of the living;  
let them not be enrolled  
among the righteous.  
29 But I am lowly and in pain;  
let your salvation, O God,  
protect me.  
30 I will praise the name of  
God with a song;  
I will magnify him with  
thanksgiving.  
31 This will please the LORD  
more than an ox  
or a bull with horns and  
hoofs.

**Proverbs 17:22 (NRSV)**

22 A cheerful heart is a good  
medicine,  
but a downcast spirit  
dries up the bones.

**June 23**



**Deuteronomy 9:1–10:5 (NRSV)**

*The Consequences of  
Rebelling against God  
(Ex 32:1–35)*

Hear, O Israel! You are about to cross the Jordan today, to go in and dispossess nations larger and mightier than you, great cities, fortified to the heavens,<sup>2</sup> a strong and tall people, the offspring of the Anakim, whom you know. You have heard it said of them, “Who can stand up to the Anakim?”<sup>3</sup> Know then today that the LORD your God is the one who crosses over before you as a devouring fire; he will defeat them and subdue them before you, so that you may dispossess and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has promised you.

<sup>4</sup> When the LORD your God thrusts them out before you, do not say to yourself, “It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to occupy this land”; it is rather because of the wickedness of these nations

that the LORD is dispossessing them before you.<sup>5</sup> It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you are going in to occupy their land; but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is dispossessing them before you, in order to fulfill the promise that the LORD made on oath to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

<sup>6</sup> Know, then, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to occupy because of your righteousness; for you are a stubborn people.

<sup>7</sup> Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness; you have been rebellious against the LORD from the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place.

<sup>8</sup> Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you.<sup>9</sup> When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that the LORD

made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water. <sup>10</sup> And the LORD gave me the two stone tablets written with the finger of God; on them were all the words that the LORD had spoken to you at the mountain out of the fire on the day of the assembly. <sup>11</sup> At the end of forty days and forty nights the LORD gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant. <sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to me, "Get up, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly. They have been quick to turn from the way that I commanded them; they have cast an image for themselves." <sup>13</sup> Furthermore the LORD said to me, "I have seen that this people is indeed a stubborn people. <sup>14</sup> Let me alone that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and more numerous than they."

<sup>15</sup> So I turned and went down from the mountain, while the mountain was

ablaze; the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. <sup>16</sup> Then I saw that you had indeed sinned against the LORD your God, by casting for yourselves an image of a calf; you had been quick to turn from the way that the LORD had commanded you. <sup>17</sup> So I took hold of the two tablets and flung them from my two hands, smashing them before your eyes. <sup>18</sup> Then I lay prostrate before the LORD as before, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all the sin you had committed, provoking the LORD by doing what was evil in his sight. <sup>19</sup> For I was afraid that the anger that the LORD bore against you was so fierce that he would destroy you. But the LORD listened to me that time also. <sup>20</sup> The LORD was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him, but I interceded also on behalf of Aaron at that same time. <sup>21</sup> Then I took the sinful thing you had made, the calf, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it thoroughly, until it was reduced to dust; and I



threw the dust of it into the stream that runs down the mountain.

<sup>22</sup> At Taberah also, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, you provoked the LORD to wrath. <sup>23</sup> And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, “Go up and occupy the land that I have given you,” you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God, neither trusting him nor obeying him.

<sup>24</sup> You have been rebellious against the LORD as long as he has known you.

<sup>25</sup> Throughout the forty days and forty nights that I lay prostrate before the LORD when the LORD intended to destroy you, <sup>26</sup> I prayed to the LORD and said, “Lord GOD, do not destroy the people who are your very own possession, whom you redeemed in your greatness, whom you brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. <sup>27</sup> Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; pay no attention to the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin, <sup>28</sup> otherwise the land from which you have brought us

might say, ‘Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land that he promised them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to let them die in the wilderness.’ <sup>29</sup> For they are the people of your very own possession, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.”

*The Second Pair of Tablets*  
(Ex 34:1–9)

**10** At that time the LORD said to me, “Carve out two tablets of stone like the former ones, and come up to me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood. <sup>2</sup> I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets, which you smashed, and you shall put them in the ark.” <sup>3</sup> So I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two tablets of stone like the former ones, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. <sup>4</sup> Then he wrote on the tablets the same words as before, the ten commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the fire on

the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me.<sup>5</sup> So I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark that I had made; and there they are, as the LORD commanded me.

**Luke 8:4-15** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the Sower*  
(Mt 13:1-9; Mk 4:1-9)

<sup>4</sup>When a great crowd gathered and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable:<sup>5</sup> “A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up.<sup>6</sup> Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture.<sup>7</sup> Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it.<sup>8</sup> Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold.” As he said this, he called out, “Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

*The Purpose of the Parables*  
(Mt 13:10-17; Mk 4:10-12)

<sup>9</sup>Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant.  
<sup>10</sup>He said, “To you it has been

given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but to others I speak in parables, so that

‘looking they may not perceive,  
and listening they may not understand.’

*The Parable of the Sower Explained*

(Mt 13:18-23; Mk 4:13-20)

<sup>11</sup>“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.  
<sup>12</sup>The ones on the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.<sup>13</sup> The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe only for a while and in a time of testing fall away.  
<sup>14</sup>As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear; but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.<sup>15</sup> But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an

honest and good heart, and  
bear fruit with patient  
endurance.

**Psalms 69:32-36** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> Let the oppressed see it  
and be glad;  
you who seek God, let  
your hearts revive.

<sup>33</sup> **For the LORD hears the  
needy,  
and does not despise his  
own that are in bonds.**

<sup>34</sup> Let heaven and earth  
praise him,  
the seas and everything  
that moves in them.

<sup>35</sup> For God will save Zion  
and rebuild the cities of  
Judah;  
and his servants shall live  
there and possess it;

<sup>36</sup> the children of his  
servants shall inherit it,  
and those who love his  
name shall live in it.

**Proverbs 17:23** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> The wicked accept a  
concealed bribe  
to pervert the ways of  
justice.

**June 24**



**Deuteronomy 10:6-22** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> (The Israelites journeyed  
from Beeroth-bene-jaakan to  
Moserah. There Aaron died,  
and there he was buried; his  
son Eleazar succeeded him as  
priest. <sup>7</sup> From there they  
journeyed to Gudgodah, and  
from Gudgodah to Jotbathah,  
a land with flowing streams.

<sup>8</sup> At that time the LORD set  
apart the tribe of Levi to carry  
the ark of the covenant of the  
LORD, to stand before the LORD  
to minister to him, and to  
bless in his name, to this day.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore Levi has no  
allotment or inheritance with  
his kindred; the LORD is his  
inheritance, as the LORD your  
God promised him.)

<sup>10</sup> I stayed on the mountain  
forty days and forty nights, as I  
had done the first time. And  
once again the LORD listened to  
me. The LORD was unwilling to  
destroy you. <sup>11</sup> The LORD said  
to me, "Get up, go on your  
journey at the head of the  
people, that they may go in  
and occupy the land that I

swore to their ancestors to give them.”

*The Essence of the Law*

<sup>12</sup> So now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you? Only to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments of the LORD your God and his decrees that I am commanding you today, for your own well-being.

<sup>14</sup> Although heaven and the heaven of heavens belong to the LORD your God, the earth with all that is in it, <sup>15</sup> yet the LORD set his heart in love on your ancestors alone and chose you, their descendants after them, out of all the peoples, as it is today.

<sup>16j</sup> Circumcise, then, the foreskin of your heart, and do not be stubborn any longer.

<sup>17</sup> For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial

and takes no bribe, <sup>18</sup> who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. <sup>19</sup> You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. <sup>20</sup> You shall fear the LORD your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. <sup>21</sup> He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen. <sup>22</sup> Your ancestors went down to Egypt seventy persons; and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in heaven.

**Luke 8:16-21 (NRSV)**

*A Lamp under a Jar*

(Mk 4:21-25)

<sup>16</sup> “No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light.

<sup>17</sup> For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not become known and come to light. <sup>18</sup> Then pay attention to

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<sup>j</sup> See Romans 2:25-29 on circumcision of the heart.

how you listen; for to those  
who have, more will be given;  
and from those who do not  
have, even what they seem to  
have will be taken away.”

*The True Kindred of Jesus*  
(Mt 12:46–50; Mk 3:31–35)

<sup>19</sup> Then his mother and his  
brothers came to him, but  
they could not reach him  
because of the crowd. <sup>20</sup> And  
he was told, “Your mother and  
your brothers are standing  
outside, wanting to see you.”

<sup>21</sup> But he said to them, “**My  
mother and my brothers are  
those who hear the word of  
God and do it.**”

**Psalms 70:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*  
(Ps 40:13-17)

To the leader. Of David, for the  
memorial offering.

<sup>1</sup> Be pleased, O God, to  
deliver me.

O LORD, make haste to  
help me!

<sup>2</sup> Let those be put to shame  
and confusion  
who seek my life.

Let those be turned back  
and brought to  
dishonor

who desire to hurt me.  
<sup>3</sup> Let those who say, “Aha,  
Aha!”

turn back because of  
their shame.

<sup>4</sup> Let all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in  
you.

Let those who love your  
salvation  
say evermore, “God is  
great!”

<sup>5</sup> But I am poor and needy;  
hasten to me, O God!  
You are my help and my  
deliverer;  
O LORD, do not delay!

**Proverbs 17:24–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> The discerning person  
looks to wisdom,  
but the eyes of a fool to  
the ends of the earth.

<sup>25</sup> Foolish children are a grief  
to their father  
and bitterness to her  
who bore them.

**June 25**



**Deuteronomy 11:1-32** (NRSV)


*Rewards for Oedience*

You shall love the LORD your God, therefore, and keep his charge, his decrees, his ordinances, and his commandments always.

<sup>2</sup> Remember today that it was not your children (who have not known or seen the discipline of the LORD your God), but it is you who must acknowledge his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, <sup>3</sup> his signs and his deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and to all his land; <sup>4</sup> what he did to the Egyptian army, to their horses and chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued you, so that the LORD has destroyed them to this day; <sup>5</sup> what he did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place; <sup>6</sup> and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab son of Reuben, how in the midst of all Israel the earth opened its

mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households, their tents, and every living being in their company; <sup>7</sup> for it is your own eyes that have seen every great deed that the LORD did.

<sup>8</sup> Keep, then, this entire commandment that I am commanding you today, so that you may have strength to go in and occupy the land that you are crossing over to occupy, <sup>9</sup> and so that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup> For the land that you are about to enter to occupy is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sow your seed and irrigate by foot like a vegetable garden. <sup>11</sup> But the land that you are crossing over to occupy is a land of hills and valleys, watered by rain from the sky, <sup>12</sup> a land that the LORD your God looks after. The eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.



<sup>13</sup> If you will only heed his every commandment that I am commanding you today— loving the LORD your God, and serving him with all your heart and with all your soul— <sup>14</sup> then he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil; <sup>15</sup> and he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you will eat your fill. <sup>16</sup> Take care, or you will be seduced into turning away, serving other gods and worshiping them, <sup>17</sup> for then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain and the land will yield no fruit; then you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you.

<sup>18</sup> You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead. <sup>19</sup> Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you

rise. <sup>20</sup> Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, <sup>21</sup> so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

<sup>22</sup> If you will diligently observe this entire commandment that I am commanding you, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, <sup>23</sup> then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and mightier than yourselves. <sup>24</sup> Every place on which you set foot shall be yours; your territory shall extend from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the Western Sea. <sup>25</sup> No one will be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the fear and dread of you on all the land on which you set foot, as he promised you.

<sup>26</sup> See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: <sup>27</sup> the blessing, if you obey the commandments of

the LORD your God that I am commanding you today;<sup>28</sup> and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn from the way that I am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known.

<sup>29</sup>When the LORD your God has brought you into the land that you are entering to occupy, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

<sup>30</sup>As you know, they are beyond the Jordan, some distance to the west, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh.

<sup>31</sup>When you cross the Jordan to go in to occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and when you occupy it and live in it,<sup>32</sup> you must diligently observe all the statutes and ordinances that I am setting before you today.

**Luke 8:22-25 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Calms a Storm*  
(Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:35-41)

<sup>22</sup>One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he

said to them, “Let us go across to the other side of the lake.”

So they put out,<sup>23</sup> and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A windstorm swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger.

<sup>24</sup>They went to him and woke him up, shouting, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm.<sup>25</sup> He said to them, “Where is your faith?” They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?”

**Psalm 71:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Lifelong  
Protection and Help*

- <sup>1</sup> In you, O LORD, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.
- <sup>2</sup> In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
incline your ear to me and save me.
- <sup>3</sup> Be to me a rock of refuge,



a strong fortress, to save  
me,  
for you are my rock and  
my fortress.

<sup>4</sup> Rescue me, O my God,  
from the hand of the  
wicked,  
from the grasp of the  
unjust and cruel.

<sup>5</sup> For you, O Lord, are my  
hope,  
my trust, O LORD, from  
my youth.

<sup>6</sup> Upon you I have leaned  
from my birth;  
it was you who took me  
from my mother's  
womb. My praise is  
continually of you.

**Proverbs 17:26** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> To impose a fine on the  
innocent is not right,  
or to flog the noble for  
their integrity.

**June 26**



**Deuteronomy 12:1-32** (NRSV)

*Pagan Shrines to Be Destroyed*

These are the statutes and ordinances that you must diligently observe in the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you to occupy all the days that you live on the earth.

<sup>2</sup> You must demolish completely all the places where the nations whom you are about to dispossess served their gods, on the mountain heights, on the hills, and under every leafy tree. <sup>3</sup> Break down their altars, smash their pillars, burn their sacred poles with fire, and hew down the idols of their gods, and thus blot out their name from their places. <sup>4</sup> You shall not worship the LORD your God in such ways. <sup>5</sup> But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes as his habitation to put his name there. You shall go there, <sup>6</sup> bringing there your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and your

donations, your votive gifts, your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks.<sup>7</sup> And you shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your households together, rejoicing in all the undertakings in which the LORD your God has blessed you.

<sup>8</sup>You shall not act as we are acting here today, all of us according to our own desires,<sup>9</sup> for you have not yet come into the rest and the possession that the LORD your God is giving you.<sup>10</sup> When you cross over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is allotting to you, and when he gives you rest from your enemies all around so that you live in safety,<sup>11</sup> then you shall bring everything that I command you to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and your donations, and all your choice votive gifts that you vow to the LORD.<sup>12</sup> And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you together with your sons and your

daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites who reside in your towns (since they have no allotment or inheritance with you).

*A Prescribed Place of Worship*

<sup>13</sup>Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place you happen to see.<sup>14</sup> But only at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes—there you shall offer your burnt offerings and there you shall do everything I command you.

<sup>15</sup>Yet whenever you desire you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, according to the blessing that the LORD your God has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as they would of gazelle or deer.<sup>16</sup> The blood, however, you must not eat; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.<sup>17</sup> Nor may you eat within your towns the tithe of your grain, your wine, and your oil, the firstlings of your herds and your flocks, any of your votive gifts that you vow, your freewill offerings, or your donations;

<sup>18</sup> these you shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God at the place that the LORD your God will choose, you together with your son and your daughter, your male and female slaves, and the Levites resident in your towns, rejoicing in the presence of the LORD your God in all your undertakings. <sup>19</sup> Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

<sup>20</sup> When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, "I am going to eat some meat," because you wish to eat meat, you may eat meat whenever you have the desire.

<sup>21</sup> If the place where the LORD your God will choose to put his name is too far from you, and you slaughter as I have commanded you any of your herd or flock that the LORD has given you, then you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. <sup>22</sup> Indeed, just as gazelle or deer is eaten, so you may eat it; the unclean and the clean alike may eat it.

<sup>23</sup> Only be sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is

the life, and you shall not eat the life with the meat. <sup>24</sup> Do not eat it; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. <sup>25</sup> Do not eat it, so that all may go well with you and your children after you, because you do what is right in the sight of the LORD. <sup>26</sup> But the sacred donations that are due from you, and your votive gifts, you shall bring to the place that the LORD will choose. <sup>27</sup> You shall present your burnt offerings, both the meat and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; the blood of your other sacrifices shall be poured out beside the altar of the LORD your God, but the meat you may eat.

<sup>28</sup> Be careful to obey all these words that I command you today, so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, because you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

#### *Warning against Idolatry*

<sup>29</sup> When the LORD your God has cut off before you the nations whom you are about to enter to dispossess them,

when you have dispossessed them and live in their land,<sup>30</sup> take care that you are not snared into imitating them, after they have been destroyed before you: do not inquire concerning their gods, saying, “How did these nations worship their gods? I also want to do the same.”<sup>31</sup> You must not do the same for the LORD your God, because every abhorrent thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods. They would even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.<sup>32</sup> You must diligently observe everything that I command you; do not add to it or take anything from it.

**Luke 8:26-39 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals the  
Gerasene Demoniac  
(Mt 8:28–9:1; Mk 5:1–20)*

<sup>26</sup> Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee.<sup>27</sup> As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs.<sup>28</sup> When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him

and shouted at the top of his voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me” —<sup>29</sup> for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.)

<sup>30</sup> Jesus then asked him, “**What is your name?**” He said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him.<sup>31</sup> They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

<sup>32</sup> Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission.<sup>33</sup> Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

<sup>34</sup> When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country.<sup>35</sup> Then people came out to see what had

happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

<sup>36</sup> Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. <sup>37</sup> Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. <sup>38</sup> The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, <sup>39</sup> **“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.”** So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

**Psalm 71:7-16** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> I have been like a portent  
to many,  
but you are my strong  
refuge.  
<sup>8</sup> My mouth is filled with  
your praise,  
and with your glory all  
day long.

<sup>9</sup> Do not cast me off in the  
time of old age;  
do not forsake me when  
my strength is spent.  
<sup>10</sup> For my enemies speak  
concerning me,  
and those who watch for  
my life consult  
together.  
<sup>11</sup> They say, “Pursue and  
seize that person  
whom God has forsaken,  
for there is no one to  
deliver.”  
<sup>12</sup> O God, do not be far from  
me;  
O my God, make haste to  
help me!  
<sup>13</sup> Let my accusers be put to  
shame and consumed;  
let those who seek to  
hurt me  
be covered with scorn  
and disgrace.  
<sup>14</sup> But I will hope continually,  
and will praise you yet  
more and more.  
<sup>15</sup> My mouth will tell of your  
righteous acts,  
of your deeds of  
salvation all day long,  
though their number is  
past my knowledge.

<sup>16</sup> I will come praising the  
mighty deeds of the  
Lord GOD,  
I will praise your  
righteousness, yours  
alone.

**Proverbs 17:27–28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> One who spares words is  
knowledgeable;  
one who is cool in spirit  
has understanding.  
<sup>28</sup> Even fools who keep silent  
are considered wise;  
when they close their lips,  
they are deemed intelligent.

**June 27**



**Deuteronomy 13:1-14:27**  
(NRSV)

If prophets or those who  
divine by dreams appear  
among you and promise you  
omens or portents, <sup>2</sup> and the  
omens or the portents  
declared by them take place,  
and they say, “Let us follow  
other gods” (whom you have

not known) “and let us serve  
them,” <sup>3</sup> you must not heed  
the words of those prophets  
or those who divine by  
dreams; for the LORD your God  
is testing you, to know  
whether you indeed love the  
LORD your God with all your  
heart and soul. <sup>4</sup> The LORD your  
God you shall follow, him  
alone you shall fear, his  
commandments you shall  
keep, his voice you shall obey,  
him you shall serve, and to  
him you shall hold fast. <sup>5</sup> But  
those prophets or those who  
divine by dreams shall be put  
to death for having spoken  
treason against the LORD your  
God—who brought you out of  
the land of Egypt and  
redeemed you from the house  
of slavery—to turn you from  
the way in which the LORD  
your God commanded you to  
walk. So you shall purge the  
evil from your midst.

<sup>6</sup> If anyone secretly entices  
you—even if it is your brother,  
your father’s son or your  
mother’s son, or your own son  
or daughter, or the wife you  
embrace, or your most  
intimate friend—saying, “Let  
us go worship other gods,”

whom neither you nor your ancestors have known,<sup>7</sup> any of the gods of the peoples that are around you, whether near you or far away from you, from one end of the earth to the other,<sup>8</sup> you must not yield to or heed any such persons. Show them no pity or compassion and do not shield them.<sup>9</sup> But you shall surely kill them; your own hand shall be first against them to execute them, and afterwards the hand of all the people.<sup>10</sup> Stone them to death for trying to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.<sup>11</sup> Then all Israel shall hear and be afraid, and never again do any such wickedness.

<sup>12</sup> If you hear it said about one of the towns that the LORD your God is giving you to live in,<sup>13</sup> that scoundrels from among you have gone out and led the inhabitants of the town astray, saying, "Let us go and worship other gods," whom you have not known,<sup>14</sup> then you shall inquire and make a thorough investigation. If the charge is

established that such an abhorrent thing has been done among you,<sup>15</sup> you shall put the inhabitants of that town to the sword, utterly destroying it and everything in it—even putting its livestock to the sword.<sup>16</sup> All of its spoil you shall gather into its public square; then burn the town and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God. It shall remain a perpetual ruin, never to be rebuilt.<sup>17</sup> Do not let anything devoted to destruction stick to your hand, so that the LORD may turn from his fierce anger and show you compassion, and in his compassion multiply you, as he swore to your ancestors,<sup>18</sup> if you obey the voice of the LORD your God by keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, doing what is right in the sight of the LORD your God.

#### *Pagan Practices Forbidden*

**14** You are children of the LORD your God. You must not lacerate yourselves or shave your forelocks for the dead.<sup>2</sup> For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; it is you

the LORD has chosen out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

*Clean and Unclean Foods*  
(Lev 11:1–47)

<sup>3</sup>You shall not eat any abhorrent thing. <sup>4</sup>These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, <sup>5</sup>the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain-sheep. <sup>6</sup>Any animal that divides the hoof and has the hoof cleft in two, and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. <sup>7</sup>Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof cleft you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not divide the hoof; they are unclean for you. <sup>8</sup>And the pig, because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. You shall not eat their meat, and you shall not touch their carcasses.

<sup>9</sup>Of all that live in water you may eat these: whatever has fins and scales you may eat. <sup>10</sup>And whatever does not

have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.

<sup>11</sup>You may eat any clean birds. <sup>12</sup>But these are the ones that you shall not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the osprey, <sup>13</sup>the buzzard, the kite of any kind; <sup>14</sup>every raven of any kind; <sup>15</sup>the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind; <sup>16</sup>the little owl and the great owl, the water hen <sup>17</sup>and the desert owl, the carrion vulture and the cormorant, <sup>18</sup>the stork, the heron of any kind; the hoopoe and the bat. <sup>19</sup>And all winged insects are unclean for you; they shall not be eaten. <sup>20</sup>You may eat any clean winged creature.

<sup>21</sup>You shall not eat anything that dies of itself; you may give it to aliens residing in your towns for them to eat, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God.

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

*Regulations concerning Tithes*

<sup>22</sup>Set apart a tithe of all the yield of your seed that is brought in yearly from the



field. <sup>23</sup> In the presence of the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose as a dwelling for his name, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, your wine, and your oil, as well as the firstlings of your herd and flock, so that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. <sup>24</sup> But if, when the LORD your God has blessed you, the distance is so great that you are unable to transport it, because the place where the LORD your God will choose to set his name is too far away from you, <sup>25</sup> then you may turn it into money. With the money secure in hand, go to the place that the LORD your God will choose; <sup>26</sup> spend the money for whatever you wish—oxen, sheep, wine, strong drink, or whatever you desire. And you shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your household rejoicing together. <sup>27</sup> As for the Levites resident in your towns, do not neglect them, because they have no allotment or inheritance with you.

**Luke 8:40-56 (NRSV)**

*A Girl Restored to Life  
and a Woman Healed*  
(Mt 9:18–26; Mk 5:21–43)

<sup>40</sup> Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. <sup>41</sup> Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus' feet and begged him to come to his house, <sup>42</sup> for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, who was dying.

As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. <sup>43</sup> Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. <sup>44</sup> She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. <sup>45</sup> Then Jesus asked, **"Who touched me?"** When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." <sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, **"Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me."** <sup>47</sup> When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came

trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. <sup>48</sup> He said to her, **“Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.”**

<sup>49</sup> While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader’s house to say, “Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer.” <sup>50</sup> When Jesus heard this, he replied, **“Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved.”** <sup>51</sup> When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child’s father and mother. <sup>52</sup> They were all weeping and wailing for her; but he said, **“Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping.”**

<sup>53</sup> And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead.

<sup>54</sup> But he took her by the hand and called out, **“Child, get up!”**

<sup>55</sup> Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat. <sup>56</sup> Her parents were astounded; but

he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

**Psalm 71:17-24** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

<sup>18</sup> So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come.

Your power <sup>19</sup> and your righteousness, O God, reach the high heavens. You who have done great things,

O God, who is like you?

<sup>20</sup> You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again.

<sup>21</sup> You will increase my honor, and comfort me once again.

<sup>22</sup> I will also praise you with the harp

for your faithfulness, O  
my God;

I will sing praises to you  
with the lyre,

O Holy One of Israel.

<sup>23</sup> My lips will shout for joy  
when I sing praises to  
you;

my soul also, which you  
have rescued.

<sup>24</sup> All day long my tongue will  
talk of your righteous  
help,

for those who tried to do  
me harm  
have been put to shame,  
and disgraced.

**Proverbs 18:1** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The one who lives alone  
is self-indulgent,  
showing contempt for  
all who have sound  
judgment.

**June 28**



**Deuteronomy 14:28-15:23**  
(NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Every third year you shall  
bring out the full tithe of your  
produce for that year, and  
store it within your towns;  
<sup>29</sup> the Levites, because they  
have no allotment or  
inheritance with you, as well  
as the resident aliens, the  
orphans, and the widows in  
your towns, may come and eat  
their fill so that the LORD your  
God may bless you in all the  
work that you undertake.

*Laws concerning the  
Sabbatical Year  
(Ex 21:1–11; Lev 25:1–7)*

**15** Every seventh year you  
shall grant a remission of  
debts. <sup>2</sup> And this is the manner  
of the remission: every  
creditor shall remit the claim  
that is held against a neighbor,  
not exacting it of a neighbor  
who is a member of the  
community, because the  
LORD's remission has been  
proclaimed. <sup>3</sup> Of a foreigner  
you may exact it, but you must

remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. <sup>4</sup> There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the LORD is sure to bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, <sup>5</sup> if only you will obey the LORD your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. <sup>6</sup> When the LORD your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

<sup>7</sup> If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. <sup>8</sup> You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. <sup>9</sup> Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, "The seventh year, the year of remission, is near," and therefore view your needy

neighbor with hostility and give nothing; your neighbor might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt.

<sup>10</sup> Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. <sup>11</sup> Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."

<sup>12</sup> If a member of your community, whether a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and works for you six years, in the seventh year you shall set that person free. <sup>13</sup> And when you send a male slave out from you a free person, you shall not send him out empty-handed. <sup>14</sup> Provide liberally out of your flock, your threshing floor, and your wine press, thus giving to him some of the bounty with which the LORD your God has blessed you.

<sup>15</sup> Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; for this reason I lay this

command upon you today.

<sup>16</sup> But if he says to you, “I will not go out from you,” because he loves you and your household, since he is well off with you, <sup>17</sup> then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his earlobe into the door, and he shall be your slave forever.

You shall do the same with regard to your female slave.

<sup>18</sup> Do not consider it a hardship when you send them out from you free persons, because for six years they have given you services worth the wages of hired laborers; and the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

#### *The Firstborn of Livestock*

<sup>19</sup> Every firstling male born of your herd and flock you shall consecrate to the LORD your God; you shall not do work with your firstling ox nor shear the firstling of your flock. <sup>20</sup> You shall eat it, you together with your household, in the presence of the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose. <sup>21</sup> But if it has any defect—any serious defect, such as lameness or

blindness—you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God; <sup>22</sup> within your towns you may eat it, the unclean and the clean alike, as you would a gazelle or deer. <sup>23</sup> Its blood, however, you must not eat; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

#### **Luke 9:1-6 (NRSV)**

##### *The Mission of the Twelve* (Mt 10:5–15)

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, <sup>2</sup> and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. <sup>3</sup> He said to them, “Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. <sup>4</sup> Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. <sup>5</sup> Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” <sup>6</sup> They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

**Psalm 72:1-14** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Guidance and  
Support for the King*

Of Solomon.

1 Give the king your justice,  
O God,  
and your righteousness  
to a king's son.

2 May he judge your people  
with righteousness,  
and your poor with  
justice.

3 May the mountains yield  
prosperity for the  
people,  
and the hills, in  
righteousness.

4 May he defend the cause  
of the poor of the  
people,  
give deliverance to the  
needy,  
and crush the oppressor.

5 May he live while the sun  
endures,  
and as long as the moon,  
throughout all  
generations.

6 May he be like rain that  
falls on the mown  
grass,  
like showers that water  
the earth.

7 In his days may  
righteousness flourish

and peace abound, until  
the moon is no more.

8 May he have dominion  
from sea to sea,  
and from the River to the  
ends of the earth.

9 May his foes bow down  
before him,  
and his enemies lick the  
dust.

10 May the kings of Tarshish  
and of the isles  
render him tribute,  
may the kings of Sheba  
and Seba  
bring gifts.

11 May all kings fall down  
before him,  
all nations give him  
service.

12 For he delivers the needy  
when they call,  
the poor and those who  
have no helper.

13 He has pity on the weak  
and the needy,  
and saves the lives of the  
needy.

14 From oppression and  
violence he redeems  
their life;  
and precious is their  
blood in his sight.

**Proverbs 18:2–3** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> A fool takes no pleasure in understanding,  
but only in expressing  
personal opinion.

<sup>3</sup> When wickedness comes,  
contempt comes also;  
and with dishonor comes  
disgrace.

**June 29**



**Deuteronomy 16:1-22** (NRSV)

*The Passover Reviewed*  
(Ex 12:1–20; 23:14–19; 34:18–26)

Observe the month of Abib by keeping the passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. <sup>2</sup>You shall offer the passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose as a dwelling for his name. <sup>3</sup>You must not eat with it anything leavened. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it—the bread of affliction—because

you came out of the land of Egypt in great haste, so that all the days of your life you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt. <sup>4</sup>No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days; and none of the meat of what you slaughter on the evening of the first day shall remain until morning. <sup>5</sup>You are not permitted to offer the passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>6</sup>But at the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name, only there shall you offer the passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, the time of day when you departed from Egypt. <sup>7</sup>You shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD your God will choose; the next morning you may go back to your tents. <sup>8</sup>For six days you shall continue to eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly for the LORD your God, when you shall do no work.

*The Festival of  
Weeks Reviewed*

(Ex 34:22; Lev 23:15–21;  
Num 28:26–31)

<sup>9</sup> You shall count seven weeks; begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain. <sup>10</sup> Then you shall keep the festival of weeks to the LORD your God, contributing a freewill offering in proportion to the blessing that you have received from the LORD your God. <sup>11</sup> Rejoice before the LORD your God—you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female slaves, the Levites resident in your towns, as well as the strangers, the orphans, and the widows who are among you—at the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. <sup>12</sup> Remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and diligently observe these statutes.

*The Festival of  
Booths Reviewed*

(Lev 23:33–43; Num 29:12–40)

<sup>13</sup> You shall keep the festival of booths for seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your

threshing floor and your wine press. <sup>14</sup> Rejoice during your festival, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female slaves, as well as the Levites, the strangers, the orphans, and the widows resident in your towns.

<sup>15</sup> Seven days you shall keep the festival to the LORD your God at the place that the LORD will choose; for the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all your undertakings, and you shall surely celebrate.

<sup>16</sup> Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the festival of unleavened bread, at the festival of weeks, and at the festival of booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed; <sup>17</sup> all shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

*Municipal Judges and Officers*

<sup>18</sup> You shall appoint judges and officials throughout your tribes, in all your towns that the LORD your God is giving



you, and they shall render just decisions for the people.

<sup>19</sup>You must not distort justice; you must not show partiality; and you must not accept bribes, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of those who are in the right. <sup>20</sup>Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, so that you may live and occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

#### *Forbidden Forms of Worship*

<sup>21</sup>You shall not plant any tree as a sacred pole beside the altar that you make for the LORD your God; <sup>22</sup>nor shall you set up a stone pillar—things that the LORD your God hates.

#### **Luke 9:7-17** (NRSV)

##### *Herod's Perplexity*

(Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29)

<sup>7</sup>Now Herod the ruler heard about all that had taken place, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, <sup>8</sup>by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the ancient prophets had arisen. <sup>9</sup>Herod said, "John I beheaded; but who is this about whom I hear

such things?" And he tried to see him.

#### *Feeding the Five Thousand*

(Mt 14:13-21; Mk 6:30-44;

Jn 6:1-15)

<sup>10</sup>On their return the apostles told Jesus all they had done. He took them with him and withdrew privately to a city called Bethsaida. <sup>11</sup>When the crowds found out about it, they followed him; and he welcomed them, and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed to be cured.

<sup>12</sup>The day was drawing to a close, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside, to lodge and get provisions; for we are here in a deserted place." <sup>13</sup>But he said to them, "**You give them something to eat.**" They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." <sup>14</sup>For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "**Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each.**" <sup>15</sup>They did so and made

them all sit down. <sup>16</sup> And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. <sup>17</sup> And all ate and were filled. What was left over was gathered up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

**Psalms 72:15-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Long may he live!  
    May gold of Sheba be  
        given to him.  
    May prayer be made for  
        him continually,  
    and blessings invoked for  
        him all day long.  
<sup>16</sup> May there be abundance  
    of grain in the land;  
    may it wave on the tops  
        of the mountains;  
    may its fruit be like  
        Lebanon;  
    and may people blossom  
        in the cities  
    like the grass of the field.  
<sup>17</sup> May his name endure  
    forever,  
    his fame continue as long  
        as the sun.  
    May all nations be blessed  
        in him;

    may they pronounce him  
        happy.

<sup>18</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the  
    God of Israel,  
    who alone does  
        wondrous things.

<sup>19</sup> Blessed be his glorious  
    name forever;  
    may his glory fill the  
        whole earth.  
    Amen and Amen.

<sup>20</sup> The prayers of David son of  
    Jesse are ended.

**Proverbs 18:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The words of the mouth  
    are deep waters;  
    the fountain of wisdom  
        is a gushing stream.  
<sup>5</sup> It is not right to be partial  
    to the guilty,  
    or to subvert the  
        innocent in judgment.

**June 30**



**Deuteronomy 17:1-20** (NRSV)

You must not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep that has a defect, anything seriously wrong; for that is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

<sup>2</sup> If there is found among you, in one of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, and transgresses his covenant <sup>3</sup> by going to serve other gods and worshiping them—whether the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden— <sup>4</sup> and if it is reported to you or you hear of it, and you make a thorough inquiry, and the charge is proved true that such an abhorrent thing has occurred in Israel, <sup>5</sup> then you shall bring out to your gates that man or that woman who has committed this crime and you shall stone the man or woman to death. <sup>6</sup> On the evidence of two or three witnesses the

death sentence shall be executed; a person must not be put to death on the evidence of only one witness. <sup>7</sup> The hands of the witnesses shall be the first raised against the person to execute the death penalty, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

*Legal Decisions by  
Priests and Judges*

<sup>8</sup> If a judicial decision is too difficult for you to make between one kind of bloodshed and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another—any such matters of dispute in your towns—then you shall immediately go up to the place that the LORD your God will choose, <sup>9</sup> where you shall consult with the levitical priests and the judge who is in office in those days; they shall announce to you the decision in the case. <sup>10</sup> Carry out exactly the decision that they announce to you from the place that the LORD will choose, diligently observing everything they instruct you.

<sup>11</sup> You must carry out fully the law that they interpret for you or the ruling that they announce to you; do not turn aside from the decision that they announce to you, either to the right or to the left. <sup>12</sup> As for anyone who presumes to disobey the priest appointed to minister there to the LORD your God, or the judge, that person shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. <sup>13</sup> All the people will hear and be afraid, and will not act presumptuously again.

#### *Limitations of Royal Authority*

<sup>14</sup> When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me," <sup>15</sup> you may indeed set over you a king whom the LORD your God will choose. One of your own community you may set as king over you; you are not permitted to put a foreigner over you, who is not of your own community.

<sup>16</sup> Even so, he must not acquire many horses for himself, or

return the people to Egypt in order to acquire more horses, since the LORD has said to you, "You must never return that way again." <sup>17</sup> And he must not acquire many wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself. <sup>18</sup> When he has taken the throne of his kingdom, he shall have a copy of this law written for him in the presence of the levitical priests. <sup>19</sup> It shall remain with him and he shall read in it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, diligently observing all the words of this law and these statutes, <sup>20</sup> neither exalting himself above other members of the community nor turning aside from the commandment, either to the right or to the left, so that he and his descendants may reign long over his kingdom in Israel.

#### **Luke 9:18-27 (NRSV)**

##### *Peter's Declaration about Jesus*

*(Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30)*

<sup>18</sup> Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked

them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”<sup>19</sup> They answered, “John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen.”<sup>20</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “The Messiah of God.”

*Jesus Foretells His  
Death and Resurrection  
(Mt 16:24–28; Mk 8:31–9:1)*

<sup>21</sup> He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone,<sup>22</sup> saying, “The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”

<sup>23</sup> Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

<sup>24</sup> For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it.<sup>25</sup> What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?<sup>26</sup> Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when

he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.<sup>27</sup> But truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”

### **Psalm 73:1-20 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Relief from Oppressors*

A Psalm of Asaph.

- 1 Truly God is good to the upright,  
to those who are pure in heart.
- 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;  
my steps had nearly slipped.
- 3 For I was envious of the arrogant;  
I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- 4 For they have no pain;  
their bodies are sound and sleek.
- 5 They are not in trouble as others are;  
they are not plagued like other people.
- 6 Therefore pride is their necklace;  
violence covers them like a garment.
- 7 Their eyes swell out with fatness;

their hearts overflow  
with follies.  
8 They scoff and speak with  
malice;  
loftily they threaten  
oppression.  
9 They set their mouths  
against heaven,  
and their tongues range  
over the earth.  
10 Therefore the people turn  
and praise them,  
and find no fault in them.  
11 And they say, "How can  
God know?  
Is there knowledge in the  
Most High?"  
12 Such are the wicked;  
always at ease, they  
increase in riches.  
13 All in vain I have kept my  
heart clean  
and washed my hands in  
innocence.  
14 For all day long I have been  
plagued,  
and am punished every  
morning.  
15 If I had said, "I will talk on  
in this way,"  
I would have been  
untrue to the circle of  
your children.  
16 But when I thought how to  
understand this,

it seemed to me a  
wearisome task,  
17 until I went into the  
sanctuary of God;  
then I perceived their  
end.  
18 Truly you set them in  
slippery places;  
you make them fall to  
ruin.  
19 How they are destroyed in  
a moment,  
swept away utterly by  
terrors!  
20 They are like a dream  
when one awakes;  
on awaking you despise  
their phantoms.

**Proverbs 18:6–7 (NRSV)**

6 A fool's lips bring strife,  
and a fool's mouth  
invites a flogging.  
7 The mouths of fools are  
their ruin,  
and their lips a snare to  
themselves.

# July 1



## Deuteronomy 18:1-19:14 (NRSV)

### *Privileges of Priests and Levites*

The levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no allotment or inheritance within Israel. They may eat the sacrifices that are the LORD's portion<sup>2</sup> but they shall have no inheritance among the other members of the community; the LORD is their inheritance, as he promised them.

<sup>3</sup> This shall be the priests' due from the people, from those offering a sacrifice, whether an ox or a sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the two jowls, and the stomach.<sup>4</sup> The first fruits of your grain, your wine, and your oil, as well as the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him.<sup>5</sup> For the LORD your God has chosen Levi out of all your tribes, to stand and minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for all time.

<sup>6</sup> If a Levite leaves any of your towns, from wherever he has been residing in Israel, and comes to the place that the LORD will choose (and he may come whenever he wishes),<sup>7</sup> then he may minister in the name of the LORD his God, like all his fellow-Levites who stand to minister there before the LORD.<sup>8</sup> They shall have equal portions to eat, even though they have income from the sale of family possessions.

### *Child-Sacrifice, Divination, and Magic Prohibited*

<sup>9</sup> When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations.<sup>10</sup> No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer,<sup>11</sup> or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead.<sup>12</sup> For whoever does these things is abhorrent to the LORD; it is because of such abhorrent practices that the LORD your God is driving

them out before you. <sup>13</sup> You must remain completely loyal to the LORD your God.

<sup>14</sup> Although these nations that you are about to dispossess do give heed to soothsayers and diviners, as for you, the LORD your God does not permit you to do so.

*A New Prophet Like Moses*

<sup>15</sup> The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. <sup>16</sup> This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” <sup>17</sup> Then the LORD replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. <sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. <sup>19</sup> Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. <sup>20</sup> But any

prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.” <sup>21</sup> You may say to yourself, “How can we recognize a word that the LORD has not spoken?” <sup>22</sup> If a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD but the thing does not take place or prove true, it is a word that the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; do not be frightened by it.

*Laws concerning the  
Cities of Refuge*

*(Num 35:9–28; Josh 20:1–9)*

**19** When the LORD your God has cut off the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you, and you have dispossessed them and settled in their towns and in their houses, <sup>2</sup> you shall set apart three cities in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess. <sup>3</sup> You shall calculate the distances and divide into three regions the land that the LORD your God gives you as a possession, so that any



homicide can flee to one of them.

<sup>4</sup> Now this is the case of a homicide who might flee there and live, that is, someone who has killed another person unintentionally when the two had not been at enmity before: <sup>5</sup> Suppose someone goes into the forest with another to cut wood, and when one of them swings the ax to cut down a tree, the head slips from the handle and strikes the other person who then dies; the killer may flee to one of these cities and live.

<sup>6</sup> But if the distance is too great, the avenger of blood in hot anger might pursue and overtake and put the killer to death, although a death sentence was not deserved, since the two had not been at enmity before. <sup>7</sup> Therefore I command you: You shall set apart three cities.

<sup>8</sup> If the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he swore to your ancestors—and he will give you all the land that he promised your ancestors to give you, <sup>9</sup> provided you diligently observe this entire

commandment that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God and walking always in his ways—then you shall add three more cities to these three, <sup>10</sup> so that the blood of an innocent person may not be shed in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, thereby bringing bloodguilt upon you.

<sup>11</sup> But if someone at enmity with another lies in wait and attacks and takes the life of that person, and flees into one of these cities, <sup>12</sup> then the elders of the killer's city shall send to have the culprit taken from there and handed over to the avenger of blood to be put to death. <sup>13</sup> Show no pity; you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, so that it may go well with you.

#### *Property Boundaries*

<sup>14</sup> You must not move your neighbor's boundary marker, set up by former generations, on the property that will be allotted to you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

**Luke 9:28-36** (NRSV)

*The Transfiguration*

(Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8;

2 Pet 1:16-18)

<sup>28</sup> Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. <sup>31</sup> They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup> Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup> While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> Then from the

cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” <sup>36</sup> When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

**Psalms 73:21-28** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> When my soul was embittered,  
when I was pricked in heart,  
<sup>22</sup> I was stupid and ignorant;  
I was like a brute beast toward you.  
<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless I am continually with you;  
you hold my right hand.  
<sup>24</sup> You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will receive me with honor.  
<sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you.  
<sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.



<sup>27</sup> Indeed, those who are far  
from you will perish;  
you put an end to those  
who are false to you.  
<sup>28</sup> But for me it is good to be  
near God;  
I have made the Lord  
GOD my refuge,  
to tell of all your works.

**Proverbs 18:8** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> The words of a whisperer  
are like delicious  
morsels;  
they go down into the  
inner parts of the body.

**July 2**



**Deuteronomy 19:15-20:20**  
(NRSV)

*Law concerning Witnesses*

<sup>15</sup> A single witness shall not  
suffice to convict a person of  
any crime or wrongdoing in  
connection with any offense  
that may be committed. Only  
on the evidence of two or  
three witnesses shall a charge  
be sustained. <sup>16</sup> If a malicious

witness comes forward to  
accuse someone of  
wrongdoing, <sup>17</sup> then both  
parties to the dispute shall  
appear before the LORD,  
before the priests and the  
judges who are in office in  
those days, <sup>18</sup> and the judges  
shall make a thorough inquiry.  
If the witness is a false  
witness, having testified  
falsely against another, <sup>19</sup> then  
you shall do to the false  
witness just as the false  
witness had meant to do to  
the other. So you shall purge  
the evil from your midst. <sup>20</sup> The  
rest shall hear and be afraid,  
and a crime such as this shall  
never again be committed  
among you. <sup>21</sup> Show no pity:  
life for life, eye for eye, tooth  
for tooth, hand for hand, foot  
for foot.

*Rules of Warfare*

**20** When you go out to war  
against your enemies, and see  
horses and chariots, an army  
larger than your own, you  
shall not be afraid of them; for  
the LORD your God is with you,  
who brought you up from the  
land of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> Before you  
engage in battle, the priest

shall come forward and speak to the troops,<sup>3</sup> and shall say to them: “Hear, O Israel! Today you are drawing near to do battle against your enemies.

**Do not lose heart, or be afraid, or panic, or be in dread of them;<sup>4</sup> for it is the LORD your God who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to give you victory.”**

<sup>5</sup> Then the officials shall address the troops, saying, “Has anyone built a new house but not dedicated it? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another dedicate it.<sup>6</sup> Has anyone planted a vineyard but not yet enjoyed its fruit? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another be first to enjoy its fruit.<sup>7</sup> Has anyone become engaged to a woman but not yet married her? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another marry her.”<sup>8</sup> The officials shall continue to address the troops, saying, “Is anyone afraid or disheartened? He should go back to his house, or he might cause the heart of his comrades to melt like his

own.”<sup>9</sup> When the officials have finished addressing the troops, then the commanders shall take charge of them.

<sup>10</sup> When you draw near to a town to fight against it, offer it terms of peace.<sup>11</sup> If it accepts your terms of peace and surrenders to you, then all the people in it shall serve you at forced labor.<sup>12</sup> If it does not submit to you peacefully, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it;<sup>13</sup> and when the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword.

<sup>14</sup> You may, however, take as your booty the women, the children, livestock, and everything else in the town, all its spoil. You may enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you.<sup>15</sup> Thus you shall treat all the towns that are very far from you, which are not towns of the nations here.<sup>16</sup> But as for the towns of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you must not let anything that breathes remain alive.<sup>17</sup> You shall annihilate them—the Hittites and the Amorites, the

Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—just as the LORD your God has commanded,<sup>18</sup> so that they may not teach you to do all the abhorrent things that they do for their gods, and you thus sin against the LORD your God.

<sup>19</sup> If you besiege a town for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them. Although you may take food from them, you must not cut them down. Are trees in the field human beings that they should come under siege from you? <sup>20</sup> You may destroy only the trees that you know do not produce food; you may cut them down for use in building siegeworks against the town that makes war with you, until it falls.

**Luke 9:37-50 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Heals a*

*Boy with a Demon*

*(Mt 17:14–21; Mk 9:14–29)*

<sup>37</sup> On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. <sup>38</sup> Just then a man from the crowd shouted, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he

is my only child.” <sup>39</sup> Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. <sup>40</sup> I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” <sup>41</sup> Jesus answered, “**You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.**” <sup>42</sup> While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. <sup>43</sup> And all were astounded at the greatness of God.

*Jesus Again Foretells His Death*  
*(Mt 17:22–23; Mk 9:30–32)*

While everyone was amazed at all that he was doing, he said to his disciples, <sup>44</sup> “**Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands.**” <sup>45</sup> But they did not understand this saying; its meaning was concealed from them, so that they could not perceive it. And they were

afraid to ask him about this saying.

*True Greatness*

(Mt 18:1–5; Mk 9:33–37)

<sup>46</sup> An argument arose among them as to which one of them was the greatest.  
<sup>47</sup> But Jesus, aware of their inner thoughts, took a little child and put it by his side,  
<sup>48</sup> and said to them, “Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me; for the least among all of you is the greatest.”

*Another Exorcist*

(Mk 9:38–41)

<sup>49</sup> John answered, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us.”  
<sup>50</sup> But Jesus said to him, “Do not stop him; for whoever is not against you is for you.”

**Psalm 74:1-11** (NRSV)

*Plea for Help in Time of National Humiliation*

A Maskil of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> O God, why do you cast us off forever?

Why does your anger smoke against the sheep of your pasture?

- <sup>2</sup> Remember your congregation, which you acquired long ago, which you redeemed to be the tribe of your heritage.  
Remember Mount Zion, where you came to dwell.
- <sup>3</sup> Direct your steps to the perpetual ruins; the enemy has destroyed everything in the sanctuary.
- <sup>4</sup> Your foes have roared within your holy place; they set up their emblems there.
- <sup>5</sup> At the upper entrance they hacked the wooden trellis with axes.
- <sup>6</sup> And then, with hatchets and hammers, they smashed all its carved work.
- <sup>7</sup> They set your sanctuary on fire; they desecrated the dwelling place of your name, bringing it to the ground.

- 8 They said to themselves,  
 “We will utterly  
 subdue them”;  
 they burned all the  
 meeting places of God  
 in the land.
- 9 We do not see our  
 emblems;  
 there is no longer any  
 prophet,  
 and there is no one  
 among us who knows  
 how long.
- 10 How long, O God, is the  
 foe to scoff?  
 Is the enemy to revile  
 your name forever?
- 11 Why do you hold back your  
 hand;  
 why do you keep your  
 hand in your bosom?

**Proverbs 18:9–10 (NRSV)**

- 9 One who is slack in work  
 is close kin to a vandal.
- 10 The name of the LORD is a  
 strong tower;  
 the righteous run into it  
 and are safe.

**July 3**



**Deuteronomy 21:1-23 (NRSV)**

*Law concerning Murder by  
 Persons Unknown*

<sup>1</sup> If, in the land that the LORD  
 your God is giving you to  
 possess, a body is found lying  
 in open country, and it is not  
 known who struck the person  
 down, <sup>2</sup> then your elders and  
 your judges shall come out to  
 measure the distances to the  
 towns that are near the body.  
<sup>3</sup> The elders of the town  
 nearest the body shall take a  
 heifer that has never been  
 worked, one that has not  
 pulled in the yoke; <sup>4</sup> the elders  
 of that town shall bring the  
 heifer down to a wadi with  
 running water, which is  
 neither plowed nor sown, and  
 shall break the heifer’s neck  
 there in the wadi. <sup>5</sup> Then the  
 priests, the sons of Levi, shall  
 come forward, for the LORD  
 your God has chosen them to  
 minister to him and to  
 pronounce blessings in the  
 name of the LORD, and by their  
 decision all cases of dispute  
 and assault shall be settled.

<sup>6</sup> All the elders of that town nearest the body shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the wadi, <sup>7</sup> and they shall declare: "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor were we witnesses to it. <sup>8</sup> Absolve, O LORD, your people Israel, whom you redeemed; do not let the guilt of innocent blood remain in the midst of your people Israel." Then they will be absolved of bloodguilt. <sup>9</sup> So you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, because you must do what is right in the sight of the LORD.

#### *Female Captives*

<sup>10</sup> When you go out to war against your enemies, and the LORD your God hands them over to you and you take them captive, <sup>11</sup> suppose you see among the captives a beautiful woman whom you desire and want to marry, <sup>12</sup> and so you bring her home to your house: she shall shave her head, pare her nails, <sup>13</sup> discard her captive's garb, and shall remain in your house a full month, mourning for her father and mother; after that

you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. <sup>14</sup> But if you are not satisfied with her, you shall let her go free and not sell her for money. You must not treat her as a slave, since you have dishonored her.

#### *The Right of the Firstborn*

<sup>15</sup> If a man has two wives, one of them loved and the other disliked, and if both the loved and the disliked have borne him sons, the firstborn being the son of the one who is disliked, <sup>16</sup> then on the day when he wills his possessions to his sons, he is not permitted to treat the son of the loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the disliked, who is the firstborn. <sup>17</sup> He must acknowledge as firstborn the son of the one who is disliked, giving him a double portion of all that he has; since he is the first issue of his virility, the right of the firstborn is his.

#### *Rebellious Children*

<sup>18</sup> If someone has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father and mother, who does not



heed them when they discipline him,<sup>19</sup> then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his town at the gate of that place.<sup>20</sup> They shall say to the elders of his town, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard."<sup>21</sup> Then all the men of the town shall stone him to death. So you shall purge the evil from your midst; and all Israel will hear, and be afraid.

#### *Miscellaneous Laws*

<sup>22</sup> When someone is convicted of a crime punishable by death and is executed, and you hang him on a tree,<sup>23</sup> his corpse must not remain all night upon the tree; you shall bury him that same day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not defile the land that the LORD your God is giving you for possession.

#### **Luke 9:51-62 (NRSV)**

##### *A Samaritan Village*

##### *Refuses to Receive Jesus*

<sup>51</sup> When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.<sup>52</sup> And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him;<sup>53</sup> but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.<sup>54</sup> When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"<sup>55</sup> But he turned and rebuked them.<sup>56</sup> Then they went on to another village.

##### *Would-Be Followers of Jesus*


*(Mt 8:18-22)*

<sup>57</sup> As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."<sup>58</sup> And Jesus said to him, "**Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.**"<sup>59</sup> To another he said, "**Follow me.**" But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."<sup>60</sup> But

Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

<sup>61</sup> Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” <sup>62</sup> Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

**Psalm 74:12-23 (NRSV)**



<sup>12</sup> Yet God my King is from of old,  
working salvation in the earth.

<sup>13</sup> You divided the sea by your might;  
you broke the heads of the dragons in the waters.

<sup>14</sup> You crushed the heads of Leviathan;  
you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

<sup>15</sup> You cut openings for springs and torrents;  
you dried up ever-flowing streams.

<sup>16</sup> Yours is the day, yours also the night;  
you established the luminaries and the sun.

<sup>17</sup> You have fixed all the bounds of the earth;  
you made summer and winter.

<sup>18</sup> Remember this, O LORD,  
how the enemy scoffs,  
and an impious people  
reviles your name.

<sup>19</sup> Do not deliver the soul of your dove to the wild animals;  
do not forget the life of your poor forever.

<sup>20</sup> Have regard for your covenant,  
for the dark places of the land are full of the haunts of violence.

<sup>21</sup> Do not let the downtrodden be put to shame;  
let the poor and needy praise your name.

<sup>22</sup> Rise up, O God, plead your cause;  
remember how the impious scoff at you all day long.

<sup>23</sup> Do not forget the clamor of your foes,  
the uproar of your adversaries that goes up continually.

**Proverbs 18:11–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> The wealth of the rich is  
their strong city;  
in their imagination it is  
like a high wall.

<sup>12</sup> Before destruction one's  
heart is haughty,  
but humility goes before  
honor.

**July 4**



**Deuteronomy 22:1-30 (NRSV)**

You shall not watch your neighbor's ox or sheep straying away and ignore them; you shall take them back to their owner. <sup>2</sup> If the owner does not reside near you or you do not know who the owner is, you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until the owner claims it; then you shall return it. <sup>3</sup> You shall do the same with a neighbor's donkey; you shall do the same with a neighbor's garment; and you shall do the same

with anything else that your neighbor loses and you find. You may not withhold your help.

<sup>4</sup> You shall not see your neighbor's donkey or ox fallen on the road and ignore it; you shall help to lift it up.

<sup>5</sup> A woman shall not wear a man's apparel, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whoever does such things is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

<sup>6</sup> If you come on a bird's nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs, with the mother sitting on the fledglings or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. <sup>7</sup> Let the mother go, taking only the young for yourself, in order that it may go well with you and you may live long.

<sup>8</sup> When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof; otherwise you might have bloodguilt on your house, if anyone should fall from it.

<sup>9</sup> You shall not sow your vineyard with a second kind of seed, or the whole yield will have to be forfeited, both the

crop that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard itself.

<sup>10</sup> You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together.

<sup>11</sup> You shall not wear clothes made of wool and linen woven together.

<sup>12</sup> You shall make tassels on the four corners of the cloak with which you cover yourself.

### *Laws concerning Sexual Relations*

<sup>13</sup> Suppose a man marries a woman, but after going in to her, he dislikes her <sup>14</sup> and makes up charges against her, slandering her by saying, "I married this woman; but when I lay with her, I did not find evidence of her virginity."

<sup>15</sup> The father of the young woman and her mother shall then submit the evidence of the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. <sup>16</sup> The father of the young woman shall say to the elders: "I gave my daughter in marriage to this man but he dislikes her; <sup>17</sup> now he has made up charges against her, saying, 'I did not find evidence

of your daughter's virginity.' But here is the evidence of my daughter's virginity." Then

they shall spread out the cloth before the elders of the town.

<sup>18</sup> The elders of that town shall take the man and punish him;

<sup>19</sup> they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver

(which they shall give to the young woman's father)

because he has slandered a virgin of Israel. She shall

remain his wife; he shall not

be permitted to divorce her as long as he lives.

<sup>20</sup> If, however, this charge is true, that evidence of the young woman's virginity was not found, <sup>21</sup> then they shall bring the young woman out to the entrance of her father's house and the men of her town shall stone her to death, because she committed a disgraceful act in Israel by prostituting herself in her father's house. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

<sup>22</sup> If a man is caught lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman

as well as the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel.

<sup>23</sup> If there is a young woman, a virgin already engaged to be married, and a man meets her in the town and lies with her, <sup>24</sup> you shall bring both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death, the young woman because she did not cry for help in the town and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

<sup>25</sup> But if the man meets the engaged woman in the open country, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. <sup>26</sup> You shall do nothing to the young woman; the young woman has not committed an offense punishable by death, because this case is like that of someone who attacks and murders a neighbor. <sup>27</sup> Since he found her in the open country, the engaged woman may have cried for help, but there was no one to rescue her.

<sup>28</sup> If a man meets a virgin who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are caught in the act, <sup>29</sup> the man who lay with her shall give fifty shekels of silver to the young woman's father, and she shall become his wife. Because he violated her he shall not be permitted to divorce her as long as he lives.

<sup>30</sup> A man shall not marry his father's wife, thereby violating his father's rights.

#### **Luke 10:1–12 (NRSV)**

##### *The Mission of the Seventy*

<sup>1</sup> After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. <sup>2</sup> He said to them, **"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.** <sup>3</sup> **Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves.** <sup>4</sup> **Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road.** <sup>5</sup> **Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house!'** <sup>6</sup> **And if anyone is there who**

shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you.

<sup>7</sup> Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. <sup>8</sup> Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; <sup>9</sup> cure the sick who are there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' <sup>10</sup> But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, <sup>11</sup> 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.' <sup>12</sup> I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town.

**Psalms 75:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for God's  
Wondrous Deeds*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. A  
Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

<sup>1</sup> We give thanks to you, O  
God;  
we give thanks; your  
name is near.

People tell of your  
wondrous deeds.

<sup>2</sup> At the set time that I  
appoint

I will judge with equity.

<sup>3</sup> When the earth totters,  
with all its inhabitants,  
it is I who keep its pillars  
steady. *Selah*

<sup>4</sup> I say to the boastful, "Do  
not boast,"

and to the wicked, "Do  
not lift up your horn;

<sup>5</sup> do not lift up your horn on  
high,  
or speak with insolent  
neck."

**Proverbs 18:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> If one gives answer before  
hearing,  
it is folly and shame.

**July 5**



**Deuteronomy 23:1-24:13  
(NRSV)**

*Those Excluded from the  
Assembly*

No one whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Those born of an illicit union shall not be admitted to the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of their descendants shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of their descendants shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD, <sup>4</sup> because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

<sup>5</sup> (Yet the LORD your God refused to heed Balaam; the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you.) <sup>6</sup> You shall never promote their welfare or their prosperity as long as you live.

<sup>7</sup> You shall not abhor any of the Edomites, for they are your kin. You shall not abhor

any of the Egyptians, because you were an alien residing in their land. <sup>8</sup> The children of the third generation that are born to them may be admitted to the assembly of the LORD.

*Sanitary, Ritual, and Humanitarian Precepts*

<sup>9</sup> When you are encamped against your enemies you shall guard against any impropriety.

<sup>10</sup> If one of you becomes unclean because of a nocturnal emission, then he shall go outside the camp; he must not come within the camp. <sup>11</sup> When evening comes, he shall wash himself with water, and when the sun has set, he may come back into the camp.

<sup>12</sup> You shall have a designated area outside the camp to which you shall go.

<sup>13</sup> With your utensils you shall have a trowel; when you relieve yourself outside, you shall dig a hole with it and then cover up your excrement.

<sup>14</sup> Because the LORD your God travels along with your camp, to save you and to hand over your enemies to you, therefore your camp must be

holy, so that he may not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you.

<sup>15</sup>Slaves who have escaped to you from their owners shall not be given back to them.

<sup>16</sup>They shall reside with you, in your midst, in any place they choose in any one of your towns, wherever they please; you shall not oppress them.

<sup>17</sup>None of the daughters of Israel shall be a temple prostitute; none of the sons of Israel shall be a temple prostitute. <sup>18</sup>You shall not bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a male prostitute into the house of the LORD your God in payment for any vow, for both of these are abhorrent to the LORD your God.

<sup>19</sup>You shall not charge interest on loans to another Israelite, interest on money, interest on provisions, interest on anything that is lent. <sup>20</sup>On loans to a foreigner you may charge interest, but on loans to another Israelite you may not charge interest, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings in

the land that you are about to enter and possess.

<sup>21</sup>If you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not postpone fulfilling it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and you would incur guilt. <sup>22</sup>But if you refrain from vowing, you will not incur guilt. <sup>23</sup>Whatever your lips utter you must diligently perform, just as you have freely vowed to the LORD your God with your own mouth.

<sup>24</sup>If you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in a container.

<sup>25</sup>If you go into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor's standing grain.

### *Laws concerning Marriage and Divorce*

**24** Suppose a man enters into marriage with a woman, but she does not please him because he finds something objectionable about her, and so he writes her a certificate



of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; she then leaves his house<sup>2</sup> and goes off to become another man's wife.<sup>3</sup> Then suppose the second man dislikes her, writes her a bill of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house (or the second man who married her dies);<sup>4</sup> her first husband, who sent her away, is not permitted to take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that would be abhorrent to the LORD, and you shall not bring guilt on the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession.

#### *Miscellaneous Laws*

<sup>5</sup> When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be charged with any related duty. He shall be free at home one year, to be happy with the wife whom he has married.

<sup>6</sup> No one shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for that would be taking a life in pledge.

<sup>7</sup> If someone is caught kidnaping another Israelite,

enslaving or selling the Israelite, then that kidnaper shall die. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

<sup>8</sup> Guard against an outbreak of a leprous skin disease by being very careful; you shall carefully observe whatever the levitical priests instruct you, just as I have commanded them.

<sup>9</sup> Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on your journey out of Egypt.

<sup>10</sup> When you make your neighbor a loan of any kind, you shall not go into the house to take the pledge.<sup>11</sup> You shall wait outside, while the person to whom you are making the loan brings the pledge out to you.<sup>12</sup> If the person is poor, you shall not sleep in the garment given you as the pledge.<sup>13</sup> You shall give the pledge back by sunset, so that your neighbor may sleep in the cloak and bless you; and it will be to your credit before the LORD your God.

#### **Luke 10:13–24 (NRSV)**

*Woes to Unrepentant Cities*

*(Mt 11:20–24)*

<sup>13</sup> **“Woe to you, Chorazin!  
Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if**

the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>14</sup> But at the judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. <sup>15</sup> And you, Capernaum,

will you be exalted to heaven?

No, you will be brought down to Hades.

<sup>16</sup> “Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.”

### *The Return of the Seventy*

<sup>17</sup> The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!” <sup>18</sup> He said to them, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. <sup>19</sup> See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. <sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that

your names are written in heaven.”

### *Jesus Rejoices*

(Mt 11:25–27)

<sup>21</sup> At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>22</sup> All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

<sup>23</sup> Then turning to the disciples, Jesus said to them privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!

<sup>24</sup> For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

### **Psalm 75:6-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> For not from the east or from the west

and not from the  
wilderness comes  
lifting up;

7 but it is God who executes  
judgment,  
putting down one and  
lifting up another.

8 For in the hand of the LORD  
there is a cup  
with foaming wine, well  
mixed;  
he will pour a draught  
from it,  
and all the wicked of the  
earth  
shall drain it down to the  
dregs.

9 But I will rejoice forever;  
I will sing praises to the  
God of Jacob.

10 All the horns of the wicked  
I will cut off,  
but the horns of the  
righteous shall be  
exalted.

#### **Proverbs 18:14–15** (NRSV)

14 The human spirit will  
endure sickness;  
but a broken spirit—who  
can bear?

15 An intelligent mind  
acquires knowledge,  
and the ear of the wise  
seeks knowledge.

## July 6



#### **Deuteronomy 24:14-25:19** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup>You shall not withhold  
the wages of poor and needy  
laborers, whether other  
Israelites or aliens who reside  
in your land in one of your  
towns. <sup>15</sup>You shall pay them  
their wages daily before  
sunset, because they are poor  
and their livelihood depends  
on them; otherwise they  
might cry to the LORD against  
you, and you would incur guilt.

<sup>16</sup>Parents shall not be put  
to death for their children, nor  
shall children be put to death  
for their parents; only for their  
own crimes may persons be  
put to death.

<sup>17</sup>You shall not deprive a  
resident alien or an orphan of  
justice; you shall not take a  
widow's garment in pledge.

<sup>18</sup>Remember that you were a  
slave in Egypt and the LORD  
your God redeemed you from  
there; therefore I command  
you to do this.

<sup>19</sup>When you reap your  
harvest in your field and forget

a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings.

<sup>20</sup> When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow.

<sup>21</sup> When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. <sup>22</sup> Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this.

**25** Suppose two persons have a dispute and enter into litigation, and the judges decide between them, declaring one to be in the right and the other to be in the wrong. <sup>2</sup> If the one in the wrong deserves to be flogged, the judge shall make that person lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of lashes proportionate to the offense. <sup>3</sup> Forty lashes may be given but not more; if more lashes than

these are given, your neighbor will be degraded in your sight.

<sup>4</sup> You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.

### *Levirate Marriage*

<sup>5</sup> When brothers reside together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her, taking her in marriage, and performing the duty of a husband's brother to her, <sup>6</sup> and the firstborn whom she bears shall succeed to the name of the deceased brother, so that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. <sup>7</sup> But if the man has no desire to marry his brother's widow, then his brother's widow shall go up to the elders at the gate and say, "My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me." <sup>8</sup> Then the elders of his town shall summon him and speak to him. If he persists, saying, "I have no desire to marry her,"

<sup>9</sup> then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, pull his sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and declare, "This is what is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house."<sup>10</sup> Throughout Israel his family shall be known as "the house of him whose sandal was pulled off."

#### *Various Commands*

<sup>11</sup> If men get into a fight with one another, and the wife of one intervenes to rescue her husband from the grip of his opponent by reaching out and seizing his genitals,<sup>12</sup> you shall cut off her hand; show no pity.

<sup>13</sup> You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, large and small.<sup>14</sup> You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, large and small.<sup>15</sup> You shall have only a full and honest weight; you shall have only a full and honest measure, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.<sup>16</sup> For all who do such things, all who act

dishonestly, are abhorrent to the LORD your God.

<sup>17</sup> Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey out of Egypt,<sup>18</sup> how he attacked you on the way, when you were faint and weary, and struck down all who lagged behind you; he did not fear God.<sup>19</sup> Therefore when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies on every hand, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; do not forget.

#### **Luke 10:25-37 (NRSV)**

##### *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

(Mt 22:34-40; Mk 12:28-34)

<sup>25</sup> Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"<sup>26</sup> He said to him, "**What is written in the law? What do you read there?**"<sup>27</sup> He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."<sup>28</sup> And he said to

him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

<sup>29</sup> But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” <sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, was

a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” <sup>37</sup> He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

**Psalm 76:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Israel’s God—Judge of  
All the Earth*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

- 1 In Judah God is known,  
his name is great in  
Israel.
- 2 His abode has been  
established in Salem,  
his dwelling place in  
Zion.
- 3 There he broke the  
flashing arrows,  
the shield, the sword,  
and the weapons of  
war. *Selah*
- 4 Glorious are you, more  
majestic  
than the everlasting  
mountains.
- 5 The stouthearted were  
stripped of their spoil;  
they sank into sleep;  
none of the troops  
was able to lift a hand.
- 6 At your rebuke, O God of  
Jacob,

both rider and horse lay  
stunned.

- <sup>7</sup> But you indeed are  
awesome!  
Who can stand before  
you  
when once your anger is  
roused?

**Proverbs 18:16–18 (NRSV)**

- <sup>16</sup> A gift opens doors;  
it gives access to the  
great.  
<sup>17</sup> The one who first states a  
case seems right,  
until the other comes  
and cross-examines.  
<sup>18</sup> Casting the lot puts an end  
to disputes  
and decides between  
powerful contenders.

**July 7**



**Deuteronomy 26:1-19 (NRSV)**

*First Fruits and Tithes*

When you have come into  
the land that the LORD your  
God is giving you as an

inheritance to possess, and  
you possess it, and settle in it,  
<sup>2</sup> you shall take some of the  
first of all the fruit of the  
ground, which you harvest  
from the land that the LORD  
your God is giving you, and  
you shall put it in a basket and  
go to the place that the LORD  
your God will choose as a  
dwelling for his name. <sup>3</sup> You  
shall go to the priest who is in  
office at that time, and say to  
him, “Today I declare to the  
LORD your God that I have  
come into the land that the  
LORD swore to our ancestors to  
give us.” <sup>4</sup> When the priest  
takes the basket from your  
hand and sets it down before  
the altar of the LORD your God,  
<sup>5</sup> you shall make this response  
before the LORD your God: “A  
wandering Aramean was my  
ancestor; he went down into  
Egypt and lived there as an  
alien, few in number, and  
there he became a great  
nation, mighty and populous.  
<sup>6</sup> When the Egyptians treated  
us harshly and afflicted us, by  
imposing hard labor on us,  
<sup>7</sup> we cried to the LORD, the God  
of our ancestors; the LORD  
heard our voice and saw our

affliction, our toil, and our oppression. <sup>8</sup>The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; <sup>9</sup>and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup>So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me.” You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. <sup>11</sup>Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

<sup>12</sup>When you have finished paying all the tithe of your produce in the third year (which is the year of the tithe), giving it to the Levites, the aliens, the orphans, and the widows, so that they may eat their fill within your towns, <sup>13</sup>then you shall say before the LORD your God: “I have removed the sacred portion from the house, and I have given it to the Levites, the

resident aliens, the orphans, and the widows, in accordance with your entire commandment that you commanded me; I have neither transgressed nor forgotten any of your commandments: <sup>14</sup>I have not eaten of it while in mourning; I have not removed any of it while I was unclean; and I have not offered any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the LORD my God, doing just as you commanded me. <sup>15</sup>Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey.”

#### *Concluding Exhortation*

<sup>16</sup>This very day the LORD your God is commanding you to observe these statutes and ordinances; so observe them diligently with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>17</sup>Today you have obtained the LORD’s agreement: to be your God; and for you to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, and his



ordinances, and to obey him.

<sup>18</sup> Today the LORD has obtained your agreement: to be his treasured people, as he promised you, and to keep his commandments; <sup>19</sup> for him to set you high above all nations that he has made, in praise and in fame and in honor; and for you to be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.

**Luke 10:38-42** (NRSV)

*Jesus Visits Martha and Mary*

<sup>38</sup> Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." <sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered her, "**Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; <sup>42</sup> there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which**

**will not be taken away from her."**

**Psalm 76:8-12** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> From the heavens you uttered judgment; the earth feared and was still  
<sup>9</sup> when God rose up to establish judgment, to save all the oppressed of the earth. *Selah*  
<sup>10</sup> Human wrath serves only to praise you, when you bind the last bit of your wrath around you.  
<sup>11</sup> Make vows to the LORD your God, and perform them; let all who are around him bring gifts to the one who is awesome,  
<sup>12</sup> who cuts off the spirit of princes, who inspires fear in the kings of the earth.

**Proverbs 18:19** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> An ally offended is stronger than a city; such quarreling is like the bars of a castle.

# July 8



**Deuteronomy 27:1-26** (NRSV)

*The Inscribed Stones and  
Altar on Mount Ebal*

Then Moses and the elders of Israel charged all the people as follows: Keep the entire commandment that I am commanding you today. <sup>2</sup> On the day that you cross over the Jordan into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and cover them with plaster. <sup>3</sup> You shall write on them all the words of this law when you have crossed over, to enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you. <sup>4</sup> So when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall cover them with plaster. <sup>5</sup> And you shall build an altar there to the LORD your God, an altar of stones on which you have not used an iron tool. <sup>6</sup> You

must build the altar of the LORD your God of unhewn stones. Then offer up burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God, <sup>7</sup> make sacrifices of well-being, and eat them there, rejoicing before the LORD your God. <sup>8</sup> You shall write on the stones all the words of this law very clearly.

<sup>9</sup> Then Moses and the levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: Keep silence and hear, O Israel! This very day you have become the people of the LORD your God.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore obey the LORD your God, observing his commandments and his statutes that I am commanding you today.

*Twelve Curses*

<sup>11</sup> The same day Moses charged the people as follows: <sup>12</sup> When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim for the blessing of the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. <sup>13</sup> And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. <sup>14</sup> Then the Levites

shall declare in a loud voice to all the Israelites:

<sup>15</sup> “Cursed be anyone who makes an idol or casts an image, anything abhorrent to the LORD, the work of an artisan, and sets it up in secret.” All the people shall respond, saying, “Amen!”

<sup>16</sup> “Cursed be anyone who dishonors father or mother.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>17</sup> “Cursed be anyone who moves a neighbor’s boundary marker.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>18</sup> “Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind person on the road.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>19</sup> “Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien, the orphan, and the widow of justice.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>20</sup> “Cursed be anyone who lies with his father’s wife, because he has violated his father’s rights.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>21</sup> “Cursed be anyone who lies with any animal.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>22</sup> “Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether

the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.”

All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>23</sup> “Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>24</sup> “Cursed be anyone who strikes down a neighbor in secret.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>25</sup> “Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

<sup>26</sup> “Cursed be anyone who does not uphold the words of this law by observing them.” All the people shall say, “Amen!”

### **Luke 11:1-13 (NRSV)**

#### *The Lord’s Prayer*

*(Mt 6:9–15)*

<sup>1</sup> He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> He said to them,

**“When you pray, say:**

**Father, hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come.**

3 Give us each day our  
daily bread.  
4 And forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive  
everyone indebted to  
us.  
And do not bring us to  
the time of trial.”

*Perseverance in Prayer*  
(Mt 7:7–11)

5 And he said to them,  
“Suppose one of you has a  
friend, and you go to him at  
midnight and say to him,  
‘Friend, lend me three loaves  
of bread; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine  
has arrived, and I have nothing  
to set before him.’ <sup>7</sup> And he  
answers from within, ‘Do not  
bother me; the door has  
already been locked, and my  
children are with me in bed; I  
cannot get up and give you  
anything.’ <sup>8</sup> I tell you, even  
though he will not get up and  
give him anything because he  
is his friend, at least because  
of his persistence he will get  
up and give him whatever he  
needs.  
<sup>9</sup> “So I say to you, Ask, and it  
will be given you; search, and  
you will find; knock, and the  
door will be opened for you.  
<sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks

receives, and everyone who  
searches finds, and for  
everyone who knocks, the  
door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> Is there  
anyone among you who, if  
your child asks for a fish, will  
give a snake instead of a fish?  
<sup>12</sup> Or if the child asks for an  
egg, will give a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If  
you then, who are evil, know  
how to give good gifts to your  
children, how much more will  
the heavenly Father give the  
Holy Spirit to those who ask  
him!”

**Psalm 77:1-14 (NRSV)**

*God’s Mighty Deeds Recalled*

To the leader: according to  
Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A Psalm.

1 I cry aloud to God,  
aloud to God, that he  
may hear me.  
2 In the day of my trouble I  
seek the Lord;  
in the night my hand is  
stretched out without  
wearying;  
my soul refuses to be  
comforted.  
3 I think of God, and I moan;  
I meditate, and my spirit  
faints. *Selah*  
4 You keep my eyelids from  
closing;

I am so troubled that I  
cannot speak.  
5 I consider the days of old,  
and remember the years  
of long ago.  
6 I commune with my heart  
in the night;  
I meditate and search my  
spirit:  
7 “Will the Lord spurn  
forever,  
and never again be  
favorable?  
8 Has his steadfast love  
ceased forever?  
Are his promises at an  
end for all time?  
9 Has God forgotten to be  
gracious?  
Has he in anger shut up  
his compassion?”  
*Selah*  
10 And I say, “It is my grief  
that the right hand of the  
Most High has  
changed.”  
11 I will call to mind the  
deeds of the LORD;  
I will remember your  
wonders of old.  
12 I will meditate on all your  
work,  
and muse on your  
mighty deeds.  
13 Your way, O God, is holy.

What god is so great as  
our God?

14 You are the God who  
works wonders;  
you have displayed your  
might among the  
peoples.

**Proverbs 18:20–21** (NRSV)

20 From the fruit of the  
mouth one’s stomach  
is satisfied;  
the yield of the lips  
brings satisfaction.  
21 Death and life are in the  
power of the tongue,  
and those who love it  
will eat its fruits.

## July 9



**Deuteronomy 28:1-44** (NRSV)

*Blessings for Obedience*  
(Lev 26:1–13; Deut 7:12–24)

If you will only obey the  
LORD your God, by diligently  
observing all his  
commandments that I am  
commanding you today, the

LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth; <sup>2</sup> all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the LORD your God:

<sup>3</sup> Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.

<sup>4</sup> Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, both the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock.

<sup>5</sup> Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

<sup>6</sup> Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. <sup>8</sup> The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns, and in all that you undertake; he will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he has

sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways.

<sup>10</sup> All the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give you. <sup>12</sup> The LORD will open for you his rich storehouse, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all your undertakings. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. <sup>13</sup> The LORD will make you the head, and not the tail;

you shall be only at the top, and not at the bottom—if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today, by diligently observing them, <sup>14</sup> and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I am commanding you today, either to the right or to the left, following other gods to serve them.

*Warnings against  
Disobedience*

*(Ex 9:8–12; Lev 26:14–46)*

<sup>15</sup> But if you will not obey the LORD your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you:

<sup>16</sup> Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field.

<sup>17</sup> Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

<sup>18</sup> Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock.

<sup>19</sup> Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

<sup>20</sup> The LORD will send upon you disaster, panic, and frustration in everything you attempt to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. <sup>21</sup> The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until it has consumed you off the land that you are

entering to possess. <sup>22</sup> The LORD will afflict you with consumption, fever, inflammation, with fiery heat and drought, and with blight and mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. <sup>23</sup> The sky over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you iron. <sup>24</sup> The LORD will change the rain of your land into powder, and only dust shall come down upon you from the sky until you are destroyed.

<sup>25</sup> The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out against them one way and flee before them seven ways. You shall become an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. <sup>26</sup> Your corpses shall be food for every bird of the air and animal of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away. <sup>27</sup> The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt, with ulcers, scurvy, and itch, of which you cannot be healed. <sup>28</sup> The LORD will afflict you with madness, blindness, and confusion of mind; <sup>29</sup> you shall grope about at noon as blind people grope

in darkness, but you shall be unable to find your way; and you shall be continually abused and robbed, without anyone to help. <sup>30</sup> You shall become engaged to a woman, but another man shall lie with her. You shall build a house, but not live in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but not enjoy its fruit. <sup>31</sup> Your ox shall be butchered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it. Your donkey shall be stolen in front of you, and shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, without anyone to help you. <sup>32</sup> Your sons and daughters shall be given to another people, while you look on; you will strain your eyes looking for them all day but be powerless to do anything. <sup>33</sup> A people whom you do not know shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors; you shall be continually abused and crushed, <sup>34</sup> and driven mad by the sight that your eyes shall see. <sup>35</sup> The LORD will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your

foot to the crown of your head. <sup>36</sup> The LORD will bring you, and the king whom you set over you, to a nation that neither you nor your ancestors have known, where you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone. <sup>37</sup> You shall become an object of horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the LORD will lead you.

<sup>38</sup> You shall carry much seed into the field but shall gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. <sup>39</sup> You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall eat them. <sup>40</sup> You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. <sup>41</sup> You shall have sons and daughters, but they shall not remain yours, for they shall go into captivity. <sup>42</sup> All your trees and the fruit of your ground the cicada shall take over. <sup>43</sup> Aliens residing among you shall ascend above you higher and higher, while you shall descend lower and lower.



<sup>44</sup> They shall lend to you but you shall not lend to them; they shall be the head and you shall be the tail.

**Luke 11:14-22** (NRSV)

*Jesus and Beelzebul*

(Mt 12:22–32; Mk 3:19b–30)

<sup>14</sup> Now he was casting out a demon that was mute; when the demon had gone out, the one who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed. <sup>15</sup> But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.” <sup>16</sup> Others, to test him, kept demanding from him a sign from heaven. <sup>17</sup> But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house. <sup>18</sup> If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? —for you say that I cast out the demons by Beelzebul. <sup>19</sup> Now if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. <sup>20</sup> But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom

of God has come to you.

<sup>21</sup> When a strong man, fully armed, guards his castle, his property is safe. <sup>22</sup> But when one stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his plunder.

**Psalms 77:15-20** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> With your strong arm you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*  
<sup>16</sup> When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; the very deep trembled.  
<sup>17</sup> The clouds poured out water; the skies thundered; your arrows flashed on every side.  
<sup>18</sup> The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook.  
<sup>19</sup> Your way was through the sea, your path, through the mighty waters;

yet your footprints were  
unseen.

<sup>20</sup> You led your people like a  
flock  
by the hand of Moses  
and Aaron.

### **Proverbs 18:22 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> He who finds a wife finds a  
good thing,  
and obtains favor from  
the LORD.

## **July 10**



### **Deuteronomy 28:45-68 (NRSV)**

<sup>45</sup> All these curses shall  
come upon you, pursuing and  
overtaking you until you are  
destroyed, because you did  
not obey the LORD your God,  
by observing the  
commandments and the  
decrees that he commanded  
you. <sup>46</sup> They shall be among  
you and your descendants as a  
sign and a portent forever.

<sup>47</sup> Because you did not  
serve the LORD your God

joyfully and with gladness of  
heart for the abundance of  
everything, <sup>48</sup> therefore you  
shall serve your enemies  
whom the LORD will send  
against you, in hunger and  
thirst, in nakedness and lack of  
everything. He will put an iron  
yoke on your neck until he has  
destroyed you. <sup>49</sup> The LORD will  
bring a nation from far away,  
from the end of the earth, to  
swoop down on you like an  
eagle, a nation whose  
language you do not  
understand, <sup>50</sup> a grim-faced  
nation showing no respect to  
the old or favor to the young.  
<sup>51</sup> It shall consume the fruit of  
your livestock and the fruit of  
your ground until you are  
destroyed, leaving you neither  
grain, wine, and oil, nor the  
increase of your cattle and the  
issue of your flock, until it has  
made you perish. <sup>52</sup> It shall  
besiege you in all your towns  
until your high and fortified  
walls, in which you trusted,  
come down throughout your  
land; it shall besiege you in all  
your towns throughout the  
land that the LORD your God  
has given you. <sup>53</sup> In the  
desperate straits to which the

enemy siege reduces you, you will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your own sons and daughters whom the LORD your God has given you.

<sup>54</sup> Even the most refined and gentle of men among you will begrudge food to his own brother, to the wife whom he embraces, and to the last of his remaining children, <sup>55</sup> giving to none of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because nothing else remains to him, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in all your towns. <sup>56</sup> She who is the most refined and gentle among you, so gentle and refined that she does not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground, will begrudge food to the husband whom she embraces, to her own son, and to her own daughter, <sup>57</sup> begrudging even the afterbirth that comes out from between her thighs, and the children that she bears, because she is eating them in secret for lack of anything else, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in your towns.

<sup>58</sup> If you do not diligently observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, fearing this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, <sup>59</sup> then the LORD will overwhelm both you and your offspring with severe and lasting afflictions and grievous and lasting maladies. <sup>60</sup> He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were in dread, and they shall cling to you. <sup>61</sup> Every other malady and affliction, even though not recorded in the book of this law, the LORD will inflict on you until you are destroyed. <sup>62</sup> Although once you were as numerous as the stars in heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the LORD your God. <sup>63</sup> And just as the LORD took delight in making you prosperous and numerous, so the LORD will take delight in bringing you to ruin and destruction; you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>64</sup> The LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other; and there you shall serve

other gods, of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors have known.

<sup>65</sup> Among those nations you shall find no ease, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and a languishing spirit. <sup>66</sup> Your life shall hang in doubt before you; night and day you shall be in dread, with no assurance of your life. <sup>67</sup> In the morning you shall say, "If only it were evening!" and at evening you shall say, "If only it were morning!"—because of the dread that your heart shall feel and the sights that your eyes shall see. <sup>68</sup> The LORD will bring you back in ships to Egypt, by a route that I promised you would never see again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.

**Luke 11:23-36** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> **Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.**

*The Return of the  
Unclean Spirit*

(Mt 12:43–45)

<sup>24</sup> **"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' <sup>25</sup> When it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. <sup>26</sup> Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first."**

*True Blessedness*

<sup>27</sup> While he was saying this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!" <sup>28</sup> But he said, **"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"**

*The Sign of Jonah*

(Mt 12:38–42)

<sup>29</sup> When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, **"This generation is an evil generation; it asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it**

except the sign of Jonah. <sup>30</sup> For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be to this generation. <sup>31</sup> The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here! <sup>32</sup> The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here!

*The Light of the Body*  
(Mt 6:22–23)

<sup>33</sup> “No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar, but on the lampstand so that those who enter may see the light. <sup>34</sup> Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but if it is not healthy, your body is full of darkness. <sup>35</sup> Therefore consider whether the light in you is not darkness. <sup>36</sup> If then your whole body is full of light, with no

part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays.”

**Psalm 78:1-22 (NRSV)**

*God's Goodness and Israel's  
Ingratitude*

A Maskil of Asaph.

- 1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;  
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable;  
I will utter dark sayings from of old,  
3 things that we have heard and known,  
that our ancestors have told us.
- 4 We will not hide them from their children;  
we will tell to the coming generation  
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,  
and the wonders that he has done.
- 5 He established a decree in Jacob,  
and appointed a law in Israel,  
which he commanded our ancestors  
to teach to their children;

6 that the next generation  
might know them,  
the children yet unborn,  
and rise up and tell them  
to their children,  
7 so that they should set  
their hope in God,  
and not forget the works  
of God,  
but keep his  
commandments;  
8 and that they should not  
be like their ancestors,  
a stubborn and  
rebellious generation,  
a generation whose heart  
was not steadfast,  
whose spirit was not  
faithful to God.  
9 The Ephraimites, armed  
with the bow,  
turned back on the day  
of battle.  
10 They did not keep God's  
covenant,  
but refused to walk  
according to his law.  
11 They forgot what he had  
done,  
and the miracles that he  
had shown them.  
12 In the sight of their  
ancestors he worked  
marvels

in the land of Egypt, in  
the fields of Zoan.  
13 He divided the sea and let  
them pass through it,  
and made the waters  
stand like a heap.  
14 In the daytime he led them  
with a cloud,  
and all night long with a  
fiery light.  
15 He split rocks open in the  
wilderness,  
and gave them drink  
abundantly as from the  
deep.  
16 He made streams come  
out of the rock,  
and caused waters to  
flow down like rivers.  
17 Yet they sinned still more  
against him,  
rebellious against the  
Most High in the  
desert.  
18 They tested God in their  
heart  
by demanding the food  
they craved.  
19 They spoke against God,  
saying,  
"Can God spread a table  
in the wilderness?  
20 Even though he struck the  
rock so that water  
gushed out

and torrents overflowed,  
can he also give bread,  
or provide meat for his  
people?"

- <sup>21</sup> Therefore, when the LORD  
heard, he was full of  
rage;  
a fire was kindled against  
Jacob,  
his anger mounted  
against Israel,  
<sup>22</sup> because they had no faith  
in God,  
and did not trust his  
saving power.

**Proverbs 18:23–24 (NRSV)**

- <sup>23</sup> The poor use entreaties,  
but the rich answer  
roughly.  
<sup>24</sup> Some friends play at  
friendship  
but a true friend sticks  
closer than one's  
nearest kin.

**July 11**



**Deuteronomy 29:1-29 (NRSV)**

These are the words of the  
covenant that the LORD  
commanded Moses to make  
with the Israelites in the land  
of Moab, in addition to the  
covenant that he had made  
with them at Horeb.

*The Covenant  
Renewed in Moab*

<sup>2</sup> Moses summoned all  
Israel and said to them: You  
have seen all that the LORD did  
before your eyes in the land of  
Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all  
his servants and to all his land,  
<sup>3</sup> the great trials that your eyes  
saw, the signs, and those great  
wonders. <sup>4</sup> But to this day the  
LORD has not given you a mind  
to understand, or eyes to see,  
or ears to hear. <sup>5</sup> I have led you  
forty years in the wilderness.  
The clothes on your back have  
not worn out, and the sandals  
on your feet have not worn  
out; <sup>6</sup> you have not eaten  
bread, and you have not drunk  
wine or strong drink—so that  
you may know that I am the  
LORD your God. <sup>7</sup> When you  
came to this place, King Sihon  
of Heshbon and King Og of  
Bashan came out against us  
for battle, but we defeated

them. <sup>8</sup> We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore diligently observe the words of this covenant, in order that you may succeed in everything that you do.

<sup>10</sup> You stand assembled today, all of you, before the LORD your God—the leaders of your tribes, your elders, and your officials, all the men of Israel, <sup>11</sup> your children, your women, and the aliens who are in your camp, both those who cut your wood and those who draw your water— <sup>12</sup> to enter into the covenant of the LORD your God, sworn by an oath, which the LORD your God is making with you today; <sup>13</sup> in order that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you and as he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. <sup>14</sup> I am making this covenant, sworn by an oath, not only with you who stand here with us today before the LORD our God, <sup>15</sup> but also with those who are not here with us today. <sup>16</sup> You know how we

lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed. <sup>17</sup> You have seen their detestable things, the filthy idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold, that were among them. <sup>18</sup> It may be that there is among you a man or woman, or a family or tribe, whose heart is already turning away from the LORD our God to serve the gods of those nations. It may be that there is among you a root sprouting poisonous and bitter growth. <sup>19</sup> All who hear the words of this oath and bless themselves, thinking in their hearts, “We are safe even though we go our own stubborn ways” (thus bringing disaster on moist and dry alike)— <sup>20</sup> the LORD will be unwilling to pardon them, for the LORD’s anger and passion will smoke against them. All the curses written in this book will descend on them, and the LORD will blot out their names from under heaven. <sup>21</sup> The LORD will single them out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant



written in this book of the law.  
<sup>22</sup> The next generation, your children who rise up after you, as well as the foreigner who comes from a distant country, will see the devastation of that land and the afflictions with which the LORD has afflicted it—<sup>23</sup> all its soil burned out by sulfur and salt, nothing planted, nothing sprouting, unable to support any vegetation, like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD destroyed in his fierce anger—<sup>24</sup> they and indeed all the nations will wonder, “Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused this great display of anger?”<sup>25</sup> They will conclude, “It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.<sup>26</sup> They turned and served other gods, worshiping them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them;<sup>27</sup> so the anger of the LORD was kindled against that land, bringing on

it every curse written in this book.<sup>28</sup> The LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, fury, and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as is now the case.”<sup>29</sup> The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the revealed things belong to us and to our children forever, to observe all the words of this law.

**Luke 11:37-54 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Denounces*

*Pharisees and Lawyers*

<sup>37</sup> While he was speaking, a Pharisee invited him to dine with him; so he went in and took his place at the table.

<sup>38</sup> The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not first wash before dinner.<sup>39</sup> Then the Lord said to him, “**Now you**

**Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.**<sup>40</sup> **You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?**

<sup>41</sup> **So give for alms those things that are within; and see, everything will be clean for you.**

<sup>42</sup> **“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint**

and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others.

<sup>43</sup> Woe to you Pharisees! For you love to have the seat of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces. <sup>44</sup> Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without realizing it."

<sup>45</sup> One of the lawyers answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us too." <sup>46</sup> And he said, "Woe also to you lawyers! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not lift a finger to ease them. <sup>47</sup> Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors killed. <sup>48</sup> So you are witnesses and approve of the deeds of your ancestors; for they killed them, and you build their tombs. <sup>49</sup> Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' <sup>50</sup> so that this generation may be

charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, <sup>51</sup> from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against this generation. <sup>52</sup> Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering."

<sup>53</sup> When he went outside, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile toward him and to cross-examine him about many things, <sup>54</sup> lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

### **Psalm 78:23-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> Yet he commanded the skies above,  
and opened the doors of heaven;  
<sup>24</sup> he rained down on them manna to eat,  
and gave them the grain of heaven.  
<sup>25</sup> Mortals ate of the bread of angels;

he sent them food in  
abundance.  
<sup>26</sup> He caused the east wind to  
blow in the heavens,  
and by his power he led  
out the south wind;  
<sup>27</sup> he rained flesh upon them  
like dust,  
winged birds like the  
sand of the seas;  
<sup>28</sup> he let them fall within  
their camp,  
all around their  
dwellings.  
<sup>29</sup> And they ate and were  
well filled,  
for he gave them what  
they craved.  
<sup>30</sup> But before they had  
satisfied their craving,  
while the food was still in  
their mouths,  
<sup>31</sup> the anger of God rose  
against them  
and he killed the  
strongest of them,  
and laid low the flower  
of Israel.

**Proverbs 19:1–3 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> Better the poor walking  
in integrity  
than one perverse of  
speech who is a fool.

<sup>2</sup> Desire without knowledge  
is not good,  
and one who moves too  
hurriedly misses the  
way.  
<sup>3</sup> One's own folly leads to  
ruin, yet the heart  
rages against the LORD.

**July 12**



**Deuteronomy 30:1-20 (NRSV)**

*God's Fidelity Assured*  
When all these things have  
happened to you, the  
blessings and the curses that I  
have set before you, if you call  
them to mind among all the  
nations where the LORD your  
God has driven you, <sup>2</sup> and  
return to the LORD your God,  
and you and your children  
obey him with all your heart  
and with all your soul, just as I  
am commanding you today,  
<sup>3</sup> then the LORD your God will  
restore your fortunes and  
have compassion on you,  
gathering you again from all

the peoples among whom the LORD your God has scattered you. <sup>4</sup> Even if you are exiled to the ends of the world, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will bring you back. <sup>5</sup> The LORD your God will bring you into the land that your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors.

<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. <sup>7</sup> The LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on the adversaries who took advantage of you. <sup>8</sup> Then you shall again obey the LORD, observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today, <sup>9</sup> and the LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the

fruit of your soil. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, <sup>10</sup> when you obey the LORD your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

*Exhortation to Choose Life*

<sup>11</sup> Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. <sup>12</sup> It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?"

<sup>13</sup> Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" <sup>14</sup> No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

<sup>15</sup> See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup> If you

obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, <sup>20</sup> loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

### **Luke 12:1-7 (NRSV)**

#### *A Warning against Hypocrisy*

<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, when the crowd gathered by the thousands, so that they trampled on one another, he began to speak first to his disciples, **“Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, that is, their hypocrisy.**

<sup>2</sup> **Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known.** <sup>3</sup> **Therefore whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed from the housetops.**

#### *Exhortation to Fearless Confession*

*(Mt 10:26–33)*

<sup>4</sup> **“I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that can do nothing more.** <sup>5</sup> **But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!** <sup>6</sup> **Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight.**

<sup>7</sup> **But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not**

be afraid; you are of more  
value than many sparrows.

**Psalms 78:32-39 (NRSV)**

<sup>32</sup> In spite of all this they still  
sinned;  
they did not believe in  
his wonders.  
<sup>33</sup> So he made their days  
vanish like a breath,  
and their years in terror.  
<sup>34</sup> When he killed them, they  
sought for him;  
they repented and  
sought God earnestly.  
<sup>35</sup> They remembered that  
God was their rock,  
the Most High God their  
redeemer.  
<sup>36</sup> But they flattered him with  
their mouths;  
they lied to him with  
their tongues.  
<sup>37</sup> Their heart was not  
steadfast toward him;  
they were not true to his  
covenant.  
<sup>38</sup> Yet he, being  
compassionate,  
forgave their iniquity,  
and did not destroy  
them;  
often he restrained his  
anger,

and did not stir up all his  
wrath.

<sup>39</sup> He remembered that they  
were but flesh,  
a wind that passes and  
does not come again.

**Proverbs 19:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Wealth brings many  
friends,  
but the poor are left  
friendless.  
<sup>5</sup> A false witness will not go  
unpunished, and a liar  
will not escape.

**July 13**



**Deuteronomy 31:1-29 (NRSV)**

*Joshua Becomes  
Moses' Successor  
(Num 27:12-23)*

When Moses had finished  
speaking all these words to all  
Israel, <sup>2</sup> he said to them: "I am  
now one hundred twenty  
years old. I am no longer able  
to get about, and the LORD has  
told me, 'You shall not cross  
over this Jordan.'<sup>3</sup> The LORD

your God himself will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua also will cross over before you, as the LORD promised. <sup>4</sup>The LORD will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. <sup>5</sup>The LORD will give them over to you and you shall deal with them in full accord with the command that I have given to you. <sup>6</sup>Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the LORD your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: “Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their ancestors to give them; and you will put them in possession of it. <sup>8</sup>It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

### *The Law to Be Read Every Seventh Year*

<sup>9</sup>Then Moses wrote down this law, and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. <sup>10</sup>Moses commanded them: “Every seventh year, in the scheduled year of remission, during the festival of booths, <sup>11</sup>when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. <sup>12</sup>Assemble the people—men, women, and children, as well as the aliens residing in your towns—so that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God and to observe diligently all the words of this law, <sup>13</sup>and so that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to possess.”

### *Moses and Joshua Receive God’s Charge*

<sup>14</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Your time to die is near; call

Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, so that I may commission him.” So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting,<sup>15</sup> and the LORD appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud; the pillar of cloud stood at the entrance to the tent.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Soon you will lie down with your ancestors. Then this people will begin to prostitute themselves to the foreign gods in their midst, the gods of the land into which they are going; they will forsake me, breaking my covenant that I have made with them.”<sup>17</sup> My anger will be kindled against them in that day. I will forsake them and hide my face from them; they will become easy prey, and many terrible troubles will come upon them. In that day they will say, ‘Have not these troubles come upon us because our God is not in our midst?’<sup>18</sup> On that day I will surely hide my face on account of all the evil they have done by turning to other gods.

<sup>19</sup>Now therefore write this song, and teach it to the

Israelites; put it in their mouths, in order that this song may be a witness for me against the Israelites.<sup>20</sup> For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I promised on oath to their ancestors, and they have eaten their fill and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, despising me and breaking my covenant.<sup>21</sup> And when many terrible troubles come upon them, this song will confront them as a witness, because it will not be lost from the mouths of their descendants. For I know what they are inclined to do even now, before I have brought them into the land that I promised them on oath.”<sup>22</sup> That very day Moses wrote this song and taught it to the Israelites.

<sup>23</sup>Then the LORD commissioned Joshua son of Nun and said, “Be strong and bold, for you shall bring the Israelites into the land that I promised them; I will be with you.”

<sup>24</sup>When Moses had finished writing down in a book the words of this law to



the very end, <sup>25</sup> Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, <sup>26</sup> "Take this book of the law and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God; let it remain there as a witness against you. <sup>27</sup> For I know well how rebellious and stubborn you are. If you already have been so rebellious toward the LORD while I am still alive among you, how much more after my death! <sup>28</sup> Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officials, so that I may recite these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them. <sup>29</sup> For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly, turning aside from the way that I have commanded you. In time to come trouble will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands."

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<sup>k</sup> See Luke 23:26-31 Jesus on the way to the cross.

### **Luke 12:8-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; <sup>9</sup> but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God. <sup>10</sup> And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. <sup>11</sup> When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say; <sup>12</sup> for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what you ought to say."

### **Psalms 78:40-55 (NRSV)**

- <sup>40</sup> How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert!
- <sup>41</sup> They tested God again and again, and provoked the Holy One of Israel.
- <sup>42</sup> They did not keep in mind his power,

or the day when he  
redeemed them from  
the foe;  
43 when he displayed his  
signs in Egypt,  
and his miracles in the  
fields of Zoan.  
44 He turned their rivers to  
blood,  
so that they could not  
drink of their streams.  
45 He sent among them  
swarms of flies, which  
devoured them,  
and frogs, which  
destroyed them.  
46 He gave their crops to the  
caterpillar,  
and the fruit of their  
labor to the locust.  
47 He destroyed their vines  
with hail,  
and their sycamores with  
frost.  
48 He gave over their cattle to  
the hail,  
and their flocks to  
thunderbolts.  
49 He let loose on them his  
fierce anger,  
wrath, indignation, and  
distress,  
a company of destroying  
angels.

50 He made a path for his  
anger;  
he did not spare them  
from death,  
but gave their lives over  
to the plague.  
51 He struck all the firstborn  
in Egypt,  
the first issue of their  
strength in the tents of  
Ham.  
52 Then he led out his people  
like sheep,  
and guided them in the  
wilderness like a flock.  
53 He led them in safety, so  
that they were not  
afraid;  
but the sea  
overwhelmed their  
enemies.  
54 And he brought them to  
his holy hill,  
to the mountain that his  
right hand had won.  
55 He drove out nations  
before them;  
he apportioned them for  
a possession  
and settled the tribes of  
Israel in their tents.

**Proverbs 19:6–7 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Many seek the favor of the  
generous,

and everyone is a friend  
to a giver of gifts.

<sup>7</sup> If the poor are hated even  
by their kin,  
how much more are they  
shunned by their  
friends!  
When they call after them,  
they are not there.

## July 14



### Deuteronomy 31:30-32:27 (NRSV)

#### *The Song of Moses*

<sup>30</sup> Then Moses recited the  
words of this song, to the very  
end, in the hearing of the  
whole assembly of Israel:

**32** Give ear, O heavens, and I  
will speak;  
let the earth hear the  
words of my mouth.  
<sup>2</sup> May my teaching drop like  
the rain,  
my speech condense like  
the dew;  
like gentle rain on grass,

like showers on new  
growth.

<sup>3</sup> For I will proclaim the  
name of the LORD;  
ascribe greatness to our  
God!  
<sup>4</sup> The Rock, his work is  
perfect,  
and all his ways are just.  
A faithful God, without  
deceit,  
just and upright is he;  
<sup>5</sup> yet his degenerate children  
have dealt falsely with  
him,  
a perverse and crooked  
generation.  
<sup>6</sup> Do you thus repay the  
LORD,  
O foolish and senseless  
people?  
Is not he your father, who  
created you,  
who made you and  
established you?  
<sup>7</sup> Remember the days of old,  
consider the years long  
past;  
ask your father, and he will  
inform you;  
your elders, and they will  
tell you.  
<sup>8</sup> When the Most High  
apportioned the  
nations,

when he divided  
humankind,  
he fixed the boundaries of  
the peoples  
according to the number  
of the gods;  
9 the LORD's own portion  
was his people,  
Jacob his allotted share.  
10 He sustained him in a  
desert land,  
in a howling wilderness  
waste;  
he shielded him, cared for  
him,  
guarded him as the apple  
of his eye.  
11 As an eagle stirs up its  
nest,  
and hovers over its  
young;  
as it spreads its wings,  
takes them up,  
and bears them aloft on  
its pinions,  
12 the LORD alone guided him;  
no foreign god was with  
him.  
13 He set him atop the  
heights of the land,  
and fed him with  
produce of the field;  
he nursed him with honey  
from the crags,  
with oil from flinty rock;

14 curds from the herd, and  
milk from the flock,  
with fat of lambs and  
rams;  
Bashan bulls and goats,  
together with the  
choicest wheat—  
you drank fine wine from  
the blood of grapes.  
15 Jacob ate his fill;  
Jeshurun grew fat, and  
kicked.  
You grew fat, bloated,  
and gorged!  
He abandoned God who  
made him,  
and scoffed at the Rock  
of his salvation.  
16 They made him jealous  
with strange gods,  
with abhorrent things  
they provoked him.  
17 They sacrificed to demons,  
not God,  
to deities they had never  
known,  
to new ones recently  
arrived,  
whom your ancestors  
had not feared.  
18 You were unmindful of the  
Rock that bore you;  
you forgot the God who  
gave you birth.

19 The LORD saw it, and was  
jealous;  
he spurned his sons and  
daughters.  
20 He said: I will hide my face  
from them,  
I will see what their end  
will be;  
for they are a perverse  
generation,  
children in whom there  
is no faithfulness.  
21 They made me jealous  
with what is no god,  
provoked me with their  
idols.  
So I will make them jealous  
with what is no people,  
provoke them with a  
foolish nation.  
22 For a fire is kindled by my  
anger,  
and burns to the depths  
of Sheol;  
it devours the earth and its  
increase,  
and sets on fire the  
foundations of the  
mountains.  
23 I will heap disasters upon  
them,  
spend my arrows against  
them:  
24 wasting hunger,  
burning consumption,

bitter pestilence.  
The teeth of beasts I will  
send against them,  
with venom of things  
crawling in the dust.  
25 In the street the sword  
shall bereave,  
and in the chambers  
terror,  
for young man and woman  
alike,  
nursing child and old  
gray head.  
26 I thought to scatter them  
and blot out the memory  
of them from  
humankind;  
27 but I feared provocation by  
the enemy,  
for their adversaries  
might misunderstand  
and say, "Our hand is  
triumphant;  
it was not the LORD who  
did all this."

**Luke 12:13-34 (NRSV)**

*The Parable of the Rich Fool*

<sup>13</sup> Someone in the crowd  
said to him, "Teacher, tell my  
brother to divide the family  
inheritance with me." <sup>14</sup> But he  
said to him, "**Friend, who set  
me to be a judge or arbitrator  
over you?**" <sup>15</sup> And he said to

them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.”<sup>16</sup> Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly.<sup>17</sup> And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’<sup>18</sup> Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.’<sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’<sup>20</sup> But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’<sup>21</sup> So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

### *Do Not Worry*

*(Mt 6:19–21, 25–34)*

<sup>22</sup> He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear.<sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than

clothing.<sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds!<sup>25</sup> And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?<sup>26</sup> If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest?<sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.<sup>28</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!<sup>29</sup> And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying.<sup>30</sup> For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them.<sup>31</sup> Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.<sup>32</sup> “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s

good pleasure to give you the kingdom.<sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.<sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**Psalm 78:56-59** (NRSV)

<sup>56</sup> Yet they tested the Most High God,  
and rebelled against him.  
They did not observe his decrees,  
<sup>57</sup> but turned away and were faithless like their ancestors;  
they twisted like a treacherous bow.  
<sup>58</sup> For they provoked him to anger with their high places;  
they moved him to jealousy with their idols.  
<sup>59</sup> When God heard, he was full of wrath,  
and he utterly rejected Israel.

**Proverbs 19:8–9** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> To get wisdom is to love oneself;  
to keep understanding is to prosper.  
<sup>9</sup> A false witness will not go unpunished,  
and the liar will perish.

**July 15**



**Deuteronomy 32:28-52** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> They are a nation void of sense;  
there is no understanding in them.  
<sup>29</sup> If they were wise, they would understand this;  
they would discern what the end would be.  
<sup>30</sup> How could one have routed a thousand,  
and two put a myriad to flight,  
unless their Rock had sold them,  
the LORD had given them up?

31 Indeed their rock is not like  
our Rock;  
our enemies are fools.  
32 Their vine comes from the  
vinestock of Sodom,  
from the vineyards of  
Gomorrah;  
their grapes are grapes of  
poison,  
their clusters are bitter;  
33 their wine is the poison of  
serpents,  
the cruel venom of asps.  
34 Is not this laid up in store  
with me,  
sealed up in my  
treasuries?  
35 Vengeance is mine, and  
recompense,  
for the time when their  
foot shall slip;  
because the day of their  
calamity is at hand,  
their doom comes  
swiftly.  
36 Indeed the LORD will  
vindicate his people,  
have compassion on his  
servants,  
when he sees that their  
power is gone,  
neither bond nor free  
remaining.  
37 Then he will say: Where  
are their gods,

the rock in which they  
took refuge,  
38 who ate the fat of their  
sacrifices,  
and drank the wine of  
their libations?  
Let them rise up and help  
you,  
let them be your  
protection!  
39 See now that I, even I, am  
he;  
there is no god besides  
me.  
I kill and I make alive;  
I wound and I heal;  
and no one can deliver  
from my hand.  
40 For I lift up my hand to  
heaven,  
and swear: As I live  
forever,  
41 when I whet my flashing  
sword,  
and my hand takes hold  
on judgment;  
I will take vengeance on  
my adversaries,  
and will repay those who  
hate me.  
42 I will make my arrows  
drunk with blood,  
and my sword shall  
devour flesh—



with the blood of the slain  
and the captives,  
from the long-haired  
enemy.

<sup>43</sup> Praise, O heavens, his  
people,  
worship him, all you  
gods!

For he will avenge the  
blood of his children,  
and take vengeance on  
his adversaries;  
he will repay those who  
hate him,  
and cleanse the land for  
his people.

<sup>44</sup> Moses came and recited  
all the words of this song in  
the hearing of the people, he  
and Joshua son of Nun.

<sup>45</sup> When Moses had finished  
reciting all these words to all  
Israel, <sup>46</sup> he said to them:  
“Take to heart all the words  
that I am giving in witness  
against you today; give them  
as a command to your  
children, so that they may  
diligently observe all the  
words of this law. <sup>47</sup> This is no  
trifling matter for you, but  
rather your very life; through  
it you may live long in the land  
that you are crossing over the  
Jordan to possess.”

### *Moses' Death Foretold*

<sup>48</sup> On that very day the  
LORD addressed Moses as  
follows: <sup>49</sup> “Ascend this  
mountain of the Abarim,  
Mount Nebo, which is in the  
land of Moab, across from  
Jericho, and view the land of  
Canaan, which I am giving to  
the Israelites for a possession;  
<sup>50</sup> you shall die there on the  
mountain that you ascend and  
shall be gathered to your kin,  
as your brother Aaron died on  
Mount Hor and was gathered  
to his kin; <sup>51</sup> because both of  
you broke faith with me  
among the Israelites at the  
waters of Meribath-kadesh in  
the wilderness of Zin, by failing  
to maintain my holiness  
among the Israelites.  
<sup>52</sup> Although you may view the  
land from a distance, you shall  
not enter it—the land that I  
am giving to the Israelites.”

### **Luke 12:35-48 (NRSV)**

#### *Watchful Slaves*

<sup>35</sup> “Be dressed for action  
and have your lamps lit; <sup>36</sup> be  
like those who are waiting for  
their master to return from  
the wedding banquet, so that  
they may open the door for

him as soon as he comes and knocks.<sup>37</sup> Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them.<sup>38</sup> If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

<sup>39</sup>“But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.”<sup>40</sup> You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

*The Faithful or  
the Unfaithful Slave  
(Mt 24:45–51)*

<sup>41</sup>Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?”<sup>42</sup> And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and prudent manager whom his master will put in charge of his slaves, to give them their allowance of food at the proper time?”<sup>43</sup> Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives.<sup>44</sup> Truly I tell you, he

will put that one in charge of all his possessions.<sup>45</sup> But if that slave says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and if he begins to beat the other slaves, men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk,<sup>46</sup> the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and put him with the unfaithful.<sup>47</sup> That slave who knew what his master wanted, but did not prepare himself or do what was wanted, will receive a severe beating.<sup>48</sup> But the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a light beating. From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.

**Psalm 78:60-64 (NRSV)**

<sup>60</sup> He abandoned his dwelling  
at Shiloh,  
the tent where he dwelt  
among mortals,  
<sup>61</sup> and delivered his power to  
captivity,

his glory to the hand of  
the foe.

- 62 He gave his people to the  
sword,  
and vented his wrath on  
his heritage.
- 63 Fire devoured their young  
men,  
and their girls had no  
marriage song.
- 64 Their priests fell by the  
sword,  
and their widows made  
no lamentation.

**Proverbs 19:10–12 (NRSV)**

- 10 It is not fitting for a fool to  
live in luxury,  
much less for a slave to  
rule over princes.
- 11 Those with good sense are  
slow to anger,  
and it is their glory to  
overlook an offense.
- 12 A king's anger is like the  
growling of a lion, but  
his favor is like dew on  
the grass.

## July 16



**Deuteronomy 33:1-17 (NRSV)**  
*Moses' Final Blessing on Israel*

This is the blessing with  
which Moses, the man of God,  
blessed the Israelites before  
his death. <sup>2</sup> He said:

The LORD came from Sinai,  
and dawned from Seir  
upon us;  
he shone forth from  
Mount Paran.

With him were myriads of  
holy ones;  
at his right, a host of his  
own.

- <sup>3</sup> Indeed, O favorite among  
peoples,  
all his holy ones were in  
your charge;  
they marched at your  
heels,  
accepted direction from  
you.

- <sup>4</sup> Moses charged us with the  
law,  
as a possession for the  
assembly of Jacob.

- <sup>5</sup> There arose a king in  
Jeshurun,  
when the leaders of the  
people assembled—

the united tribes of  
Israel.  
6 May Reuben live, and not  
die out,  
even though his numbers  
are few.  
7 And this he said of Judah:  
O LORD, give heed to Judah,  
and bring him to his  
people;  
strengthen his hands for  
him,  
and be a help against his  
adversaries.  
8 And of Levi he said:  
Give to Levi your  
Thummim,  
and your Urim to your  
loyal one,  
whom you tested at  
Massah,  
with whom you  
contended at the  
waters of Meribah;  
9 who said of his father and  
mother,  
“I regard them not”;  
he ignored his kin,  
and did not acknowledge  
his children.  
For they observed your  
word,  
and kept your covenant.  
10 They teach Jacob your  
ordinances,

and Israel your law;  
they place incense before  
you,  
and whole burnt  
offerings on your altar.  
11 Bless, O LORD, his  
substance,  
and accept the work of  
his hands;  
crush the loins of his  
adversaries,  
of those that hate him,  
so that they do not rise  
again.  
12 Of Benjamin he said:  
The beloved of the LORD  
rests in safety—  
the High God surrounds  
him all day long—  
the beloved rests  
between his shoulders.  
13 And of Joseph he said:  
Blessed by the LORD be his  
land,  
with the choice gifts of  
heaven above,  
and of the deep that lies  
beneath;  
14 with the choice fruits of  
the sun,  
and the rich yield of the  
months;  
15 with the finest produce of  
the ancient mountains,

and the abundance of  
the everlasting hills;  
<sup>16</sup> with the choice gifts of the  
earth and its fullness,  
and the favor of the one  
who dwells on Sinai.

Let these come on the  
head of Joseph,  
on the brow of the  
prince among his  
brothers.

<sup>17</sup> A firstborn bull—majesty is  
his!

His horns are the horns  
of a wild ox;  
with them he gores the  
peoples,  
driving them to the ends  
of the earth;  
such are the myriads of  
Ephraim,  
such the thousands of  
Manasseh.

**Luke 12:49-59** (NRSV)

*Jesus the Cause of Division*  
(Mt 10:34–39)

<sup>49</sup> “I came to bring fire to  
the earth, and how I wish it  
were already kindled! <sup>50</sup> I have  
a baptism with which to be  
baptized, and what stress I am  
under until it is completed!

<sup>51</sup> Do you think that I have  
come to bring peace to the

earth? No, I tell you, but  
rather division! <sup>52</sup> From now  
on five in one household will  
be divided, three against two  
and two against three; <sup>53</sup> they  
will be divided:

father against son  
and son against father,  
mother against daughter  
and daughter against  
mother,  
mother-in-law against her  
daughter-in-law  
and daughter-in-law  
against mother-in-  
law.”

*Interpreting the Time*  
(Mt 16:1–4)

<sup>54</sup> He also said to the  
crowds, “When you see a  
cloud rising in the west, you  
immediately say, ‘It is going to  
rain’; and so it happens. <sup>55</sup> And  
when you see the south wind  
blowing, you say, ‘There will  
be scorching heat’; and it  
happens. <sup>56</sup> You hypocrites!  
You know how to interpret the  
appearance of earth and sky,  
but why do you not know how  
to interpret the present time?

*Settling with Your Opponent*

<sup>57</sup> “And why do you not judge  
for yourselves what is right?

<sup>58</sup> Thus, when you go with your accuser before a magistrate, on the way make an effort to settle the case, or you may be dragged before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer throw you in prison. <sup>59</sup> I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny.”

**Psalm 78:65-69** (NRSV)

<sup>65</sup> Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,  
like a warrior shouting because of wine.  
<sup>66</sup> He put his adversaries to rout;  
he put them to everlasting disgrace.  
<sup>67</sup> He rejected the tent of Joseph,  
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim;  
<sup>68</sup> but he chose the tribe of Judah,  
Mount Zion, which he loves.  
<sup>69</sup> He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,  
like the earth, which he has founded forever.

**Proverbs 19:13–14** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> A stupid child is ruin to a father,  
and a wife’s quarreling is a continual dripping of rain.  
<sup>14</sup> House and wealth are inherited from parents,  
but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

**July 17**



**Deuteronomy 33:18-29** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> And of Zebulun he said:  
Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out;  
and Issachar, in your tents.  
<sup>19</sup> They call peoples to the mountain;  
there they offer the right sacrifices;  
for they suck the affluence of the seas  
and the hidden treasures of the sand.  
<sup>20</sup> And of Gad he said:

- Blessed be the  
 enlargement of Gad!  
 Gad lives like a lion;  
 he tears at arm and  
 scalp.
- 21 He chose the best for  
 himself,  
 for there a commander's  
 allotment was  
 reserved;  
 he came at the head of the  
 people,  
 he executed the justice  
 of the LORD,  
 and his ordinances for  
 Israel.
- 22 And of Dan he said:  
 Dan is a lion's whelp  
 that leaps forth from  
 Bashan.
- 23 And of Naphtali he said:  
 O Naphtali, sated with  
 favor,  
 full of the blessing of the  
 LORD,  
 possess the west and the  
 south.
- 24 And of Asher he said:  
 Most blessed of sons be  
 Asher;  
 may he be the favorite of  
 his brothers,  
 and may he dip his foot  
 in oil.
- 25 Your bars are iron and  
 bronze;  
 and as your days, so is  
 your strength.
- 26 There is none like God, O  
 Jeshurun,  
 who rides through the  
 heavens to your help,  
 majestic through the  
 skies.
- 27 He subdues the ancient  
 gods,  
 shatters the forces of  
 old;  
 he drove out the enemy  
 before you,  
 and said, "Destroy!"
- 28 So Israel lives in safety,  
 untroubled is Jacob's  
 abode  
 in a land of grain and wine,  
 where the heavens drop  
 down dew.
- 29 Happy are you, O Israel!  
 Who is like you,  
 a people saved by the  
 LORD,  
 the shield of your help,  
 and the sword of your  
 triumph!  
 Your enemies shall come  
 fawning to you,  
 and you shall tread on  
 their backs.

**Luke 13:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Repent or Perish*

<sup>1</sup> At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? <sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

*The Parable of the  
Barren Fig Tree*

<sup>6</sup> Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup> So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’

<sup>8</sup> He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. <sup>9</sup> If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

**Psalm 78:70-72 (NRSV)**

<sup>70</sup> He chose his servant  
David,  
and took him from the  
sheepfolds;  
<sup>71</sup> from tending the nursing  
ewes he brought him  
to be the shepherd of his  
people Jacob,  
of Israel, his inheritance.  
<sup>72</sup> With upright heart he  
tended them,  
and guided them with  
skillful hand.

**Proverbs 19:15–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Laziness brings on deep  
sleep;  
an idle person will suffer  
hunger.  
<sup>16</sup> Those who keep the  
commandment will  
live;  
those who are heedless  
of their ways will die.



## July 18



### **Deuteronomy 34:1-Joshua 1:18** (NRSV)

#### *Moses Dies and Is Buried in the Land of Moab*

Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, <sup>2</sup> all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, <sup>3</sup> the Negeb, and the Plain—that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar. <sup>4</sup> The LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants’; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.” <sup>5</sup> Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, at the LORD’s command. <sup>6</sup> He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor,

but no one knows his burial place to this day. <sup>7</sup> Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated. <sup>8</sup> The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended.

<sup>9</sup> Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>10</sup> Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. <sup>11</sup> He was unequaled for all the signs and wonders that the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, <sup>12</sup> and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

## Joshua 1:1–18 (NRSV)

### *God's Commission to Joshua*

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, <sup>2</sup> "My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. <sup>3</sup> Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. <sup>4</sup> From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory. <sup>5</sup> No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. <sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. <sup>7</sup> Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn

from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. <sup>8</sup> This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. <sup>9</sup> I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

### *Preparations for the Invasion*

<sup>10</sup> Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, <sup>11</sup> "Pass through the camp, and command the people: 'Prepare your provisions; for in three days you are to cross over the Jordan, to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God gives you to possess.' "

<sup>12</sup> To the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, <sup>13</sup> "Remember the word that Moses the servant of the LORD

commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is providing you a place of rest, and will give you this land.’<sup>14</sup> Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan. But all the warriors among you shall cross over armed before your kindred and shall help them,<sup>15</sup> until the LORD gives rest to your kindred as well as to you, and they too take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land and take possession of it, the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan to the east.”

<sup>16</sup> They answered Joshua: “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.<sup>17</sup> Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses!<sup>18</sup> Whoever rebels against your orders and disobeys your words, whatever you command, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

### **Luke 13:10-21 (NRSV)**

#### *Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman*

<sup>10</sup> Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.<sup>11</sup> And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight.<sup>12</sup> When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, **“Woman, you are set free from your ailment.”**<sup>13</sup> When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.<sup>14</sup> But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day.”<sup>15</sup> But the Lord answered him and said, **“You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water?<sup>16</sup> And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?”**

<sup>17</sup> When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

*The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

(Mt 13:31–32; Mk 4:30–32)

<sup>18</sup> He said therefore, “**What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it?** <sup>19</sup> **It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.**”

*The Parable of the Yeast*  
(Mt 13:33)

<sup>20</sup> And again he said, “**To what should I compare the kingdom of God?** <sup>21</sup> **It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.**”

**Psalm 79:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Mercy for Jerusalem*

A Psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;

they have defiled your holy temple;  
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.

<sup>2</sup> They have given the bodies of your servants to the birds of the air for food,  
the flesh of your faithful to the wild animals of the earth.

<sup>3</sup> They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them.

<sup>4</sup> We have become a taunt to our neighbors, mocked and derided by those around us.

<sup>5</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?  
Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?

<sup>6</sup> Pour out your anger on the nations that do not know you, and on the kingdoms that do not call on your name.

<sup>7</sup> For they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his habitation.

8 Do not remember against us the iniquities of our ancestors;  
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,  
for we are brought very low.

**Proverbs 19:17 (NRSV)**

17 **Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and will be repaid in full.**

## July 19



**Joshua 2:1-24 (NRSV)**

*Spies Sent to Jericho*  
(Heb 11:31)

Then Joshua son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and entered the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and spent the night there. <sup>2</sup>The king of Jericho was told, "Some Israelites have

come here tonight to search out the land." <sup>3</sup>Then the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come only to search out the whole land." <sup>4</sup>But the woman took the two men and hid them. Then she said, "True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they came from." <sup>5</sup>And when it was time to close the gate at dark, the men went out. Where the men went I do not know. Pursue them quickly, for you can overtake them." <sup>6</sup>She had, however, brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof. <sup>7</sup>So the men pursued them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. As soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

<sup>8</sup>Before they went to sleep, she came up to them on the roof <sup>9</sup>and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before

you. <sup>10</sup> For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. <sup>11</sup> As soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no courage left in any of us because of you. The LORD your God is indeed God in heaven above and on earth below. <sup>12</sup> Now then, since I have dealt kindly with you, swear to me by the LORD that you in turn will deal kindly with my family. Give me a sign of good faith <sup>13</sup> that you will spare my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.”

<sup>14</sup> The men said to her, “Our life for yours! If you do not tell this business of ours, then we will deal kindly and faithfully with you when the LORD gives us the land.”

<sup>15</sup> Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the outer side of the city wall and she resided within the wall

itself. <sup>16</sup> She said to them, “Go toward the hill country, so that the pursuers may not come upon you. Hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers have returned; then afterward you may go your way.” <sup>17</sup> The men said to her, “We will be released from this oath that you have made us swear to you <sup>18</sup> if we invade the land and you do not tie this crimson cord in the window through which you let us down, and you do not gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your family. <sup>19</sup> If any of you go out of the doors of your house into the street, they shall be responsible for their own death, and we shall be innocent; but if a hand is laid upon any who are with you in the house, we shall bear the responsibility for their death. <sup>20</sup> But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be released from this oath that you made us swear to you.” <sup>21</sup> She said, “According to your words, so be it.” She sent them away and they

departed. Then she tied the crimson cord in the window.

<sup>22</sup> They departed and went into the hill country and stayed there three days, until the pursuers returned. The pursuers had searched all along the way and found nothing. <sup>23</sup> Then the two men came down again from the hill country. They crossed over, came to Joshua son of Nun, and told him all that had happened to them. <sup>24</sup> They said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before us.”

**Luke 13:22-35** (NRSV)

*The Narrow Door*

(Mt 7:13–14)

<sup>22</sup> Jesus went through one town and village after another, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> Someone asked him, “Lord, will only a few be saved?” He said to them, <sup>24</sup> “**Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able.** <sup>25</sup> **When once the owner of the house has got up and shut the door, and you begin to stand**

**outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then in reply he will say to you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’** <sup>26</sup> **Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.’** <sup>27</sup> **But he will say, ‘I do not know where you come from; go away from me, all you evildoers!’** <sup>28</sup> **There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrown out.** <sup>29</sup> **Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.** <sup>30</sup> **Indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”**

*The Lament over Jerusalem*

(Mt 23:37–39)

<sup>31</sup> At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” <sup>32</sup> He said to them, “**Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third**

day I finish my work. <sup>33</sup> Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' <sup>34</sup> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>35</sup> See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

**Psalm 79:9-13** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Help us, O God of our salvation,  
for the glory of your name;  
deliver us, and forgive our sins,  
for your name's sake.  
<sup>10</sup> Why should the nations say,  
"Where is their God?"  
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants

be known among the nations before our eyes.

<sup>11</sup> Let the groans of the prisoners come before you;  
according to your great power preserve those doomed to die.

<sup>12</sup> Return sevenfold into the bosom of our neighbors  
the taunts with which they taunted you, O Lord!

<sup>13</sup> Then we your people, the flock of your pasture,  
will give thanks to you forever;  
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

**Proverbs 19:18-19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Discipline your children while there is hope;  
do not set your heart on their destruction.  
<sup>19</sup> A violent tempered person will pay the penalty;  
if you effect a rescue, you will only have to do it again.



## July 20



### Joshua 3:1-17 (NRSV)

#### *Israel Crosses the Jordan*

Early in the morning Joshua rose and set out from Shittim with all the Israelites, and they came to the Jordan. They camped there before crossing over. <sup>2</sup>At the end of three days the officers went through the camp <sup>3</sup>and commanded the people, “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place. Follow it, <sup>4</sup>so that you may know the way you should go, for you have not passed this way before. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, a distance of about two thousand cubits; do not come any nearer to it.” <sup>5</sup>Then Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.” <sup>6</sup>To the priests Joshua said, “Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass on in front of the people.” So they took up the

ark of the covenant and went in front of the people.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they may know that I will be with you as I was with Moses. <sup>8</sup>You are the one who shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, ‘When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.’” <sup>9</sup>Joshua then said to the Israelites, “Draw near and hear the words of the LORD your God.” <sup>10</sup>Joshua said, “By this you shall know that among you is the living God who without fail will drive out from before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites: <sup>11</sup>the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is going to pass before you into the Jordan. <sup>12</sup>So now select twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. <sup>13</sup>When the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the

Jordan flowing from above shall be cut off; they shall stand in a single heap.”

<sup>14</sup> When the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the priests bearing the ark of the covenant were in front of the people. <sup>15</sup> Now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest. So when those who bore the ark had come to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the edge of the water, <sup>16</sup> the waters flowing from above stood still, rising up in a single heap far off at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, while those flowing toward the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, were wholly cut off. Then the people crossed over opposite Jericho. <sup>17</sup> While all Israel were crossing over on dry ground, the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, until the entire nation finished crossing over the Jordan.

**Luke 14:1-6** (NRSV)

*Jesus Heals the*

*Man with Dropsy*

<sup>1</sup> On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

<sup>2</sup> Just then, in front of him, there was a man who had dropsy. <sup>3</sup> And Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees, “**Is it lawful to cure people on the sabbath, or not?**” <sup>4</sup> But they were silent. So Jesus took him and healed him, and sent him away. <sup>5</sup> Then he said to them, “**If one of you has a child or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a sabbath day?**” <sup>6</sup> And they could not reply to this.

**Psalm 80:1-13** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Israel's Restoration*

To the leader: on Lilies, a Covenant.

Of Asaph. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim,  
shine forth
- <sup>2</sup> before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.  
Stir up your might,

and come to save us!  
3 Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that  
we may be saved.  
4 O LORD God of hosts,  
how long will you be  
angry with your  
people's prayers?  
5 You have fed them with  
the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to  
drink in full measure.  
6 You make us the scorn of  
our neighbors;  
our enemies laugh  
among themselves.  
7 Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that  
we may be saved.  
8 You brought a vine out of  
Egypt;  
you drove out the  
nations and planted it.  
9 You cleared the ground for  
it;  
it took deep root and  
filled the land.  
10 The mountains were  
covered with its shade,  
the mighty cedars with  
its branches;  
11 it sent out its branches to  
the sea,  
and its shoots to the  
River.

12 Why then have you broken  
down its walls,  
so that all who pass  
along the way pluck its  
fruit?  
13 The boar from the forest  
ravages it,  
and all that move in the  
field feed on it.

**Proverbs 19:20–21** (NRSV)

20 Listen to advice and accept  
instruction,  
that you may gain  
wisdom for the future.  
21 The human mind may  
devise many plans,  
but it is the purpose of  
the LORD that will be  
established.



**July 21**



**Joshua 4:1-24** (NRSV)

*Twelve Stones Set Up at Gilgal*  
When the entire nation  
had finished crossing over the  
Jordan, the LORD said to  
Joshua: <sup>2</sup>“Select twelve men

from the people, one from each tribe,<sup>3</sup> and command them, ‘Take twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood, carry them over with you, and lay them down in the place where you camp tonight.’ ”

<sup>4</sup> Then Joshua summoned the twelve men from the Israelites, whom he had appointed, one from each tribe. <sup>5</sup> Joshua said to them, “Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, one for each of the tribes of the Israelites,<sup>6</sup> so that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’ <sup>7</sup> then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off in front of the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the Israelites a memorial forever.”

<sup>8</sup> The Israelites did as Joshua commanded. They

took up twelve stones out of the middle of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, as the LORD told Joshua, carried them over with them to the place where they camped, and laid them down there.

<sup>9</sup> (Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.)

<sup>10</sup> The priests who bore the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan, until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people crossed over in haste.

<sup>11</sup> As soon as all the people had finished crossing over, the ark of the LORD, and the priests, crossed over in front of the people. <sup>12</sup> The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the Israelites, as Moses had ordered them. <sup>13</sup> About forty thousand armed for war crossed over before the LORD

to the plains of Jericho for battle.

<sup>14</sup> On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they stood in awe of him, as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD said to Joshua, <sup>16</sup> “Command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, to come up out of the Jordan.”

<sup>17</sup> Joshua therefore commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.”

<sup>18</sup> When the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet touched dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

<sup>19</sup> The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. <sup>20</sup> Those twelve stones, which they had taken out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal, <sup>21</sup> saying to the Israelites, “When your children ask their parents in time to come,

‘What do these stones mean?’ <sup>22</sup> then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel crossed over the Jordan here on dry ground.’ <sup>23</sup> For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we crossed over, <sup>24</sup> so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, and so that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

#### **Luke 14:7-24 (NRSV)**

##### *Humility and Hospitality*

<sup>7</sup> When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable.

<sup>8</sup> “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; <sup>9</sup> and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. <sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, go and

sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. <sup>11</sup> For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

<sup>12</sup> He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. <sup>13</sup> But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. <sup>14</sup> And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

*The Parable of  
the Great Dinner  
(Mt 22:1-14)*

<sup>15</sup> One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, "Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" <sup>16</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Someone gave a great

dinner and invited many. <sup>17</sup> At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'

<sup>18</sup> But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.' <sup>19</sup> Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.'

<sup>20</sup> Another said, 'I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.' <sup>21</sup> So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' <sup>22</sup> And the slave said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.' <sup>23</sup> Then the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. <sup>24</sup> For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.' "

**Psalms 80:14-19** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Turn again, O God of hosts;  
look down from heaven,  
and see;  
have regard for this vine,  
<sup>15</sup> the stock that your right  
hand planted.  
<sup>16</sup> They have burned it with  
fire, they have cut it  
down;  
may they perish at the  
rebuke of your  
countenance.  
<sup>17</sup> But let your hand be upon  
the one at your right  
hand,  
the one whom you made  
strong for yourself.  
<sup>18</sup> Then we will never turn  
back from you;  
give us life, and we will  
call on your name.  
<sup>19</sup> Restore us, O LORD God of  
hosts;  
let your face shine, that  
we may be saved.

**Proverbs 19:22–23** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> What is desirable in a  
person is loyalty,  
and it is better to be  
poor than a liar.  
<sup>23</sup> The fear of the LORD is life  
indeed;

filled with it one rests  
secure and suffers no  
harm.

**July 22**



**Joshua 5:1-15** (NRSV)

*The New Generation  
Circumcised*

**5** When all the kings of the Amorites beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted, and there was no longer any spirit in them, because of the Israelites.

<sup>2</sup> At that time the LORD said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites a second time.” <sup>3</sup> So Joshua made flint knives, and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath-haaraloth. <sup>4</sup> This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came

out of Egypt, all the warriors, had died during the journey through the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt.

<sup>5</sup> Although all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people born on the journey through the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised. <sup>6</sup> For the Israelites traveled forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the warriors who came out of Egypt, perished, not having listened to the voice of the LORD. To them the LORD swore that he would not let them see the land that he had sworn to their ancestors to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>7</sup> So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

<sup>8</sup> When the circumcising of all the nation was done, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of

Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

### *The Passover at Gilgal*

*(Heb 11:30)*

<sup>10</sup> While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. <sup>11</sup> On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. <sup>12</sup> The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

### *Joshua's Vision*

<sup>13</sup> Once when Joshua was by Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing before him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you one of us, or one of our adversaries?" <sup>14</sup> He replied, "Neither; but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and he said to him, "What do you command your servant, my



lord?" <sup>15</sup> The commander of the army of the LORD said to Joshua, "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

**Luke 14:25-35** (NRSV)

*The Cost of Discipleship*  
(Mt 10:34-39)

<sup>25</sup> Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup> "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup> Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup> For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, <sup>30</sup> saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' <sup>31</sup> Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to

oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. <sup>33</sup> So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

*About Salt*

(Mt 5:13; Mk 9:50)

<sup>34</sup> "Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? <sup>35</sup> It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; they throw it away. Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

**Psalm 81:1-7** (NRSV)

*God's Appeal to  
Stubborn Israel*

To the leader: according to The  
Gittith. Of Asaph.

- 1 Sing aloud to God our strength;  
shout for joy to the God of Jacob.
- 2 Raise a song, sound the tambourine,  
the sweet lyre with the harp.
- 3 Blow the trumpet at the new moon,

at the full moon, on our  
festal day.

<sup>4</sup> For it is a statute for Israel,  
an ordinance of the God  
of Jacob.

<sup>5</sup> He made it a decree in  
Joseph,  
when he went out over  
the land of Egypt.

I hear a voice I had not  
known:

<sup>6</sup> “I relieved your shoulder  
of the burden;  
your hands were freed  
from the basket.

<sup>7</sup> In distress you called, and I  
rescued you;

I answered you in the  
secret place of  
thunder;

I tested you at the  
waters of Meribah.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 19:24–25** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> The lazy person buries a  
hand in the dish,  
and will not even bring it  
back to the mouth.

<sup>25</sup> Strike a scoffer, and the  
simple will learn  
prudence;  
reprove the intelligent,  
and they will gain  
knowledge.

**July 23**



**Joshua 6:1-27** (NRSV)

*Jericho Taken and Destroyed*

Now Jericho was shut up  
inside and out because of the  
Israelites; no one came out  
and no one went in. <sup>2</sup>The LORD  
said to Joshua, “See, I have  
handed Jericho over to you,  
along with its king and  
soldiers. <sup>3</sup>You shall march  
around the city, all the  
warriors circling the city once.  
Thus you shall do for six days,  
<sup>4</sup>with seven priests bearing  
seven trumpets of rams’ horns  
before the ark. On the seventh  
day you shall march around  
the city seven times, the  
priests blowing the trumpets.  
<sup>5</sup>When they make a long blast  
with the ram’s horn, as soon  
as you hear the sound of the  
trumpet, then all the people  
shall shout with a great shout;  
and the wall of the city will fall  
down flat, and all the people  
shall charge straight ahead.”

<sup>6</sup>So Joshua son of Nun  
summoned the priests and  
said to them, “Take up the ark  
of the covenant, and have

seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of the LORD."

<sup>7</sup> To the people he said, "Go forward and march around the city; have the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD."

<sup>8</sup> As Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the LORD following them. <sup>9</sup> And the armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets; the rear guard came after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually.

<sup>10</sup> To the people Joshua gave this command: "You shall not shout or let your voice be heard, nor shall you utter a word, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout."

<sup>11</sup> So the ark of the LORD went around the city, circling it once; and they came into the camp, and spent the night in the camp.

<sup>12</sup> Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

<sup>13</sup> The seven priests carrying

the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD passed on, blowing the trumpets continually. The armed men went before them, and the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets blew continually.

<sup>14</sup> On the second day they marched around the city once and then returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

<sup>15</sup> On the seventh day they rose early, at dawn, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. <sup>16</sup> And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city."

<sup>17</sup> The city and all that is in it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live because she hid the

messengers we sent. <sup>18</sup> As for you, keep away from the things devoted to destruction, so as not to covet and take any of the devoted things and

make the camp of Israel an object for destruction, bringing trouble upon it.<sup>19</sup> But all silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are sacred to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.”<sup>20</sup> So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpets, they raised a great shout, and the wall fell down flat; so the people charged straight ahead into the city and captured it.

<sup>21</sup> Then they devoted to destruction by the edge of the sword all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys.

<sup>22</sup> Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the prostitute’s house, and bring the woman out of it and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.”<sup>23</sup> So the young men who had been spies went in and brought Rahab out, along with her father, her mother, her brothers, and all who belonged to her—they brought all her kindred out—and set them outside the camp of Israel.<sup>24</sup> They burned

down the city, and everything in it; only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.<sup>25</sup> But Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, Joshua spared. Her family has lived in Israel ever since. For she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

<sup>26</sup> Joshua then pronounced this oath, saying,

“Cursed before the LORD be anyone who tries to build this city—this Jericho!

At the cost of his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest he shall set up its gates!”

<sup>27</sup> So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was in all the land.

### **Luke 15:1-10 (NRSV)**

#### *The Parable of the Lost Sheep* (Mt 18:10-14)

<sup>1</sup> Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him.<sup>2</sup> And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This

fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

<sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable: <sup>4</sup> “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? <sup>5</sup> When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. <sup>6</sup> And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ <sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

*The Parable of the Lost Coin*

<sup>8</sup> “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? <sup>9</sup> When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ <sup>10</sup> Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the

presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

**Psalm 81:8-16 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Hear, O my people, while I admonish you;  
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!  
<sup>9</sup> There shall be no strange god among you;  
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.  
<sup>10</sup> I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.  
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.  
<sup>11</sup> “But my people did not listen to my voice;  
Israel would not submit to me.  
<sup>12</sup> So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts,  
to follow their own counsels.  
<sup>13</sup> O that my people would listen to me,  
that Israel would walk in my ways!  
<sup>14</sup> Then I would quickly subdue their enemies,  
and turn my hand against their foes.



- <sup>15</sup> Those who hate the LORD  
would cringe before  
him,  
and their doom would  
last forever.
- <sup>16</sup> I would feed you with the  
finest of the wheat,  
and with honey from the  
rock I would satisfy  
you.”

**Proverbs 19:26** (NRSV)

- <sup>26</sup> Those who do violence to  
their father and chase  
away their mother  
are children who cause  
shame and bring  
reproach.

## July 24



**Joshua 7:1-26** (NRSV)

*The Sin of Achan  
and Its Punishment*

**7** But the Israelites broke faith  
in regard to the devoted  
things: Achan son of Carmi son  
of Zabdi son of Zerah, of the  
tribe of Judah, took some of  
the devoted things; and the

anger of the LORD burned  
against the Israelites.

<sup>2</sup> Joshua sent men from  
Jericho to Ai, which is near  
Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and  
said to them, “Go up and spy  
out the land.” And the men  
went up and spied out Ai.  
<sup>3</sup> Then they returned to Joshua  
and said to him, “Not all the  
people need go up; about two  
or three thousand men should  
go up and attack Ai. Since they  
are so few, do not make the  
whole people toil up there.”  
<sup>4</sup> So about three thousand of  
the people went up there; and  
they fled before the men of Ai.  
<sup>5</sup> The men of Ai killed about  
thirty-six of them, chasing  
them from outside the gate as  
far as Shebarim and killing  
them on the slope. The hearts  
of the people melted and  
turned to water.

<sup>6</sup> Then Joshua tore his  
clothes, and fell to the ground  
on his face before the ark of  
the LORD until the evening, he  
and the elders of Israel; and  
they put dust on their heads.  
<sup>7</sup> Joshua said, “Ah, Lord GOD!  
Why have you brought this  
people across the Jordan at all,  
to hand us over to the

Amorites so as to destroy us?  
Would that we had been  
content to settle beyond the  
Jordan! <sup>8</sup> O Lord, what can I  
say, now that Israel has turned  
their backs to their enemies!  
<sup>9</sup> The Canaanites and all the  
inhabitants of the land will  
hear of it, and surround us,  
and cut off our name from the  
earth. Then what will you do  
for your great name?"

<sup>10</sup> The LORD said to Joshua,  
"Stand up! Why have you  
fallen upon your face? <sup>11</sup> Israel  
has sinned; they have  
transgressed my covenant that  
I imposed on them. They have  
taken some of the devoted  
things; they have stolen, they  
have acted deceitfully, and  
they have put them among  
their own belongings.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore the Israelites are  
unable to stand before their  
enemies; they turn their backs  
to their enemies, because they  
have become a thing devoted  
for destruction themselves. I  
will be with you no more,  
unless you destroy the  
devoted things from among  
you. <sup>13</sup> Proceed to sanctify the  
people, and say, 'Sanctify  
yourselves for tomorrow; for

thus says the LORD, the God of  
Israel, "There are devoted  
things among you, O Israel;  
you will be unable to stand  
before your enemies until you  
take away the devoted things  
from among you." <sup>14</sup> In the  
morning therefore you shall  
come forward tribe by tribe.  
The tribe that the LORD takes  
shall come near by clans, the  
clan that the LORD takes shall  
come near by households, and  
the household that the LORD  
takes shall come near one by  
one. <sup>15</sup> And the one who is  
taken as having the devoted  
things shall be burned with  
fire, together with all that he  
has, for having transgressed  
the covenant of the LORD, and  
for having done an outrageous  
thing in Israel.' "

<sup>16</sup> So Joshua rose early in  
the morning, and brought  
Israel near tribe by tribe, and  
the tribe of Judah was taken.  
<sup>17</sup> He brought near the clans of  
Judah, and the clan of the  
Zerahites was taken; and he  
brought near the clan of the  
Zerahites, family by family,  
and Zabdi was taken. <sup>18</sup> And he  
brought near his household  
one by one, and Achan son of

Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. <sup>19</sup> Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and make confession to him. Tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." <sup>20</sup> And Achan answered Joshua, "It is true; I am the one who sinned against the LORD God of Israel. This is what I did: <sup>21</sup> when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, then I coveted them and took them. They now lie hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

<sup>22</sup> So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. <sup>23</sup> They took them out of the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites; and they spread them out before the LORD. <sup>24</sup> Then Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan son of Zerah, with the silver, the mantle, and the bar of gold, with his sons and daughters,

with his oxen, donkeys, and sheep, and his tent and all that he had; and they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. <sup>25</sup> Joshua said, "Why did you bring trouble on us? The LORD is bringing trouble on you today." And all Israel stoned him to death; they burned them with fire, cast stones on them, <sup>26</sup> and raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the LORD turned from his burning anger. Therefore that place to this day is called the Valley of Achor.

**Luke 15:11-32 (NRSV)**

*The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother*

<sup>11</sup> Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup> When he had spent everything, a severe famine



took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need.<sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.<sup>16</sup> He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything.<sup>17</sup> But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!<sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you;<sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." '

<sup>20</sup> So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him.<sup>21</sup> Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

<sup>22</sup> But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put

it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

<sup>23</sup> And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;<sup>24</sup> for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.<sup>26</sup> He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on.<sup>27</sup> He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.'<sup>28</sup> Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.<sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.'<sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!'

<sup>31</sup> Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.

<sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

### **Psalms 82:1-5 (NRSV)**

#### *A Plea for Justice*

A Psalm of Asaph.

- <sup>1</sup> God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:
- <sup>2</sup> "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? *Selah*
- <sup>3</sup> Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
- <sup>4</sup> Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."
- <sup>5</sup> They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk around in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

### **Proverbs 19:27-29 (NRSV)**

- <sup>27</sup> Cease straying, my child, from the words of knowledge, in order that you may hear instruction.
- <sup>28</sup> A worthless witness mocks at justice, and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.
- <sup>29</sup> Condemnation is ready for scoffers, and flogging for the backs of fools.

## **July 25**



### **Joshua 8:1-9:2 (NRSV)**

#### *Ai Captured by a Stratagem and Destroyed*

- 8** Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear or be dismayed; take all the fighting men with you, and go up now to Ai. See, I have handed over to you the king of Ai with his people, his city, and his land.
- <sup>2</sup> You shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its

king; only its spoil and its livestock you may take as booty for yourselves. Set an ambush against the city, behind it.”

<sup>3</sup> So Joshua and all the fighting men set out to go up against Ai. Joshua chose thirty thousand warriors and sent them out by night <sup>4</sup> with the command, “You shall lie in ambush against the city, behind it; do not go very far from the city, but all of you stay alert. <sup>5</sup> I and all the people who are with me will approach the city. When they come out against us, as before, we shall flee from them. <sup>6</sup> They will come out after us until we have drawn them away from the city; for they will say, ‘They are fleeing from us, as before.’ While we flee from them, <sup>7</sup> you shall rise up from the ambush and seize the city; for the LORD your God will give it into your hand. <sup>8</sup> And when you have taken the city, you shall set the city on fire, doing as the LORD has ordered; see, I have commanded you.” <sup>9</sup> So Joshua sent them out; and they went to the place of ambush, and lay between

Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai; but Joshua spent that night in the camp.

<sup>10</sup> In the morning Joshua rose early and mustered the people, and went up, with the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. <sup>11</sup> All the fighting men who were with him went up, and drew near before the city, and camped on the north side of Ai, with a ravine between them and Ai.

<sup>12</sup> Taking about five thousand men, he set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. <sup>13</sup> So they stationed the forces, the main encampment that was north of the city and its rear guard west of the city. But Joshua spent that night in the valley.

<sup>14</sup> When the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, the inhabitants of the city, hurried out early in the morning to the meeting place facing the Arabah to meet Israel in battle; but he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city.

<sup>15</sup> And Joshua and all Israel made a pretense of being beaten before them, and fled in the direction of the

wilderness. <sup>16</sup> So all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue them, and as they pursued Joshua they were drawn away from the city. <sup>17</sup> There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel; they left the city open, and pursued Israel.

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Stretch out the sword that is in your hand toward Ai; for I will give it into your hand.” And Joshua stretched out the sword that was in his hand toward the city. <sup>19</sup> As soon as he stretched out his hand, the troops in ambush rose quickly out of their place and rushed forward. They entered the city, took it, and at once set the city on fire.

<sup>20</sup> So when the men of Ai looked back, the smoke of the city was rising to the sky. They had no power to flee this way or that, for the people who fled to the wilderness turned back against the pursuers.

<sup>21</sup> When Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city was rising, then they turned back and

struck down the men of Ai.

<sup>22</sup> And the others came out from the city against them; so they were surrounded by Israelites, some on one side, and some on the other; and Israel struck them down until no one was left who survived or escaped. <sup>23</sup> But the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

<sup>24</sup> When Israel had finished slaughtering all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them, and when all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai, and attacked it with the edge of the sword. <sup>25</sup> The total of those who fell that day, both men and women, was twelve thousand—all the people of Ai. <sup>26</sup> For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the sword, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. <sup>27</sup> Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their booty, according to the word of the LORD that he had issued to Joshua. <sup>28</sup> So Joshua burned Ai, and made it forever a heap of ruins, as it is

to this day. <sup>29</sup> And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening; and at sunset Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree, threw it down at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day.

*Joshua Renews the Covenant*  
(Cp Deut 27:4–5)

<sup>30</sup> Then Joshua built on Mount Ebal an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, <sup>31</sup> just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the Israelites, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, “an altar of unhewn stones, on which no iron tool has been used”; and they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed offerings of well-being. <sup>32</sup> And there, in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. <sup>33</sup> All Israel, alien as well as citizen, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark in front of the levitical priests who carried the ark of the

covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel. <sup>34</sup> And afterward he read all the words of the law, blessings and curses, according to all that is written in the book of the law. <sup>35</sup> There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the aliens who resided among them.

*The Gibeonites Save Themselves by Trickery*

**9** Now when all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland all along the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—heard of this, <sup>2</sup> they gathered together with one accord to fight Joshua and Israel.

**Luke 16:1–9** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the  
Dishonest Manager*

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. <sup>2</sup> So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ <sup>3</sup> Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup> I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ <sup>5</sup> So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup> He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ <sup>7</sup> Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A

hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ <sup>8</sup> And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.



**Psalm 82:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> I say, “You are gods,  
children of the Most  
High, all of you;  
<sup>7</sup> nevertheless, you shall die  
like mortals,  
and fall like any prince.”  
<sup>8</sup> Rise up, O God, judge the  
earth;  
for all the nations belong  
to you!

**Proverbs 20:1** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Wine is a mocker, strong  
drink a brawler,  
and whoever is led  
astray by it is not wise.

**July 26**



**Joshua 9:3-10:11** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, <sup>4</sup> they on their part acted with cunning: they went and prepared provisions, and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, <sup>5</sup> with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes; and all their provisions were dry and moldy. <sup>6</sup> They went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the Israelites, “We have come from a far country; so now make a treaty with us.” <sup>7</sup> But the Israelites said to the Hivites, “Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a treaty with you?” <sup>8</sup> They said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” And Joshua said to them, “Who are you? And where do you come from?” <sup>9</sup> They said to him, “Your servants have come from a very far country, because of the name of the

LORD your God; for we have heard a report of him, of all that he did in Egypt, <sup>10</sup> and of all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, King Sihon of Heshbon, and King Og of Bashan who lived in Ashtaroth. <sup>11</sup> So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, ‘Take provisions in your hand for the journey; go to meet them, and say to them, “We are your servants; come now, make a treaty with us.”’ <sup>12</sup> Here is our bread; it was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey, on the day we set out to come to you, but now, see, it is dry and moldy; <sup>13</sup> these wineskins were new when we filled them, and see, they are burst; and these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey.” <sup>14</sup> So the leaders partook of their provisions, and did not ask direction from the LORD. <sup>15</sup> And Joshua made peace with them, guaranteeing their lives by a treaty; and the leaders of the congregation swore an oath to them.

<sup>16</sup> But when three days had passed after they had made a treaty with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and were living among them.

<sup>17</sup> So the Israelites set out and reached their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.

<sup>18</sup> But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. Then all the congregation murmured against the leaders.

<sup>19</sup> But all the leaders said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we must not touch them. <sup>20</sup> This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that wrath may not come upon us, because of the oath that we swore to them." <sup>21</sup> The leaders said to them, "Let them live." So they became hewers of wood and drawers of water for all the congregation, as the leaders had decided concerning them.

<sup>22</sup> Joshua summoned them, and said to them, "Why did

you deceive us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' while in fact you are living among us?

<sup>23</sup> Now therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall always be slaves, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God."

<sup>24</sup> They answered Joshua, "Because it was told to your servants for a certainty that the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you; so we were in great fear for our lives because of you, and did this thing. <sup>25</sup> And now we are in your hand: do as it seems good and right in your sight to do to us." <sup>26</sup> This is what he did for them: he saved them from the Israelites; and they did not kill them. <sup>27</sup> But on that day Joshua made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, to continue to this day, in the place that he should choose.



*The Sun Stands Still*

**10** When King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, <sup>2</sup> he became greatly frightened, because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities, and was larger than Ai, and all its men were warriors. <sup>3</sup> So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent a message to King Hoham of Hebron, to King Piram of Jarmuth, to King Japhia of Lachish, and to King Debir of Eglon, saying, <sup>4</sup> “Come up and help me, and let us attack Gibeon; for it has made peace with Joshua and with the Israelites.” <sup>5</sup> Then the five kings of the Amorites—the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon—gathered their forces, and went up with all their armies and camped against Gibeon, and made war against it.

<sup>6</sup> And the Gibeonites sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, “Do not abandon your servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites who live in the hill country are gathered against us.” <sup>7</sup> So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the fighting force with him, all the mighty warriors. <sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Joshua, “Do not fear them, for I have handed them over to you; not one of them shall stand before you.” <sup>9</sup> So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal. <sup>10</sup> And the LORD threw them into a panic before Israel, who inflicted a great slaughter on them at Gibeon, chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah. <sup>11</sup> As they fled before Israel, while they were going down the slope of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down huge stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died; there were more who died because of the

hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword.

**Luke 16:10–18** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. <sup>11</sup> If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? <sup>13</sup> No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

*The Law and the Kingdom of God*

<sup>14</sup> The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all this, and they ridiculed him. <sup>15</sup> So he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of others; but God knows your hearts; for what is prized by human beings is an

abomination in the sight of God.

<sup>16</sup> “The law and the prophets were in effect until John came; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed, and everyone tries to enter it by force. <sup>17</sup> But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one stroke of a letter in the law to be dropped.

<sup>18</sup> “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

**Psalms 83:1-8** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Judgment on Israel’s Foes*

A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> O God, do not keep silence;  
do not hold your peace or be still, O God!  
<sup>2</sup> Even now your enemies are in tumult;  
those who hate you have raised their heads.  
<sup>3</sup> They lay crafty plans against your people;

they consult together  
against those you  
protect.

4 They say, “Come, let us  
wipe them out as a  
nation;  
let the name of Israel be  
remembered no  
more.”

5 They conspire with one  
accord;  
against you they make a  
covenant—

6 the tents of Edom and the  
Ishmaelites,

Moab and the Hagrites,  
7 Gebal and Ammon and  
Amalek,

Philistia with the  
inhabitants of Tyre;

8 Assyria also has joined  
them;  
they are the strong arm  
of the children of Lot.  
*Selah*

### **Proverbs 20:2–3** (NRSV)

2 The dread anger of a king  
is like the growling of a  
lion;  
anyone who provokes  
him to anger forfeits  
life itself.

3 It is honorable to refrain  
from strife, but every  
fool is quick to quarrel.

## **July 27**



### **Joshua 10:12-43** (NRSV)

12 On the day when the  
LORD gave the Amorites over  
to the Israelites, Joshua spoke  
to the LORD; and he said in the  
sight of Israel,

“Sun, stand still at Gibeon,  
and Moon, in the valley  
of Aijalon.”

13 And the sun stood still, and  
the moon stopped,  
until the nation took  
vengeance on their  
enemies.

Is this not written in the Book  
of Jashar? The sun stopped in  
midheaven, and did not hurry  
to set for about a whole day.

14 There has been no day like it  
before or since, when the LORD  
heeded a human voice; for the  
LORD fought for Israel.

<sup>15</sup> Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

### *Five Kings Defeated*

<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, these five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah.

<sup>17</sup> And it was told Joshua, “The five kings have been found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah.” <sup>18</sup> Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them; <sup>19</sup> but do not stay there yourselves; pursue your enemies, and attack them from the rear. Do not let them enter their towns, for the LORD your God has given them into your hand.” <sup>20</sup> When Joshua and the Israelites had finished inflicting a very great slaughter on them, until they were wiped out, and when the survivors had entered into the fortified towns, <sup>21</sup> all the people returned safe to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah; no one dared to speak against any of the Israelites.

<sup>22</sup> Then Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave, and bring those five kings out to

me from the cave.” <sup>23</sup> They did so, and brought the five kings out to him from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. <sup>24</sup> When they brought the kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the Israelites, and said to the chiefs of the warriors who had gone with him, “Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.” Then they came near and put their feet on their necks. <sup>25</sup> And Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous; for thus the LORD will do to all the enemies against whom you fight.” <sup>26</sup> Afterward Joshua struck them down and put them to death, and he hung them on five trees. And they hung on the trees until evening. <sup>27</sup> At sunset Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves; they set large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day.

<sup>28</sup> Joshua took Makkedah on that day, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword; he utterly destroyed every person in it; he left no one remaining. And he did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

<sup>29</sup> Then Joshua passed on from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, to Libnah, and fought against Libnah. <sup>30</sup> The LORD gave it also and its king into the hand of Israel; and he struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it; he left no one remaining in it; and he did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

<sup>31</sup> Next Joshua passed on from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish, and laid siege to it, and assaulted it. <sup>32</sup> The LORD gave Lachish into the hand of Israel, and he took it on the second day, and struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it, as he had done to Libnah.

<sup>33</sup> Then King Horam of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, leaving him no survivors.

<sup>34</sup> From Lachish Joshua passed on with all Israel to Eglon; and they laid siege to it, and assaulted it; <sup>35</sup> and they took it that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword; and every person in it he utterly destroyed that day, as he had done to Lachish.

<sup>36</sup> Then Joshua went up with all Israel from Eglon to Hebron; they assaulted it, <sup>37</sup> and took it, and struck it with the edge of the sword, and its king and its towns, and every person in it; he left no one remaining, just as he had done to Eglon, and utterly destroyed it with every person in it.

<sup>38</sup> Then Joshua, with all Israel, turned back to Debir and assaulted it, <sup>39</sup> and he took it with its king and all its towns; they struck them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed every person in it; he left no one remaining; just as he had done to Hebron, and, as he had done to Libnah and its king, so he did to Debir and its king.

<sup>40</sup> So Joshua defeated the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and the

lowland and the slopes, and all their kings; he left no one remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded. <sup>41</sup> And Joshua defeated them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, as far as Gibeon. <sup>42</sup> Joshua took all these kings and their land at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. <sup>43</sup> Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

**Luke 16:19–31 (NRSV)**

*The Rich Man and Lazarus*

<sup>19</sup> “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. <sup>20</sup> And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, <sup>21</sup> who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. <sup>22</sup> The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In Hades, where he was being tormented, he

looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup> He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ <sup>25</sup> But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ <sup>27</sup> He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house— <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ <sup>29</sup> Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ <sup>30</sup> He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ <sup>31</sup> He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses

and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

**Psalms 83:9-18 (NRSV)**

9 Do to them as you did to  
Midian,  
as to Sisera and Jabin at  
the Wadi Kishon,  
10 who were destroyed at En-  
dor,  
who became dung for  
the ground.  
11 Make their nobles like  
Oreb and Zeeb,  
all their princes like  
Zebah and Zalmunna,  
12 who said, “Let us take the  
pastures of God  
for our own possession.”  
13 O my God, make them like  
whirling dust,  
like chaff before the  
wind.  
14 As fire consumes the  
forest,  
as the flame sets the  
mountains ablaze,  
15 so pursue them with your  
tempest  
and terrify them with  
your hurricane.  
16 Fill their faces with shame,

so that they may seek  
your name, O LORD.

17 Let them be put to shame  
and dismayed forever;  
let them perish in  
disgrace.  
18 Let them know that you  
alone,  
whose name is the LORD,  
are the Most High over  
all the earth.

**Proverbs 20:4-6 (NRSV)**

4 The lazy person does not  
plow in season;  
harvest comes, and there  
is nothing to be found.  
5 The purposes in the  
human mind are like  
deep water,  
but the intelligent will  
draw them out.  
6 Many proclaim themselves  
loyal,  
but who can find one  
worthy of trust?

## July 28



**Joshua 11:1-23** (NRSV)

### *The United Kings of Northern Canaan Defeated*

When King Jabin of Hazor heard of this, he sent to King Jobab of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph,<sup>2</sup> and to the kings who were in the northern hill country, and in the Arabah south of Chinneroth, and in the lowland, and in Naphtod on the west,<sup>3</sup> to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpah.<sup>4</sup> They came out, with all their troops, a great army, in number like the sand on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots.<sup>5</sup> All these kings joined their forces, and came and camped together at the waters of Merom, to fight with Israel.

<sup>6</sup> And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this

time I will hand over all of them, slain, to Israel; you shall hamstring their horses, and burn their chariots with fire."

<sup>7</sup> So Joshua came suddenly upon them with all his fighting force, by the waters of Merom, and fell upon them.

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD handed them over to Israel, who attacked them and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward as far as the valley of Mizpeh. They struck them down, until they had left no one remaining.<sup>9</sup> And Joshua did to them as the LORD commanded him; he hamstrung their horses, and burned their chariots with fire.

<sup>10</sup> Joshua turned back at that time, and took Hazor, and struck its king down with the sword. Before that time Hazor was the head of all those kingdoms.<sup>11</sup> And they put to the sword all who were in it, utterly destroying them; there was no one left who breathed, and he burned Hazor with fire.<sup>12</sup> And all the towns of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took, and struck them with the edge of the sword,



utterly destroying them, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded.<sup>13</sup> But Israel burned none of the towns that stood on mounds except Hazor, which Joshua did burn.<sup>14</sup> All the spoil of these towns, and the livestock, the Israelites took for their booty; but all the people they struck down with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, and they did not leave any who breathed.<sup>15</sup> As the LORD had commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

*Summary of  
Joshua's Conquests*

<sup>16</sup> So Joshua took all that land: the hill country and all the Negeb and all the land of Goshen and the lowland and the Arabah and the hill country of Israel and its lowland,<sup>17</sup> from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He took all their kings, struck them down, and

put them to death.<sup>18</sup> Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.<sup>19</sup> There was not a town that made peace with the Israelites, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all were taken in battle.<sup>20</sup> For it was the LORD's doing to harden their hearts so that they would come against Israel in battle, in order that they might be utterly destroyed, and might receive no mercy, but be exterminated, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>21</sup> At that time Joshua came and wiped out the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their towns.<sup>22</sup> None of the Anakim was left in the land of the Israelites; some remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.<sup>23</sup> So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according

to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

**Luke 17:1–10** (NRSV)

*Some Sayings of Jesus*

(Mt 18:6–9; Mk 9:42–48)

<sup>1</sup> Jesus said to his disciples, “Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone by whom they come! <sup>2</sup> It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble. <sup>3</sup> Be on your guard! If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive. <sup>4</sup> And if the same person sins against you seven times a day, and turns back to you seven times and says, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive.”

<sup>5</sup> The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

<sup>6</sup> The Lord replied, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

<sup>7</sup> “Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field,

‘Come here at once and take your place at the table’?

<sup>8</sup> Would you not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink’? <sup>9</sup> Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? <sup>10</sup> So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, ‘We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!’”

**Psalm 84:1-4** (NRSV)

*The Joy of Worship in the Temple*

To the leader: according to The Gittith. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O LORD of hosts!  
<sup>2</sup> My soul longs, indeed it faints  
for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and my flesh sing  
for joy  
to the living God.  
<sup>3</sup> Even the sparrow finds a home,  
and the swallow a nest  
for herself,

where she may lay her  
young,  
at your altars, O LORD of  
hosts,  
my King and my God.  
<sup>4</sup> Happy are those who live  
in your house,  
ever singing your praise.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 20:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> The righteous walk in  
integrity—  
happy are the children  
who follow them!

## July 29



**Joshua 12:1-24** (NRSV)

*The Kings Conquered by Moses*  
(Cp Num 21:21–35)

Now these are the kings of  
the land, whom the Israelites  
defeated, whose land they  
occupied beyond the Jordan  
toward the east, from the  
Wadi Arnon to Mount  
Hermon, with all the Arabah

eastward: <sup>2</sup> King Sihon of the  
Amorites who lived at  
Heshbon, and ruled from  
Aroer, which is on the edge of  
the Wadi Arnon, and from the  
middle of the valley as far as  
the river Jabbok, the boundary  
of the Ammonites, that is, half  
of Gilead, <sup>3</sup> and the Arabah to  
the Sea of Chinneroth  
eastward, and in the direction  
of Beth-jeshimoth, to the sea  
of the Arabah, the Dead Sea,  
southward to the foot of the  
slopes of Pisgah; <sup>4</sup> and King Og  
of Bashan, one of the last of  
the Rephaim, who lived at  
Ashtaroth and at Edrei <sup>5</sup> and  
ruled over Mount Hermon and  
Salecah and all Bashan to the  
boundary of the Geshurites  
and the Maacathites, and over  
half of Gilead to the boundary  
of King Sihon of Heshbon.  
<sup>6</sup> Moses, the servant of the  
LORD, and the Israelites  
defeated them; and Moses the  
servant of the LORD gave their  
land for a possession to the  
Reubenites and the Gadites  
and the half-tribe of  
Manasseh.

*The Kings Conquered  
by Joshua*

<sup>7</sup> The following are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir (and Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments, <sup>8</sup> in the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negeb, the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites):

<sup>9</sup> the king of Jericho one  
the king of Ai, which is  
next to Bethel one  
<sup>10</sup> the king of Jerusalem one  
the king of Hebron one  
<sup>11</sup> the king of Jarmuth one  
the king of Lachish one  
<sup>12</sup> the king of Eglon one  
the king of Gezer one  
<sup>13</sup> the king of Debir one  
the king of Geder one  
<sup>14</sup> the king of Hormah one  
the king of Arad one  
<sup>15</sup> the king of Libnah one  
the king of Adullam one  
<sup>16</sup> the king of Makedah one

the king of Bethel one  
<sup>17</sup> the king of Tappuah one  
the king of Hopher one  
<sup>18</sup> the king of Aphek one  
the king of Lasharon one  
<sup>19</sup> the king of Madon one  
the king of Hazor one  
<sup>20</sup> the king of Shimron-meron  
one  
the king of Achshaph one  
<sup>21</sup> the king of Taanach one  
the king of Megiddo one  
<sup>22</sup> the king of Kedesh one  
the king of Jokneam in  
Carmel one  
<sup>23</sup> the king of Dor in Naphth-  
dor one  
the king of Goiim in  
Galilee, one  
<sup>24</sup> the king of Tirzah one  
thirty-one kings in all.

**Luke 17:11–25 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers*

<sup>11</sup> On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, <sup>13</sup> they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” <sup>14</sup> When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And

as they went, they were made clean. <sup>15</sup> Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup> Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? <sup>18</sup> Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" <sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

*The Coming of the Kingdom*  
(Gen 6:5–8:22; 19:12–14)

<sup>20</sup> Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; <sup>21</sup> nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you."

<sup>22</sup> Then he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

<sup>23</sup> They will say to you, 'Look

there!' or 'Look here!' Do not go, do not set off in pursuit.

<sup>24</sup> For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.


<sup>25</sup> But first he must endure much suffering and be rejected by this generation.

**Psalm 84:5-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.  
<sup>6</sup> As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools.  
<sup>7</sup> They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion.  
<sup>8</sup> O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob!  
*Selah*  
<sup>9</sup> Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed.  
<sup>10</sup> For a day in your courts is better

than a thousand  
elsewhere.

I would rather be a  
doorkeeper in the  
house of my God  
than live in the tents of  
wickedness.

 <sup>11</sup> For the LORD God is a sun  
and shield;  
he bestows favor and  
honor.

No good thing does the  
LORD withhold  
from those who walk  
uprightly.

<sup>12</sup> O LORD of hosts,  
happy is everyone who  
trusts in you.

**Proverbs 20:8–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> A king who sits on the  
throne of judgment  
winnows all evil with his  
eyes.

<sup>9</sup> Who can say, “I have made  
my heart clean;  
I am pure from my sin”?

<sup>10</sup> Diverse weights and  
diverse measures  
are both alike an  
abomination to the  
LORD.

**July 30**



**Joshua 13:1-33 (NRSV)**

*The Parts of Canaan Still  
Unconquered*

Now Joshua was old and  
advanced in years; and the  
LORD said to him, “You are old  
and advanced in years, and  
very much of the land still  
remains to be possessed. <sup>2</sup>This  
is the land that still remains:  
all the regions of the  
Philistines, and all those of the  
Geshurites <sup>3</sup>(from the Shihor,  
which is east of Egypt,  
northward to the boundary of  
Ekron, it is reckoned as  
Canaanite; there are five  
rulers of the Philistines, those  
of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon,  
Gath, and Ekron), and those of  
the Avvim <sup>4</sup>in the south; all  
the land of the Canaanites,  
and Mearah that belongs to  
the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the  
boundary of the Amorites,  
<sup>5</sup>and the land of the Gebalites,  
and all Lebanon, toward the  
east, from Baal-gad below  
Mount Hermon to Lebo-  
hamath, <sup>6</sup>all the inhabitants of  
the hill country from Lebanon

to Misrephoth-maim, even all the Sidonians. I will myself drive them out from before the Israelites; only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you.<sup>7</sup> Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh.”

*The Territory  
East of the Jordan*

<sup>8</sup>With the other half-tribe of Manasseh the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them:<sup>9</sup> from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, and the town that is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland from Medeba as far as Dibon;<sup>10</sup> and all the cities of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the boundary of the Ammonites;<sup>11</sup> and Gilead, and the region of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah;<sup>12</sup> all the

kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he alone was left of the survivors of the Rephaim); these Moses had defeated and driven out.<sup>13</sup> Yet the Israelites did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites; but Geshur and Maacath live within Israel to this day.

<sup>14</sup>To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance; the offerings by fire to the LORD God of Israel are their inheritance, as he said to them.

*The Territory of Reuben*

<sup>15</sup>Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of the Reubenites according to their clans.<sup>16</sup> Their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, and the town that is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland by Medeba;<sup>17</sup> with Heshbon, and all its towns that are in the tableland; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,<sup>18</sup> and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,<sup>19</sup> and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereth-shahar on the hill of the valley,<sup>20</sup> and Beth-peor,

and the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth,<sup>21</sup> that is, all the towns of the tableland, and all the kingdom of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses defeated with the leaders of Midian, Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, as princes of Sihon, who lived in the land.<sup>22</sup> Along with the rest of those they put to death, the Israelites also put to the sword Balaam son of Beor, who practiced divination.<sup>23</sup> And the border of the Reubenites was the Jordan and its banks. This was the inheritance of the Reubenites according to their families, with their towns and villages.

#### *The Territory of Gad*

<sup>24</sup> Moses gave an inheritance also to the tribe of the Gadites, according to their families.<sup>25</sup> Their territory was Jazer, and all the towns of Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is east of Rabbah,<sup>26</sup> and from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the territory of

Debir,<sup>27</sup> and in the valley Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Heshbon, the Jordan and its banks, as far as the lower end of the Sea of Chinnereth, eastward beyond the Jordan.<sup>28</sup> This is the inheritance of the Gadites according to their clans, with their towns and villages.

#### *The Territory of the Half-Tribe of Manasseh (East)*

<sup>29</sup> Moses gave an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh; it was allotted to the half-tribe of the Manassites according to their families.<sup>30</sup> Their territory extended from Mahanaim, through all Bashan, the whole kingdom of King Og of Bashan, and all the settlements of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty towns,<sup>31</sup> and half of Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the towns of the kingdom of Og in Bashan; these were allotted to the people of Machir son of Manasseh according to their clans—for half the Machirites.<sup>32</sup> These are the inheritances that Moses



distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. <sup>33</sup> But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel is their inheritance, as he said to them.

**Luke 17:26-37** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man.

<sup>27</sup> They were eating and drinking, and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all of them.

<sup>28</sup> Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, <sup>29</sup> but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all of them <sup>30</sup> —it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. <sup>31</sup> On that day, anyone on the housetop who has belongings in the house must not come down to take them away; and likewise anyone in the field must not turn back. <sup>32</sup> Remember Lot's

wife. <sup>33</sup> Those who try to make their life secure will lose it, but those who lose their life will keep it. <sup>34</sup> I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. <sup>35</sup> There will be two women grinding meal together; one will be taken and the other left." <sup>37</sup> Then they asked him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."

**Psalm 85:1-7** (NRSV)

*Prayer for the Restoration  
of God's Favor*

To the leader. Of the Korahites.  
A Psalm.

- 1 LORD, you were favorable  
to your land;  
you restored the  
fortunes of Jacob.
- 2 You forgave the iniquity of  
your people;  
you pardoned all their  
sin. *Selah*
- 3 You withdrew all your  
wrath;  
you turned from your  
hot anger.
- 4 Restore us again, O God of  
our salvation,  
and put away your  
indignation toward us.

- <sup>5</sup> Will you be angry with us forever?  
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
- <sup>6</sup> Will you not revive us again,  
so that your people may rejoice in you?
- <sup>7</sup> Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,  
and grant us your salvation.

**Proverbs 20:11 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Even children make themselves known by their acts,  
by whether what they do is pure and right.

**July 31**



**Joshua 14:1-15 (NRSV)**

*The Distribution of Territory West of the Jordan*

These are the inheritances that the Israelites received in the land of Canaan, which the priest Eleazar, and Joshua son

of Nun, and the heads of the families of the tribes of the Israelites distributed to them. <sup>2</sup> Their inheritance was by lot, as the LORD had commanded Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. <sup>3</sup> For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan; but to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. <sup>4</sup> For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim; and no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only towns to live in, with their pasture lands for their flocks and herds. <sup>5</sup> The Israelites did as the LORD commanded Moses; they allotted the land.

*Hebron Allotted to Caleb*

<sup>6</sup> Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal; and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. <sup>7</sup> I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him an

honest report. <sup>8</sup> But my companions who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God. <sup>9</sup> And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God.' <sup>10</sup> And now, as you see, the LORD has kept me alive, as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel was journeying through the wilderness; and here I am today, eighty-five years old. <sup>11</sup> I am still as strong today as I was on the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war, and for going and coming. <sup>12</sup> So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day; for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities; it may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as the LORD said."

<sup>13</sup> Then Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. <sup>14</sup> So Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholeheartedly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>15</sup> Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba; this Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. And the land had rest from war.

**Luke 18:1–8 (NRSV)**

*The Parable of the Widow  
and the Unjust Judge*

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. <sup>2</sup> He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. <sup>3</sup> In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' <sup>4</sup> For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that

she may not wear me out by continually coming.’ ” <sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup> And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? <sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

**Psalms 85:8-13** (NRSV)

- <sup>8</sup> Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,  
for he will speak peace  
to his people,  
to his faithful, to those  
who turn to him in  
their hearts.
- <sup>9</sup> Surely his salvation is at  
hand for those who  
fear him,  
that his glory may dwell  
in our land.
- <sup>10</sup> Steadfast love and  
faithfulness will meet;  
righteousness and peace  
will kiss each other.
- <sup>11</sup> Faithfulness will spring up  
from the ground,  
and righteousness will  
look down from the  
sky.

- <sup>12</sup> The LORD will give what is  
good,  
and our land will yield its  
increase.
- <sup>13</sup> Righteousness will go  
before him,  
and will make a path for  
his steps.

**Proverbs 20:12** (NRSV)

- <sup>12</sup> The hearing ear and the  
seeing eye—  
the LORD has made them  
both.

## August 1



**Joshua 15:1-12** (NRSV)

*The Territory of Judah*

The lot for the tribe of the people of Judah according to their families reached southward to the boundary of Edom, to the wilderness of Zin at the farthest south. <sup>2</sup> And their south boundary ran from the end of the Dead Sea, from the bay that faces southward; <sup>3</sup> it goes out southward of the

ascent of Akrabbim, passes along to Zin, and goes up south of Kadesh-barnea, along by Hezron, up to Addar, makes a turn to Karka, <sup>4</sup> passes along to Azmon, goes out by the Wadi of Egypt, and comes to its end at the sea. This shall be your south boundary. <sup>5</sup> And the east boundary is the Dead Sea, to the mouth of the Jordan. And the boundary on the north side runs from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan; <sup>6</sup> and the boundary goes up to Beth-hoglah, and passes along north of Beth-arabah; and the boundary goes up to the Stone of Bohan, Reuben's son; <sup>7</sup> and the boundary goes up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley; and the boundary passes along to the waters of En-shemesh, and ends at En-rogel; <sup>8</sup> then the boundary goes up by the valley of the son of Hinnom at the southern slope of the Jebusites (that is, Jerusalem); and the boundary goes up to the top of the

mountain that lies over against the valley of Hinnom, on the west, at the northern end of the valley of Rephaim; <sup>9</sup> then the boundary extends from the top of the mountain to the spring of the Waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the towns of Mount Ephron; then the boundary bends around to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim); <sup>10</sup> and the boundary circles west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passes along to the northern slope of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon), and goes down to Beth-shemesh, and passes along by Timnah; <sup>11</sup> the boundary goes out to the slope of the hill north of Ekron, then the boundary bends around to Shikkeron, and passes along to Mount Baalah, and goes out to Jabneel; then the boundary comes to an end at the sea. <sup>12</sup> And the west boundary was the Mediterranean with its coast. This is the boundary surrounding the people of Judah according to their families.

**Luke 18:9-17** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the Pharisee  
and the Tax Collector*

<sup>9</sup> He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: <sup>10</sup> “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.’ <sup>13</sup> But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ <sup>14</sup> I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

*Jesus Blesses Little Children*  
(Mt 19:13–15; Mk 10:13-16)

<sup>15</sup> People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the

disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it.

<sup>16</sup> But Jesus called for them and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. <sup>17</sup> Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”

**Psalms 86:1-7** (NRSV)

*Supplication for Help against  
Enemies*

A Prayer of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Incline your ear, O LORD,  
and answer me,  
for I am poor and needy.
- <sup>2</sup> Preserve my life, for I am  
devoted to you;  
save your servant who  
trusts in you.  
You are my God; <sup>3</sup> be  
gracious to me, O Lord,  
for to you do I cry all day  
long.
- <sup>4</sup> Gladden the soul of your  
servant,  
for to you, O Lord, I lift  
up my soul.
- <sup>5</sup> For you, O Lord, are good  
and forgiving,  
abounding in steadfast  
love to all who call on  
you.

6 Give ear, O LORD, to my  
prayer;  
listen to my cry of  
supplication.  
7 In the day of my trouble I  
call on you,  
for you will answer me.

**Proverbs 20:13–15** (NRSV)

13 Do not love sleep, or else  
you will come to  
poverty;  
open your eyes, and you  
will have plenty of  
bread.  
14 “Bad, bad,” says the buyer,  
then goes away and  
boasts.  
15 There is gold, and  
abundance of costly  
stones; but the lips  
informed by  
knowledge are a  
precious jewel.

**August 2**



**Joshua 15:13-63** (NRSV)

*Caleb Occupies His Portion*

(Judg 1:11–15)

13 According to the  
commandment of the LORD to  
Joshua, he gave to Caleb son  
of Jephunneh a portion among  
the people of Judah, Kiriath-  
arba, that is, Hebron (Arba  
was the father of Anak). 14 And  
Caleb drove out from there  
the three sons of Anak:  
Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi,  
the descendants of Anak.  
15 From there he went up  
against the inhabitants of  
Debir; now the name of Debir  
formerly was Kiriath-sepher.  
16 And Caleb said, “Whoever  
attacks Kiriath-sepher and  
takes it, to him I will give my  
daughter Achsah as wife.”  
17 Othniel son of Kenaz, the  
brother of Caleb, took it; and  
he gave him his daughter  
Achsah as wife. 18 When she  
came to him, she urged him to  
ask her father for a field. As  
she dismounted from her  
donkey, Caleb said to her,  
“What do you wish?” 19 She  
said to him, “Give me a  
present; since you have set me  
in the land of the Negeb, give  
me springs of water as well.”  
So Caleb gave her the upper  
springs and the lower springs.

*The Towns of Judah*

<sup>20</sup>This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah according to their families. <sup>21</sup>The towns belonging to the tribe of the people of Judah in the extreme south, toward the boundary of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, <sup>22</sup>Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, <sup>23</sup>Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, <sup>24</sup>Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, <sup>25</sup>Hazor-hadattah, Kerioth-hezron (that is, Hazor), <sup>26</sup>Amam, Shema, Moladah, <sup>27</sup>Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, <sup>28</sup>Hazar-shual, Beer-sheba, Biziothiah, <sup>29</sup>Baalath, Iim, Ezem, <sup>30</sup>Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, <sup>31</sup>Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, <sup>32</sup>Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: in all, twenty-nine towns, with their villages.

<sup>33</sup>And in the lowland, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, <sup>34</sup>Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, <sup>35</sup>Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, <sup>36</sup>Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, Gederothaim: fourteen towns with their villages.

<sup>37</sup>Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, <sup>38</sup>Dilan, Mizpeh,

Jokthe-el, <sup>39</sup>Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, <sup>40</sup>Cabbon, Lahmam, Chitlish, <sup>41</sup>Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen towns with their villages.

<sup>42</sup>Libnah, Ether, Ashan, <sup>43</sup>Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, <sup>44</sup>Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine towns with their villages.

<sup>45</sup>Ekron, with its dependencies and its villages; <sup>46</sup>from Ekron to the sea, all that were near Ashdod, with their villages.

<sup>47</sup>Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza, its towns and its villages; to the Wadi of Egypt, and the Great Sea with its coast.

<sup>48</sup>And in the hill country, Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, <sup>49</sup>Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), <sup>50</sup>Anab, Esstemoh, Anim, <sup>51</sup>Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven towns with their villages.

<sup>52</sup>Arab, Dumah, Eshan, <sup>53</sup>Janim, Beth-tappuah, Apekah, <sup>54</sup>Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior: nine towns with their villages.



<sup>55</sup> Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, <sup>56</sup> Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, <sup>57</sup> Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten towns with their villages.

<sup>58</sup> Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, <sup>59</sup> Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon: six towns with their villages.

<sup>60</sup> Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim) and Rabbah: two towns with their villages.

<sup>61</sup> In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah,

<sup>62</sup> Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En-gedi: six towns with their villages.

<sup>63</sup> But the people of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so the Jebusites live with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this day.

### **Luke 18:18–30** (NRSV)

#### *The Rich Ruler*

(Mt 19:16–30; Mk 10:17–31)

<sup>18</sup> A certain ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>19</sup> Jesus said to him, “**Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.**

<sup>20</sup> **You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery; You shall**

**not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother.’ ” <sup>21</sup> He replied, “I have kept all these since my youth.” <sup>22</sup> When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “**There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.**” <sup>23</sup> But when he heard this, he became sad; for he was very rich. <sup>24</sup> Jesus looked at him and said, “**How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!****

<sup>25</sup> **Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”**

<sup>26</sup> Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?”

<sup>27</sup> He replied, “**What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.**”

<sup>28</sup> Then Peter said, “Look, we have left our homes and followed you.” <sup>29</sup> And he said to them, “**Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the**

kingdom of God,<sup>30</sup> who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

**Psalms 86:8-17 (NRSV)**

8 There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,  
nor are there any works like yours.

9 All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord,  
and shall glorify your name.

10 For you are great and do wondrous things;  
you alone are God.

11 Teach me your way, O LORD,  
that I may walk in your truth;  
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

12 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,  
and I will glorify your name forever.

13 For great is your steadfast love toward me;

you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

14 O God, the insolent rise up against me;  
a band of ruffians seeks my life,  
and they do not set you before them.

15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me;  
give your strength to your servant;  
save the child of your serving girl.

17 Show me a sign of your favor,  
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,  
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

**Proverbs 20:16-18 (NRSV)**

16 Take the garment of one who has given surety for a stranger;  
seize the pledge given as surety for foreigners.

- <sup>17</sup> Bread gained by deceit is sweet,  
but afterward the mouth  
will be full of gravel.
- <sup>18</sup> Plans are established by  
taking advice;  
wage war by following  
wise guidance.

## August 3



### Joshua 16:1-17:18 (NRSV)

#### *The Territory of Ephraim*

The allotment of the Josephites went from the Jordan by Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho into the hill country to Bethel; <sup>2</sup> then going from Bethel to Luz, it passes along to Ataroth, the territory of the Archites; <sup>3</sup> then it goes down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and it ends at the sea.

<sup>4</sup> The Josephites—  
Manasseh and Ephraim—  
received their inheritance.

<sup>5</sup> The territory of the Ephraimites by their families was as follows: the boundary of their inheritance on the east was Ataroth-addar as far as Upper Beth-horon, <sup>6</sup> and the boundary goes from there to the sea; on the north is Michmethath; then on the east the boundary makes a turn toward Taanath-shiloh, and passes along beyond it on the east to Janoah, <sup>7</sup> then it goes down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, and touches Jericho, ending at the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> From Tappuah the boundary goes westward to the Wadi Kanah, and ends at the sea. Such is the inheritance of the tribe of the Ephraimites by their families, <sup>9</sup> together with the towns that were set apart for the Ephraimites within the inheritance of the Manassites, all those towns with their villages. <sup>10</sup> They did not, however, drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer: so the Canaanites have lived within Ephraim to this day but

have been made to do forced labor.

*The Other Half-Tribe of  
Manasseh (West)*

**17** Then allotment was made to the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, were allotted Gilead and Bashan, because he was a warrior. <sup>2</sup> And allotments were made to the rest of the tribe of Manasseh, by their families, Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher, and Shemida; these were the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, by their families.

<sup>3</sup> Now Zelophehad son of Hephher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh had no sons, but only daughters; and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

<sup>4</sup> They came before the priest Eleazar and Joshua son of Nun and the leaders, and said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance along with our male kin." So according to the commandment of the LORD he

gave them an inheritance among the kinsmen of their father. <sup>5</sup> Thus there fell to Manasseh ten portions, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan, <sup>6</sup> because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead was allotted to the rest of the Manassites.

<sup>7</sup> The territory of Manasseh reached from Asher to Michmethath, which is east of Shechem; then the boundary goes along southward to the inhabitants of En-tappuah.

<sup>8</sup> The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah on the boundary of Manasseh belonged to the Ephraimites.

<sup>9</sup> Then the boundary went down to the Wadi Kanah. The towns here, to the south of the wadi, among the towns of Manasseh, belong to Ephraim. Then the boundary of Manasseh goes along the north side of the wadi and ends at the sea. <sup>10</sup> The land to the south is Ephraim's and that to the north is Manasseh's, with the sea

forming its boundary; on the north Asher is reached, and on the east Issachar. <sup>11</sup> Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh had Beth-shean and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of En-dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages (the third is Naphath). <sup>12</sup> Yet the Manassites could not take possession of those towns; but the Canaanites continued to live in that land. <sup>13</sup> But when the Israelites grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

*The Tribe of Joseph Protests*

<sup>14</sup> The tribe of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, “Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, since we are a numerous people, whom all along the LORD has blessed?” <sup>15</sup> And Joshua said to them, “If you are a numerous people, go up to the forest, and clear ground there for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and

the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you.” <sup>16</sup> The tribe of Joseph said, “The hill country is not enough for us; yet all the Canaanites who live in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel.” <sup>17</sup> Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, “You are indeed a numerous people, and have great power; you shall not have one lot only, <sup>18</sup> but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong.”

**Luke 18:31–43** (NRSV)

*A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection*  
(Mt 20:17–19; Mk 10:32–34)

<sup>31</sup> Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, “**See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.** <sup>32</sup> For he will be

handed over to the Gentiles;  
and he will be mocked and  
insulted and spat upon.

<sup>33</sup> After they have flogged him,  
they will kill him, and on the  
third day he will rise again.”

<sup>34</sup> But they understood nothing  
about all these things; in fact,  
what he said was hidden from  
them, and they did not grasp  
what was said.

*Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar  
Near Jericho*

(Mt 20:29–34; Mk 10:46–52)

<sup>35</sup> As he approached Jericho, a  
blind man was sitting by the  
roadside begging. <sup>36</sup> When he  
heard a crowd going by, he  
asked what was happening.

<sup>37</sup> They told him, “Jesus of  
Nazareth is passing by.”

<sup>38</sup> Then he shouted, “Jesus,  
Son of David, have mercy on  
me!” <sup>39</sup> Those who were in  
front sternly ordered him to  
be quiet; but he shouted even  
more loudly, “Son of David,  
have mercy on me!” <sup>40</sup> Jesus  
stood still and ordered the  
man to be brought to him; and  
when he came near, he asked  
him, <sup>41</sup> “What do you want me  
to do for you?” He said, “Lord,  
let me see again.” <sup>42</sup> Jesus said  
to him, “Receive your sight;

your faith has saved you.”

<sup>43</sup> Immediately he regained his  
sight and followed him,  
glorifying God; and all the  
people, when they saw it,  
praised God.

**Psalm 87:1-3 (NRSV)**

*The Joy of Living in Zion*

Of the Korahites. A Psalm. A Song.

- <sup>1</sup> On the holy mount stands  
the city he founded;  
<sup>2</sup> the LORD loves the gates  
of Zion  
more than all the  
dwellings of Jacob.  
<sup>3</sup> Glorious things are spoken  
of you,  
O city of God. *Selah*

**Proverbs 20:19 (NRSV)**

- <sup>19</sup> A gossip reveals secrets;  
therefore do not  
associate with a  
babbler.

**August 4**



**Joshua 18:1-28** (NRSV)

*The Territories of the  
Remaining Tribes*

**18** Then the whole congregation of the Israelites assembled at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there. The land lay subdued before them.

<sup>2</sup> There remained among the Israelites seven tribes whose inheritance had not yet been apportioned. <sup>3</sup> So Joshua said to the Israelites, “How long will you be slack about going in and taking possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you? <sup>4</sup> Provide three men from each tribe, and I will send them out that they may begin to go throughout the land, writing a description of it with a view to their inheritances. Then come back to me. <sup>5</sup> They shall divide it into seven portions, Judah continuing in its territory on the south, and the house of Joseph in their territory on the north. <sup>6</sup> You shall describe the

land in seven divisions and bring the description here to me; and I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. <sup>7</sup> The Levites have no portion among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their heritage; and Gad and Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan eastward, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.”

<sup>8</sup> So the men started on their way; and Joshua charged those who went to write the description of the land, saying, “Go throughout the land and write a description of it, and come back to me; and I will cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.” <sup>9</sup> So the men went and traversed the land and set down in a book a description of it by towns in seven divisions; then they came back to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh, <sup>10</sup> and Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD; and there Joshua apportioned the land to the Israelites, to each a portion.

### *The Territory of Benjamin*

<sup>11</sup> The lot of the tribe of Benjamin according to its families came up, and the territory allotted to it fell between the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Joseph. <sup>12</sup> On the north side their boundary began at the Jordan; then the boundary goes up to the slope of Jericho on the north, then up through the hill country westward; and it ends at the wilderness of Beth-aven.

<sup>13</sup> From there the boundary passes along southward in the direction of Luz, to the slope of Luz (that is, Bethel), then the boundary goes down to Ataroth-addar, on the mountain that lies south of Lower Beth-horon. <sup>14</sup> Then the boundary goes in another direction, turning on the western side southward from the mountain that lies to the south, opposite Beth-horon, and it ends at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a town belonging to the tribe of Judah. This forms the western side. <sup>15</sup> The southern side begins at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim; and the boundary goes from there to

Ephron, to the spring of the Waters of Nephtoah; <sup>16</sup> then the boundary goes down to the border of the mountain that overlooks the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is at the north end of the valley of Rephaim; and it then goes down the valley of Hinnom, south of the slope of the Jebusites, and downward to En-rogel; <sup>17</sup> then it bends in a northerly direction going on to En-shemesh, and from there goes to Geliloth, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim; then it goes down to the Stone of Bohan, Reuben's son; <sup>18</sup> and passing on to the north of the slope of Beth-arabah it goes down to the Arabah; <sup>19</sup> then the boundary passes on to the north of the slope of Beth-hoglah; and the boundary ends at the northern bay of the Dead Sea, at the south end of the Jordan: this is the southern border. <sup>20</sup> The Jordan forms its boundary on the eastern side. This is the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin, according to its families, boundary by boundary all around.



<sup>21</sup> Now the towns of the tribe of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, <sup>22</sup> Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, <sup>23</sup> Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, <sup>24</sup> Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba—twelve towns with their villages: <sup>25</sup> Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, <sup>26</sup> Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, <sup>27</sup> Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, <sup>28</sup> Zela, Haeleph, Jebus (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah and Kiriath-jearim—fourteen towns with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin according to its families.

**Luke 19:1–10** (NRSV)

*Jesus and Zacchaeus*

<sup>1</sup> He entered Jericho and was passing through it. <sup>2</sup> A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. <sup>3</sup> He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. <sup>5</sup> When Jesus came to the place, he looked

up and said to him, **“Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.”** <sup>6</sup> So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. <sup>7</sup> All who saw it began to grumble and said, “He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.” <sup>8</sup> Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.” <sup>9</sup> **Then Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.** <sup>10</sup> **For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”**

**Psalm 87:4-7** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Among those who know me I mention Rahab and Babylon; Philistia too, and Tyre, with Ethiopia—  
“This one was born there,” they say.  
<sup>5</sup> And of Zion it shall be said, “This one and that one were born in it”;  
for the Most High himself will establish it.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD records, as he registers the peoples, “This one was born there.” *Selah*  
<sup>7</sup> Singers and dancers alike say, “All my springs are in you.”

**Proverbs 20:20–21** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> If you curse father or mother, your lamp will go out in utter darkness.  
<sup>21</sup> An estate quickly acquired in the beginning will not be blessed in the end.

## August 5



**Joshua 19:1-31** (NRSV)

*The Territory of Simeon*

The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of Simeon, according to its families; its inheritance lay within the inheritance of the tribe of Judah. <sup>2</sup> It had for its

inheritance Beer-sheba, Sheba, Moladah, <sup>3</sup> Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, <sup>4</sup> Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, <sup>5</sup> Ziklag, Bethmarcaboth, Hazar-susah, <sup>6</sup> Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem—thirteen towns with their villages; <sup>7</sup> Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four towns with their villages; <sup>8</sup> together with all the villages all around these towns as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon according to its families. <sup>9</sup> The inheritance of the tribe of Simeon formed part of the territory of Judah; because the portion of the tribe of Judah was too large for them, the tribe of Simeon obtained an inheritance within their inheritance.

*The Territory of Zebulun*

<sup>10</sup> The third lot came up for the tribe of Zebulun, according to its families. The boundary of its inheritance reached as far as Sarid; <sup>11</sup> then its boundary goes up westward, and on to Maralah, and touches Dabbesheth, then the wadi that is east of Jokneam;

<sup>12</sup> from Sarid it goes in the other direction eastward toward the sunrise to the boundary of Chisloth-tabor; from there it goes to Daberath, then up to Japhia; <sup>13</sup> from there it passes along on the east toward the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin, and going on to Rimmon it bends toward Neah; <sup>14</sup> then on the north the boundary makes a turn to Hannathon, and it ends at the valley of Iphtah-el; <sup>15</sup> and Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve towns with their villages. <sup>16</sup> This is the inheritance of the tribe of Zebulun, according to its families—these towns with their villages.

#### *The Territory of Issachar*

<sup>17</sup> The fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the tribe of Issachar, according to its families. <sup>18</sup> Its territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, <sup>19</sup> Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, <sup>20</sup> Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, <sup>21</sup> Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, Beth-pazzez; <sup>22</sup> the boundary also touches Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-

shemesh, and its boundary ends at the Jordan—sixteen towns with their villages.

<sup>23</sup> This is the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar, according to its families—the towns with their villages.

#### *The Territory of Asher*

<sup>24</sup> The fifth lot came out for the tribe of Asher according to its families. <sup>25</sup> Its boundary included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, <sup>26</sup> Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal; on the west it touches Carmel and Shihor-libnath, <sup>27</sup> then it turns eastward, goes to Beth-dagon, and touches Zebulun and the valley of Iphtah-el northward to Beth-emek and Neiel; then it continues in the north to Cabul, <sup>28</sup> Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, as far as Great Sidon; <sup>29</sup> then the boundary turns to Ramah, reaching to the fortified city of Tyre; then the boundary turns to Hosah, and it ends at the sea; Mahalab, Achzib, <sup>30</sup> Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob—twenty-two towns with their villages. <sup>31</sup> This is the inheritance of the tribe of Asher according to its

families—these towns with their villages.

**Luke 19:11–27** (NRSV)

*The Parable of the Ten Pounds*  
(Mt 25:14–30)

<sup>11</sup> As they were listening to this, he went on to tell a parable, because he was near Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. <sup>12</sup> So he said, “A

nobleman went to a distant country to get royal power for himself and then return. <sup>13</sup> He summoned ten of his slaves, and gave them ten pounds, and said to them, ‘Do business with these until I come back.’

<sup>14</sup> But the citizens of his country hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to rule over us.’ <sup>15</sup> When he returned, having received royal power, he ordered these slaves, to whom he had given the money, to be summoned so that he might find out what they had gained by trading.

<sup>16</sup> The first came forward and said, ‘Lord, your pound has made ten more pounds.’ <sup>17</sup> He said to him, ‘Well done, good slave! Because you have been

trustworthy in a very small thing, take charge of ten cities.’ <sup>18</sup> Then the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your pound has made five pounds.’

<sup>19</sup> He said to him, ‘And you, rule over five cities.’ <sup>20</sup> Then the other came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your pound. I wrapped it up in a piece of cloth, <sup>21</sup> for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man; you take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’

<sup>22</sup> He said to him, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked slave! You knew, did you, that I was a harsh man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?’ <sup>23</sup> Why then did you not put my money into the bank? Then when I returned, I could have collected it with interest.’

<sup>24</sup> He said to the bystanders, ‘Take the pound from him and give it to the one who has ten pounds.’ <sup>25</sup> (And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten pounds!’) <sup>26</sup> ‘I tell you, to all those who have, more will be given; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>27</sup> But as for these enemies of mine

who did not want me to be  
king over them—bring them  
here and slaughter them in my  
presence.’ ”

**Psalms 88:1-12** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Help in  
Despondency*

A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites. To  
the leader: according to Mahalath  
Leannoth. A Maskil of Heman the  
Ezrahite.

1 O LORD, God of my  
salvation,  
when, at night, I cry out  
in your presence,  
2 let my prayer come before  
you;  
incline your ear to my  
cry.  
3 For my soul is full of  
troubles,  
and my life draws near to  
Sheol.  
4 I am counted among those  
who go down to the  
Pit;  
I am like those who have  
no help,  
5 like those forsaken among  
the dead,  
like the slain that lie in  
the grave,  
like those whom you  
remember no more,

for they are cut off from  
your hand.

6 You have put me in the  
depths of the Pit,  
in the regions dark and  
deep.  
7 Your wrath lies heavy upon  
me,  
and you overwhelm me  
with all your waves.  
*Selah*  
8 You have caused my  
companions to shun  
me;  
you have made me a  
thing of horror to  
them.  
I am shut in so that I  
cannot escape;  
9 my eye grows dim  
through sorrow.  
Every day I call on you, O  
LORD;  
I spread out my hands to  
you.  
10 Do you work wonders for  
the dead?  
Do the shades rise up to  
praise you? *Selah*  
11 Is your steadfast love  
declared in the grave,  
or your faithfulness in  
Abaddon?

**Proverbs 20:22–23** (NRSV)

- <sup>22</sup> Do not say, “I will repay evil”;  
wait for the LORD, and he  
will help you.
- <sup>23</sup> Differing weights are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
and false scales are not  
good.

**August 6**



**Joshua 19:32–20:9** (NRSV)

*The Territory of Naphtali*

<sup>32</sup> The sixth lot came out for the tribe of Naphtali, for the tribe of Naphtali, according to its families. <sup>33</sup> And its boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak in Zaananim, and Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; and it ended at the Jordan; <sup>34</sup> then the boundary turns westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goes from there to Hukkok, touching Zebulun at the south, and Asher on the west, and

Judah on the east at the Jordan. <sup>35</sup> The fortified towns are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, <sup>36</sup> Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, <sup>37</sup> Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, <sup>38</sup> Iron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen towns with their villages. <sup>39</sup> This is the inheritance of the tribe of Naphtali according to its families—the towns with their villages.

*The Territory of Dan*

<sup>40</sup> The seventh lot came out for the tribe of Dan, according to its families. <sup>41</sup> The territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Irshemesh, <sup>42</sup> Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, <sup>43</sup> Elon, Timnah, Ekron, <sup>44</sup> Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, <sup>45</sup> Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, <sup>46</sup> Me-jarkon, and Rakkon at the border opposite Joppa. <sup>47</sup> When the territory of the Danites was lost to them, the Danites went up and fought against Leshem, and after capturing it and putting it to the sword, they took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem,

Dan, after their ancestor Dan.  
<sup>48</sup> This is the inheritance of the tribe of Dan, according to their families—these towns with their villages.

### *Joshua's Inheritance*

<sup>49</sup> When they had finished distributing the several territories of the land as inheritances, the Israelites gave an inheritance among them to Joshua son of Nun.  
<sup>50</sup> By command of the LORD they gave him the town that he asked for, Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim; he rebuilt the town, and settled in it.

<sup>51</sup> These are the inheritances that the priest Eleazar and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the families of the tribes of the Israelites distributed by lot at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished dividing the land.

### *The Cities of Refuge*

*(Num 35:9–28; Deut 19:1–13)*

**20** Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Say to the Israelites, ‘Appoint the cities of

refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, <sup>3</sup> so that anyone who kills a person without intent or by mistake may flee there; they shall be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. <sup>4</sup> The slayer shall flee to one of these cities and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and explain the case to the elders of that city; then the fugitive shall be taken into the city, and given a place, and shall remain with them. <sup>5</sup> And if the avenger of blood is in pursuit, they shall not give up the slayer, because the neighbor was killed by mistake, there having been no enmity between them before. <sup>6</sup> The slayer shall remain in that city until there is a trial before the congregation, until the death of the one who is high priest at the time: then the slayer may return home, to the town in which the deed was done.’ ”

<sup>7</sup> So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, and Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.  
<sup>8</sup> And beyond the Jordan east

of Jericho, they appointed Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland, from the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. <sup>9</sup> These were the cities designated for all the Israelites, and for the aliens residing among them, that anyone who killed a person without intent could flee there, so as not to die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until there was a trial before the congregation.

**Luke 19:28-40** (NRSV)

*Jesus' Triumphal Entry into  
Jerusalem*

(Mt 21:1-11; Mk 11:1-11;  
Jn 12:12-19)

<sup>28</sup> After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

<sup>29</sup> When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, <sup>30</sup> saying, **“Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just**

**say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”**

<sup>32</sup> So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” <sup>34</sup> They said, “The Lord needs it.” <sup>35</sup> Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.

<sup>36</sup> As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying,

“Blessed is the king  
who comes in the name  
of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,  
and glory in the highest  
heaven!”

<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.”

<sup>40</sup> He answered, **“I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”**



**Psalm 88:13-18** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Are your wonders known  
in the darkness,  
or your saving help in the  
land of forgetfulness?  
<sup>13</sup> But I, O LORD, cry out to  
you;  
in the morning my prayer  
comes before you.  
<sup>14</sup> O LORD, why do you cast  
me off?  
Why do you hide your  
face from me?  
<sup>15</sup> Wretched and close to  
death from my youth  
up,  
I suffer your terrors; I am  
desperate.  
<sup>16</sup> Your wrath has swept over  
me;  
your dread assaults  
destroy me.  
<sup>17</sup> They surround me like a  
flood all day long;  
from all sides they close  
in on me.  
<sup>18</sup> You have caused friend  
and neighbor to shun  
me;  
my companions are in  
darkness.

**Proverbs 20:24–25** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> All our steps are ordered  
by the LORD;

how then can we  
understand our own  
ways?

<sup>25</sup> It is a snare for one to say  
rashly, “It is holy,” and  
begin to reflect only  
after making a vow.

**August 7**



**Joshua 21:1-42** (NRSV)

*Cities Allotted to the Levites*  
(1 Chr 6:54–81)

**21** Then the heads of the  
families of the Levites came to  
the priest Eleazar and to  
Joshua son of Nun and to the  
heads of the families of the  
tribes of the Israelites; <sup>2</sup> they  
said to them at Shiloh in the  
land of Canaan, “The LORD  
commanded through Moses  
that we be given towns to live  
in, along with their pasture  
lands for our livestock.” <sup>3</sup> So by  
command of the LORD the  
Israelites gave to the Levites  
the following towns and

pasture lands out of their inheritance.

<sup>4</sup> The lot came out for the families of the Kohathites. So those Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest received by lot thirteen towns from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

<sup>5</sup> The rest of the Kohathites received by lot ten towns from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>6</sup> The Gershonites received by lot thirteen towns from the families of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

<sup>7</sup> The Merarites according to their families received twelve towns from the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the tribe of Zebulun.

<sup>8</sup> These towns and their pasture lands the Israelites gave by lot to the Levites, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

<sup>9</sup> Out of the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Simeon they gave the following towns

mentioned by name, <sup>10</sup> which went to the descendants of Aaron, one of the families of the Kohathites who belonged to the Levites, since the lot fell to them first. <sup>11</sup> They gave them Kiriath-arba (Arba being the father of Anak), that is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, along with the pasture lands around it. <sup>12</sup> But the fields of the town and its villages had been given to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his holding.

<sup>13</sup> To the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron, the city of refuge for the slayer, with its pasture lands, Libnah with its pasture lands, <sup>14</sup> Jattir with its pasture lands, Eshtemoa with its pasture lands, <sup>15</sup> Holon with its pasture lands, Debir with its pasture lands, <sup>16</sup> Ain with its pasture lands, Juttah with its pasture lands, and Beth-shemesh with its pasture lands—nine towns out of these two tribes. <sup>17</sup> Out of the tribe of Benjamin: Gibeon with its pasture lands, Geba with its pasture lands, <sup>18</sup> Anathoth with its pasture lands, and Almon with its pasture lands—

four towns. <sup>19</sup> The towns of the descendants of Aaron—the priests—were thirteen in all, with their pasture lands.

<sup>20</sup> As to the rest of the Kohathites belonging to the Kohathite families of the Levites, the towns allotted to them were out of the tribe of Ephraim. <sup>21</sup> To them were

given Shechem, the city of refuge for the slayer, with its pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasture lands,

<sup>22</sup> Kibzaim with its pasture lands, and Beth-horon with its pasture lands—four towns.

<sup>23</sup> Out of the tribe of Dan: Elteke with its pasture lands, Gibbethon with its pasture lands, <sup>24</sup> Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands—four towns. <sup>25</sup> Out of the half-tribe

of Manasseh: Taanach with its pasture lands, and Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands—two towns. <sup>26</sup> The

towns of the families of the rest of the Kohathites were ten in all, with their pasture lands.

<sup>27</sup> To the Gershonites, one of the families of the Levites,

were given out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its pasture lands, the city of refuge for the slayer, and Beeshterah with its pasture lands—two towns.

<sup>28</sup> Out of the tribe of Issachar: Kishion with its pasture lands, Daberath with its pasture lands, <sup>29</sup> Jarmuth with its pasture lands, En-gannim with its pasture lands—four towns.

<sup>30</sup> Out of the tribe of Asher: Mishal with its pasture lands, Abdon with its pasture lands,

<sup>31</sup> Helkath with its pasture lands, and Rehob with its pasture lands—four towns.

<sup>32</sup> Out of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasture lands, the city of refuge for the slayer, Hammoth-dor with its pasture lands, and Kartan with its pasture lands—three towns.

<sup>33</sup> The towns of the several families of the Gershonites were in all thirteen, with their pasture lands.

<sup>34</sup> To the rest of the Levites—the Merarite families—were given out of the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam with its pasture lands, Kartah with its pasture lands,

<sup>35</sup> Dimnah with its pasture lands, Nahalal with its pasture lands—four towns. <sup>36</sup> Out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer with its pasture lands, Jahzah with its pasture lands, <sup>37</sup> Kedemoth with its pasture lands, and Mephaath with its pasture lands—four towns. <sup>38</sup> Out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasture lands, the city of refuge for the slayer, Mahanaim with its pasture lands, <sup>39</sup> Heshbon with its pasture lands, Jazer with its pasture lands—four towns in all. <sup>40</sup> As for the towns of the several Merarite families, that is, the remainder of the families of the Levites, those allotted to them were twelve in all.

<sup>41</sup> The towns of the Levites within the holdings of the Israelites were in all forty-eight towns with their pasture lands. <sup>42</sup> Each of these towns had its pasture lands around it; so it was with all these towns.

**Luke 19:41–48** (NRSV)

*Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem*

<sup>41</sup> As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it,

<sup>42</sup> saying, “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

<sup>43</sup> Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side.

<sup>44</sup> They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.”

*Jesus Cleanses the Temple*

*(Mt 21:12–17; Mk 11:15–19; Jn 2:12–25)*

<sup>45</sup> Then he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; <sup>46</sup> and he said, “It is written,

‘My house shall be a house of prayer’;  
but you have made it a den of robbers.”

<sup>47</sup> Every day he was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept

looking for a way to kill him;  
<sup>48</sup>but they did not find  
anything they could do, for all  
the people were spellbound  
by what they heard.

**Psalms 89:1-6** (NRSV)

*God's Covenant with David*

A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

- <sup>1</sup> I will sing of your steadfast  
love, O LORD, forever;  
with my mouth I will  
proclaim your  
faithfulness to all  
generations.
- <sup>2</sup> I declare that your  
steadfast love is  
established forever;  
your faithfulness is as  
firm as the heavens.
- <sup>3</sup> You said, "I have made a  
covenant with my  
chosen one,  
I have sworn to my  
servant David:
- <sup>4</sup> 'I will establish your  
descendants forever,  
and build your throne for  
all generations.' "
- Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> Let the heavens praise  
your wonders, O LORD,  
your faithfulness in the  
assembly of the holy  
ones.

- <sup>6</sup> For who in the skies can be  
compared to the LORD?  
Who among the  
heavenly beings is like  
the LORD,

**Proverbs 20:26-27** (NRSV)

- <sup>26</sup> A wise king winnows the  
wicked,  
and drives the wheel  
over them.
- <sup>27</sup> The human spirit is the  
lamp of the LORD,  
searching every inmost  
part.

**August 8**



**Joshua 21:43-22:20** (NRSV)

<sup>43</sup> Thus the LORD gave to  
Israel all the land that he  
swore to their ancestors that  
he would give them; and  
having taken possession of it,  
they settled there. <sup>44</sup> And the  
LORD gave them rest on every  
side just as he had sworn to  
their ancestors; not one of all  
their enemies had withstood

them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. <sup>45</sup> Not one of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

*The Eastern Tribes Return to Their Territory*

**22** Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, <sup>2</sup> and said to them, “You have observed all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed me in all that I have commanded you; <sup>3</sup> you have not forsaken your kindred these many days, down to this day, but have been careful to keep the charge of the LORD your God. <sup>4</sup> And now the LORD your God has given rest to your kindred, as he promised them; therefore turn and go to your tents in the land where your possession lies, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. <sup>5</sup> Take good care to observe the commandment and instruction that Moses the servant of the LORD

commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.” <sup>6</sup> So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

<sup>7</sup> Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan; but to the other half Joshua had given a possession beside their fellow Israelites in the land west of the Jordan. And when Joshua sent them away to their tents and blessed them, <sup>8</sup> he said to them, “Go back to your tents with much wealth, and with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and with a great quantity of clothing; divide the spoil of your enemies with your kindred.” <sup>9</sup> So the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home, parting from the Israelites at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, their own land of which they had taken

possession by command of the LORD through Moses.

*A Memorial Altar  
East of the Jordan*

<sup>10</sup> When they came to the region near the Jordan that lies in the land of Canaan, the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of great size.

<sup>11</sup> The Israelites heard that the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh had built an altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region near the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the Israelites. <sup>12</sup> And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh, to make war against them.

<sup>13</sup> Then the Israelites sent the priest Phinehas son of Eleazar to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, <sup>14</sup> and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the clans of Israel. <sup>15</sup> They came to the

Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they said to them, <sup>16</sup> "Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, 'What is this treachery that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away today from following the LORD, by building yourselves an altar today in rebellion against the LORD?'"

<sup>17</sup> Have we not had enough of the sin at Peor from which even yet we have not cleansed ourselves, and for which a plague came upon the congregation of the LORD, <sup>18</sup> that you must turn away today from following the LORD! If you rebel against the LORD today, he will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel tomorrow. <sup>19</sup> But now, if your land is unclean, cross over into the LORD's land where the LORD's tabernacle now stands, and take for yourselves a possession among us; only do not rebel against the LORD, or rebel against us by building yourselves an altar other than the altar of the LORD our God.

<sup>20</sup> Did not Achan son of Zerah

break faith in the matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? And he did not perish alone for his iniquity! ”

**Luke 20:1–8** (NRSV)

*The Authority of  
Jesus Questioned*

(Mt 21:23–27; Mk 11:27–33)

<sup>1</sup> One day, as he was teaching the people in the temple and telling the good news, the chief priests and the scribes came with the elders <sup>2</sup> and said to him, “Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Who is it who gave you this authority?” <sup>3</sup> He answered them, “I will also ask you a question, and you tell me: <sup>4</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” <sup>5</sup> They discussed it with one another, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why did you not believe him?’” <sup>6</sup> But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ all the people will stone us; for they are convinced that John was a prophet.” <sup>7</sup> So they answered that they did not know where it came from. <sup>8</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what

authority I am doing these things.”

**Psalm 89:7-13** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and awesome above all that are around him?  
<sup>8</sup> O LORD God of hosts, who is as mighty as you, O LORD? Your faithfulness surrounds you.  
<sup>9</sup> You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.  
<sup>10</sup> You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.  
<sup>11</sup> The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it—you have founded them.  
<sup>12</sup> The north and the south—you created them; Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your name.  
<sup>13</sup> You have a mighty arm;





strong is your hand, high  
your right hand.

**Proverbs 20:28–30** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Loyalty and faithfulness  
preserve the king,  
and his throne is upheld  
by righteousness.  
<sup>29</sup> The glory of youths is their  
strength,  
but the beauty of the  
aged is their gray hair.  
<sup>30</sup> Blows that wound cleanse  
away evil; beatings  
make clean the  
innermost parts.

**August 9**



**Joshua 22:21-34** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> Then the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh said in answer to the heads of the families of Israel, <sup>22</sup> “The LORD, God of gods! The LORD, God of gods! He knows; and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in breach of faith toward the

LORD, do not spare us today <sup>23</sup> for building an altar to turn away from following the LORD; or if we did so to offer burnt offerings or grain offerings or offerings of well-being on it, may the LORD himself take vengeance. <sup>24</sup> No! We did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, ‘What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel?’ <sup>25</sup> For the LORD has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you Reubenites and Gadites; you have no portion in the LORD.’ So your children might make our children cease to worship the LORD. <sup>26</sup> Therefore we said, ‘Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, <sup>27</sup> but to be a witness between us and you, and between the generations after us, that we do perform the service of the LORD in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and offerings of well-being; so that your children may never say to our children in time to come, “You have no portion in the LORD.”’ <sup>28</sup> And we thought, If this should be said to us or to

our descendants in time to come, we could say, 'Look at this copy of the altar of the LORD, which our ancestors made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifice, but to be a witness between us and you.'

<sup>29</sup> Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn away this day from following the LORD by building an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of the LORD our God that stands before his tabernacle!"

<sup>30</sup> When the priest Phinehas and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads of the families of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the Reubenites and the Gadites and the Manassites spoke, they were satisfied.

<sup>31</sup> The priest Phinehas son of Eleazar said to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the Manassites, "Today we know that the LORD is among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD; now you have saved the Israelites from the hand of the LORD."

<sup>32</sup> Then the priest Phinehas son of Eleazar and the chiefs returned from the Reubenites and the Gadites in the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the Israelites, and brought back word to them. <sup>33</sup> The report pleased the Israelites; and the Israelites blessed God and spoke no more of making war against them, to destroy the land where the Reubenites and the Gadites were settled.

<sup>34</sup> The Reubenites and the Gadites called the altar Witness; "For," said they, "it is a witness between us that the LORD is God."

#### **Luke 20:9-26 (NRSV)**

*The Parable of  
the Wicked Tenants*  
(Mt 21:33-46; Mk 12:1-12)

<sup>9</sup> He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, and leased it to tenants, and went to another country for a long time. <sup>10</sup> When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants in order that they might give him his share of the produce of the vineyard; but the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

<sup>11</sup> Next he sent another slave;

that one also they beat and insulted and sent away empty-handed.<sup>12</sup> And he sent still a third; this one also they wounded and threw out.

<sup>13</sup> Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.'<sup>14</sup> But when the tenants saw him, they discussed it among themselves and said, 'This is the heir; let us kill him so that the inheritance may be ours.'<sup>15</sup> So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?<sup>16</sup> He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "Heaven forbid!"<sup>17</sup> But he looked at them and said, "What then does this text mean:

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone'?

<sup>18</sup> Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."<sup>19</sup> When the scribes and chief priests realized that he had told this

parable against them, they wanted to lay hands on him at that very hour, but they feared the people.

### *The Question about Paying Taxes*

*(Mt 22:15–22; Mk 12:13–17)*

<sup>20</sup> So they watched him and sent spies who pretended to be honest, in order to trap him by what he said, so as to hand him over to the jurisdiction and authority of the governor.

<sup>21</sup> So they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you are right in what you say and teach, and you show deference to no one, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth."<sup>22</sup> Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?"<sup>23</sup> But he perceived their craftiness and said to them,<sup>24</sup> "Show me a denarius. Whose head and whose title does it bear?"

They said, "The emperor's."

<sup>25</sup> He said to them, "Then give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."

<sup>26</sup> And they were not able in the presence of the people to trap him by what he said; and

being amazed by his answer,  
they became silent.

**Psalms 89:14-18** (NRSV)

- <sup>14</sup> Righteousness and justice  
are the foundation of  
your throne;  
steadfast love and  
faithfulness go before  
you.
- <sup>15</sup> Happy are the people who  
know the festal shout,  
who walk, O LORD, in the  
light of your  
countenance;
- <sup>16</sup> they exult in your name all  
day long,  
and extol your  
righteousness.
- <sup>17</sup> For you are the glory of  
their strength;  
by your favor our horn is  
exalted.
- <sup>18</sup> For our shield belongs to  
the LORD,  
our king to the Holy One  
of Israel.

**Proverbs 21:1-2** (NRSV)

- <sup>1</sup> The king's heart is a  
stream of water in the  
hand of the LORD;  
he turns it wherever he  
will.

- <sup>2</sup> All deeds are right in the  
sight of the doer,  
but the LORD weighs the  
heart.

**August  
10**



**Joshua 23:1-16** (NRSV)

*Joshua Exhorts the People*

A long time afterward,  
when the LORD had given rest  
to Israel from all their enemies  
all around, and Joshua was old  
and well advanced in years,  
<sup>2</sup> Joshua summoned all Israel,  
their elders and heads, their  
judges and officers, and said  
to them, "I am now old and  
well advanced in years; <sup>3</sup> and  
you have seen all that the LORD  
your God has done to all these  
nations for your sake, for it is  
the LORD your God who has  
fought for you. <sup>4</sup> I have  
allotted to you as an  
inheritance for your tribes  
those nations that remain,  
along with all the nations that  
I have already cut off, from the  
Jordan to the Great Sea in the

west. <sup>5</sup> The LORD your God will push them back before you, and drive them out of your sight; and you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God promised you. <sup>6</sup> Therefore be very steadfast to observe and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right nor to the left, <sup>7</sup> so that you may not be mixed with these nations left here among you, or make mention of the names of their gods, or swear by them, or serve them, or bow yourselves down to them, <sup>8</sup> but hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day. <sup>9</sup> For the LORD has driven out before you great and strong nations; and as for you, no one has been able to withstand you to this day. <sup>10</sup> One of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the LORD your God who fights for you, as he promised you. <sup>11</sup> Be very careful, therefore, to love the LORD your God. <sup>12</sup> For if you turn back, and join the survivors of these nations left here among you, and intermarry with them, so that you marry their women and

they yours, <sup>13</sup> know assuredly that the LORD your God will not continue to drive out these nations before you; but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a scourge on your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land that the LORD your God has given you.

<sup>14</sup> “And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one thing has failed of all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you; all have come to pass for you, not one of them has failed.

<sup>15</sup> But just as all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the bad things, until he has destroyed you from this good land that the LORD your God has given you. <sup>16</sup> If you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which he enjoined on you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and you shall

perish quickly from the good land that he has given to you.”

**Luke 20:27-40** (NRSV)

*The Question about  
the Resurrection*

(Mt 22:23–33; Mk 12:18–27)

<sup>27</sup> Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him <sup>28</sup> and asked him a question, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. <sup>29</sup> Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; <sup>30</sup> then the second <sup>31</sup> and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. <sup>32</sup> Finally the woman also died. <sup>33</sup> In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, “**Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; <sup>35</sup> but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. <sup>36</sup> Indeed they**

**cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. <sup>37</sup> And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. <sup>38</sup> Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.”**

<sup>39</sup> Then some of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” <sup>40</sup> For they no longer dared to ask him another question.

**Psalms 89:19-37** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:  
“I have set the crown on one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people.  
<sup>20</sup> I have found my servant David;  
with my holy oil I have anointed him;  
<sup>21</sup> my hand shall always remain with him;

my arm also shall  
strengthen him.  
22 The enemy shall not outwit  
him,  
the wicked shall not  
humble him.  
23 I will crush his foes before  
him  
and strike down those  
who hate him.  
24 My faithfulness and  
steadfast love shall be  
with him;  
and in my name his horn  
shall be exalted.  
25 I will set his hand on the  
sea  
and his right hand on the  
rivers.  
26 He shall cry to me, 'You are  
my Father,  
my God, and the Rock of  
my salvation!'  
27 I will make him the  
firstborn,  
the highest of the kings  
of the earth.  
28 Forever I will keep my  
steadfast love for him,  
and my covenant with  
him will stand firm.  
29 I will establish his line  
forever,  
and his throne as long as  
the heavens endure.

30 If his children forsake my  
law  
and do not walk  
according to my  
ordinances,  
31 if they violate my statutes  
and do not keep my  
commandments,  
32 then I will punish their  
transgression with the  
rod  
and their iniquity with  
scourges;  
33 but I will not remove from  
him my steadfast love,  
or be false to my  
faithfulness.  
34 I will not violate my  
covenant,  
or alter the word that  
went forth from my  
lips.  
35 Once and for all I have  
sworn by my holiness;  
I will not lie to David.  
36 His line shall continue  
forever,  
and his throne endure  
before me like the sun.  
37 It shall be established  
forever like the moon,  
an enduring witness in  
the skies." *Selah*

**Proverbs 21:3** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

**August  
11**



**Joshua 24:1-28** (NRSV)

*The Tribes Renew the  
Covenant  
(Cp Ex 24:9–18)*

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2</sup> And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. <sup>3</sup> Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made

his offspring many. I gave him Isaac; <sup>4</sup> and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. <sup>5</sup> Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in its midst; and afterwards I brought you out. <sup>6</sup> When I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your ancestors with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. <sup>7</sup> When they cried out to the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did to Egypt. Afterwards you lived in the wilderness a long time. <sup>8</sup> Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan; they fought with you, and I handed them over to you, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. <sup>9</sup> Then King Balak son of Zippor of Moab, set out to fight against Israel. He sent and invited Balaam



son of Beor to curse you, <sup>10</sup> but I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he blessed you; so I rescued you out of his hand.

<sup>11</sup> When you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, the citizens of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I handed them over to you. <sup>12</sup> I sent the hornet ahead of you, which drove out before you the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. <sup>13</sup> I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and towns that you had not built, and you live in them; you eat the fruit of vineyards and oliveyards that you did not plant.

<sup>14</sup> “Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup> Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region

beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

<sup>16</sup> Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup> for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; <sup>18</sup> and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

<sup>19</sup> But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. <sup>20</sup> If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.” <sup>21</sup> And the people said to Joshua,

“No, we will serve the LORD!”

<sup>22</sup> Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” <sup>23</sup> He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.” <sup>24</sup> The people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” <sup>25</sup> So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem. <sup>26</sup> Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak in the sanctuary of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> Joshua said to all the people, “See, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us; therefore it shall be a witness against you, if you deal falsely with your God.” <sup>28</sup> So Joshua sent the people away to their inheritances.

**Luke 20:41–47** (NRSV)  
*The Question*

*about David’s Son*

(Mt 22:41–46; Mk 12:35–37)

<sup>41</sup> Then he said to them,

“How can they say that the Messiah is David’s son? <sup>42</sup> For David himself says in the book of Psalms,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

<sup>43</sup>

until I make your enemies your footstool.”’

<sup>44</sup>

David thus calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?”

*Jesus Denounces the Scribes*

(Mt 23:1–7; Mk 12:38–40)

<sup>45</sup> In the hearing of all the

people he said to the disciples,

<sup>46</sup>

“Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets. <sup>47</sup> They devour widows’ houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

**Psalm 89:38–45** (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup>

But now you have spurned and rejected him;

you are full of wrath  
against your anointed.  
39 You have renounced the  
covenant with your  
servant;  
you have defiled his  
crown in the dust.  
40 You have broken through  
all his walls;  
you have laid his  
strongholds in ruins.  
41 All who pass by plunder  
him;  
he has become the scorn  
of his neighbors.  
42 You have exalted the right  
hand of his foes;  
you have made all his  
enemies rejoice.  
43 Moreover, you have  
turned back the edge  
of his sword,  
and you have not  
supported him in  
battle.  
44 You have removed the  
scepter from his hand,  
and hurled his throne to  
the ground.  
45 You have cut short the  
days of his youth;  
you have covered him  
with shame. *Selah*

### **Proverbs 21:4** (NRSV)

4 Haughty eyes and a proud  
heart—  
the lamp of the wicked—  
are sin.

## **August 12**



### **Joshua 24:29-Judges 1:15** (NRSV)

#### *Death of Joshua and Eleazar*

<sup>29</sup> After these things Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred ten years old. <sup>30</sup> They buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

<sup>31</sup> Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel.

<sup>32</sup> The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem, in the

portion of ground that Jacob had bought from the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for one hundred pieces of money; it became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

<sup>33</sup> Eleazar son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of his son Phinehas, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

*Israel's Failure to Complete the  
Conquest of Canaan  
(Josh 15:13–19)*

**15** After the death of Joshua, the Israelites inquired of the LORD, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” <sup>2</sup> The LORD said, “Judah shall go up. I hereby give the land into his hand.” <sup>3</sup> Judah said to his brother Simeon, “Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites; then I too will go with you into the territory allotted to you.” So Simeon went with him. <sup>4</sup> Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand;

and they defeated ten thousand of them at Bezek.

<sup>5</sup> They came upon Adoni-bezek at Bezek, and fought against him, and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

<sup>6</sup> Adoni-bezek fled; but they pursued him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes. <sup>7</sup> Adoni-bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has paid me back.” They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

<sup>8</sup> Then the people of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it. They put it to the sword and set the city on fire.

<sup>9</sup> Afterward the people of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland.

<sup>10</sup> Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba); and they defeated Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai.

<sup>11</sup> From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir was

formerly Kiriath-sepher).

<sup>12</sup> Then Caleb said, “Whoever attacks Kiriath-sepher and takes it, I will give him my daughter Achsah as wife.”

<sup>13</sup> And Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, took it; and he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife.

<sup>14</sup> When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. As she dismounted from her donkey, Caleb said to her, “What do you wish?”

<sup>15</sup> She said to him, “Give me a present; since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me also Gulloth-mayim.” So Caleb gave her Upper Gulloth and Lower Gulloth.

### **Luke 21:1–4** (NRSV)

#### *The Widow’s Offering* (Mk 12:41–44)

<sup>1</sup> He looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; <sup>2</sup> he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. <sup>3</sup> He said, “**Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; <sup>4</sup> for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.**”

### **Psalm 89:46–52** (NRSV)

<sup>46</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?  
How long will your wrath burn like fire?

<sup>47</sup> Remember how short my time is—  
for what vanity you have created all mortals!

<sup>48</sup> Who can live and never see death?  
Who can escape the power of Sheol?  
*Selah*

<sup>49</sup> Lord, where is your steadfast love of old,  
which by your faithfulness you swore to David?

<sup>50</sup> Remember, O Lord, how your servant is taunted;  
how I bear in my bosom the insults of the peoples,

<sup>51</sup> with which your enemies taunt, O LORD,  
with which they taunted the footsteps of your anointed.

<sup>52</sup> Blessed be the LORD forever.  
Amen and Amen.

**Proverbs 21:5–7 (NRSV)**

- <sup>5</sup> The plans of the diligent  
lead surely to  
abundance,  
but everyone who is  
hasty comes only to  
want.
- <sup>6</sup> The getting of treasures by  
a lying tongue  
is a fleeting vapor and a  
snare of death.
- <sup>7</sup> The violence of the wicked  
will sweep them away,  
because they refuse to  
do what is just.

**August  
13**



**Judges 1:16–36 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup>The descendants of Hobab the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad. Then they went and settled with the Amalekites. <sup>17</sup>Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they defeated the Canaanites who

inhabited Zephath, and devoted it to destruction. So the city was called Hormah. <sup>18</sup>Judah took Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. <sup>19</sup>The LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had chariots of iron. <sup>20</sup>Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said; and he drove out from it the three sons of Anak. <sup>21</sup>But the Benjaminites did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem; so the Jebusites have lived in Jerusalem among the Benjaminites to this day.

<sup>22</sup>The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel; and the LORD was with them. <sup>23</sup>The house of Joseph sent out spies to Bethel (the name of the city was formerly Luz). <sup>24</sup>When the spies saw a man coming out of the city, they said to him, "Show us the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you." <sup>25</sup>So he showed them the way into the city; and they put the city to the sword, but they let the man and all his family go. <sup>26</sup>So the man went

to the land of the Hittites and built a city, and named it Luz; that is its name to this day.

<sup>27</sup> Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; but the Canaanites continued to live in that land.

<sup>28</sup> When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not in fact drive them out.

<sup>29</sup> And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer; but the Canaanites lived among them in Gezer.

<sup>30</sup> Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites lived among them, and became subject to forced labor.

<sup>31</sup> Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob; <sup>32</sup> but the Asherites lived among the Canaanites,

the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

<sup>33</sup> Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Beth-anath became subject to forced labor for them.

<sup>34</sup> The Amorites pressed the Danites back into the hill country; they did not allow them to come down to the plain. <sup>35</sup> The Amorites continued to live in Har-heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced labor. <sup>36</sup> The border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela and upward.

### **Luke 21:5–28 (NRSV)**

#### *The Destruction of the Temple Foretold* (Mt 24:1–2; Mk 13:1–2)

<sup>5</sup> When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said,

<sup>6</sup> “As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.”

*Signs and Persecutions*

(Mt 24:3–14; Mk 13:3–13)

<sup>7</sup> They asked him,

“Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?”

<sup>8</sup> And he said, “Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time is near!’ Do not go after them.

<sup>9</sup> “When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.”

<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; <sup>11</sup> there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

<sup>12</sup> “But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues

and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. <sup>13</sup> This will give you an opportunity to testify. <sup>14</sup> So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; <sup>15</sup> for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict.

<sup>16</sup> You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death.

<sup>17</sup> You will be hated by all because of my name. <sup>18</sup> But not a hair of your head will perish. <sup>19</sup> By your endurance you will gain your souls.

*The Destruction of  
Jerusalem Foretold*

(Mt 24:15–28; Mk 13:14–23)

<sup>20</sup> “When you see

Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.

<sup>21</sup> Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those inside the city must leave it, and those out in the country must not enter it;

<sup>22</sup> for these are days of vengeance, as a fulfillment of all that is written. <sup>23</sup> Woe to



those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress on the earth and wrath against this people;  
<sup>24</sup> they will fall by the edge of the sword and be taken away as captives among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

*The Coming of the Son of Man*  
(Mt 24:29–31; Mk 13:24–27)

<sup>25</sup> “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. <sup>26</sup> People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

**Psalm 90:1-17 (NRSV)**

*God’s Eternity and  
Human Frailty*

A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

- 1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.
- 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
- 3 You turn us back to dust, and say, “Turn back, you mortals.”
- 4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.
- 5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;
- 6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.
- 7 For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

8 You have set our iniquities  
before you,  
our secret sins in the  
light of your  
countenance.

9 For all our days pass away  
under your wrath;  
our years come to an  
end like a sigh.

10 The days of our life are  
seventy years,  
or perhaps eighty, if we  
are strong;  
even then their span is  
only toil and trouble;  
they are soon gone, and  
we fly away.

11 Who considers the power  
of your anger?  
Your wrath is as great as  
the fear that is due  
you.

12 So teach us to count our  
days  
that we may gain a wise  
heart.

13 Turn, O LORD! How long?  
Have compassion on  
your servants!

14 Satisfy us in the morning  
with your steadfast  
love,  
so that we may rejoice  
and be glad all our  
days.

15 Make us glad as many days  
as you have afflicted  
us,  
and as many years as we  
have seen evil.

16 Let your work be manifest  
to your servants,  
and your glorious power  
to their children.

17 Let the favor of the Lord  
our God be upon us,  
and prosper for us the  
work of our hands—  
O prosper the work of  
our hands!

**Proverbs 21:8–10 (NRSV)**

8 The way of the guilty is  
crooked,  
but the conduct of the  
pure is right.

9 It is better to live in a  
corner of the housetop  
than in a house shared  
with a contentious  
wife.

10 The souls of the wicked  
desire evil;  
their neighbors find no  
mercy in their eyes.

# August 14



**Judges 2:1-9** (NRSV)

## *Israel's Disobedience*

**2** Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you into the land that I had promised to your ancestors. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you. <sup>2</sup> For your part, do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my command. See what you have done! <sup>3</sup> So now I say, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become adversaries to you, and their gods shall be a snare to you." <sup>4</sup> When the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the Israelites, the people lifted up their voices and wept. <sup>5</sup> So they named that place Bochim, and there they sacrificed to the LORD.

*Death of Joshua*  
(Josh 24:29–31)

<sup>6</sup> When Joshua dismissed the people, the Israelites all went to their own inheritances to take possession of the land. <sup>7</sup> The people worshiped the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel. <sup>8</sup> Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred ten years. <sup>9</sup> So they buried him within the bounds of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

**Luke 21:29-36** (NRSV)

*The Lesson of the Fig Tree*  
(Mt 24:32–35; Mk 13:28–31)

<sup>29</sup> Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; <sup>30</sup> as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. <sup>31</sup> So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. <sup>32</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. <sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will



pass away, but my words will not pass away.

*Exhortation to Watch*

(Mt 24:36–44; Mk 13:32–37)

<sup>34</sup> “Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, <sup>35</sup> like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup> Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

**Psalm 91:1-16** (NRSV)

*Assurance of God’s Protection*

<sup>1</sup> You who live in the shelter of the Most High,  
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,  
<sup>2</sup> will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress;  
my God, in whom I trust.”  
<sup>3</sup> For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler  
and from the deadly pestilence;

<sup>4</sup> he will cover you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.



<sup>5</sup> You will not fear the terror of the night,  
or the arrow that flies by day,  
<sup>6</sup> or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,  
or the destruction that wastes at noonday.  
<sup>7</sup> A thousand may fall at your side,  
ten thousand at your right hand,  
but it will not come near you.  
<sup>8</sup> You will only look with your eyes  
and see the punishment of the wicked.  
<sup>9</sup> Because you have made the LORD your refuge,  
the Most High your dwelling place,  
<sup>10</sup> no evil shall befall you,  
no scourge come near your tent.  
<sup>11</sup> For he will command his angels concerning you  
to guard you in all your ways.

12 On their hands they will  
bear you up,  
so that you will not dash  
your foot against a  
stone.

13 You will tread on the lion  
and the adder,  
the young lion and the  
serpent you will  
trample under foot.

14 Those who love me, I will  
deliver;  
I will protect those who  
know my name.

15 When they call to me, I will  
answer them;  
I will be with them in  
trouble,  
I will rescue them and  
honor them.

16 With long life I will satisfy  
them,  
and show them my  
salvation.

**Proverbs 21:11–12 (NRSV)**

11 When a scoffer is  
punished, the simple  
become wiser;  
when the wise are  
instructed, they  
increase in knowledge.

12 The Righteous One  
observes the house of  
the wicked; he casts

the wicked down to  
ruin.

**August  
15**



**Judges 2:10–23 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> Moreover, that whole  
generation was gathered to  
their ancestors, and another  
generation grew up after  
them, who did not know the  
LORD or the work that he had  
done for Israel.

*Israel's Unfaithfulness*

<sup>11</sup> Then the Israelites did  
what was evil in the sight of  
the LORD and worshiped the  
Baals; <sup>12</sup> and they abandoned  
the LORD, the God of their  
ancestors, who had brought  
them out of the land of Egypt;  
they followed other gods,  
from among the gods of the  
peoples who were all around  
them, and bowed down to  
them; and they provoked the  
LORD to anger. <sup>13</sup> They  
abandoned the LORD, and

worshiped Baal and the Astartes.<sup>14</sup> So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers who plundered them, and he sold them into the power of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.<sup>15</sup> Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them to bring misfortune, as the LORD had warned them and sworn to them; and they were in great distress.

<sup>16</sup> Then the LORD raised up judges, who delivered them out of the power of those who plundered them.<sup>17</sup> Yet they did not listen even to their judges; for they lusted after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their ancestors had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD; they did not follow their example.<sup>18</sup> Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the

judge; for the LORD would be moved to pity by their groaning because of those who persecuted and oppressed them.<sup>19</sup> But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors, following other gods, worshiping them and bowing down to them. They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways.<sup>20</sup> So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their ancestors, and have not obeyed my voice,<sup>21</sup> I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died."<sup>22</sup> In order to test Israel, whether or not they would take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their ancestors did,<sup>23</sup> the LORD had left those nations, not driving them out at once, and had not handed them over to Joshua.

**Luke 21:37-22:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> Every day he was teaching in the temple, and at night he would go out and

spend the night on the Mount of Olives, as it was called.

<sup>38</sup> And all the people would get up early in the morning to listen to him in the temple.

*The Plot to Kill Jesus*

(Mt 26:1–5, 14–16; Mk 14:1–2  
10–11; Jn 11:45–53)

**22** Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. <sup>2</sup> The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

<sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; <sup>4</sup> he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them.

<sup>5</sup> They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money.

<sup>6</sup> So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

*The Preparation  
of the Passover*

(Mt 26:17–19; Mk 14:12–16)

<sup>7</sup> Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which

the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it.” <sup>9</sup> They asked him, “Where do you want us to make preparations for it?” <sup>10</sup> “Listen,” he said to them, “when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters <sup>11</sup> and say to the owner of the house, ‘The teacher asks you, “Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’” <sup>12</sup> He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there.” <sup>13</sup> So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

**Psalm 92:1-15 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for Vindication*

A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath Day.

<sup>1</sup> It is good to give thanks to the LORD,  
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;  
<sup>2</sup> to declare your steadfast love in the morning,

and your faithfulness by  
night,  
3 to the music of the lute  
and the harp,  
to the melody of the  
lyre.  
4 For you, O LORD, have  
made me glad by your  
work;  
at the works of your  
hands I sing for joy.  
5 How great are your works,  
O LORD!  
Your thoughts are very  
deep!  
6 The dullard cannot know,  
the stupid cannot  
understand this:  
7 though the wicked sprout  
like grass  
and all evildoers flourish,  
they are doomed to  
destruction forever,  
8 but you, O LORD, are on  
high forever.  
9 For your enemies, O LORD,  
for your enemies shall  
perish;  
all evildoers shall be  
scattered.  
10 But you have exalted my  
horn like that of the  
wild ox;  
you have poured over  
me fresh oil.

11 My eyes have seen the  
downfall of my  
enemies;  
my ears have heard the  
doom of my evil  
assailants.  
12 The righteous flourish like  
the palm tree,  
and grow like a cedar in  
Lebanon.  
13 They are planted in the  
house of the LORD;  
they flourish in the  
courts of our God.  
14 In old age they still  
produce fruit;  
they are always green  
and full of sap,  
15 showing that the LORD is  
upright;  
he is my rock, and there  
is no unrighteousness  
in him.

**Proverbs 21:13** (NRSV)

13 If you close your ear to the  
cry of the poor,  
you will cry out and not  
be heard.





# August 16



**Judges 3:1–31** (NRSV)

## *Nations Remaining in the Land*

**3** Now these are the nations that the LORD left to test all those in Israel who had no experience of any war in Canaan <sup>2</sup> (it was only that successive generations of Israelites might know war, to teach those who had no experience of it before): <sup>3</sup> the five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. <sup>4</sup> They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their ancestors by Moses. <sup>5</sup> So the Israelites lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; <sup>6</sup> and they took their daughters as wives for themselves, and their own daughters they gave to their

sons; and they worshiped their gods.

## *Othniel*

<sup>7</sup> The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, forgetting the LORD their God, and worshiping the Baals and the Asherahs. <sup>8</sup> Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim; and the Israelites served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. <sup>9</sup> But when the Israelites cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the Israelites, who delivered them, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. <sup>10</sup> The spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel; he went out to war, and the LORD gave King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. <sup>11</sup> So the land had rest forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

## *Ehud*

<sup>12</sup> The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the

LORD; and the LORD strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> In alliance with the Ammonites and the Amalekites, he went and defeated Israel; and they took possession of the city of palms. <sup>14</sup> So the Israelites served King Eglon of Moab eighteen years.

<sup>15</sup> But when the Israelites cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. The Israelites sent tribute by him to King Eglon of Moab. <sup>16</sup> Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length; and he fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes.

<sup>17</sup> Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man.

<sup>18</sup> When Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent the people who carried the tribute on their way. <sup>19</sup> But he himself turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." So

the king said, "Silence!" and all his attendants went out from his presence. <sup>20</sup> Ehud came to him, while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber, and said, "I have a message from God for you." So he rose from his seat. <sup>21</sup> Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into Eglon's belly; <sup>22</sup> the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the dirt came out.

<sup>23</sup> Then Ehud went out into the vestibule, and closed the doors of the roof chamber on him, and locked them.

<sup>24</sup> After he had gone, the servants came. When they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, "He must be relieving himself in the cool chamber."

<sup>25</sup> So they waited until they were embarrassed. When he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them. There was their lord lying dead on the floor.

<sup>26</sup> Ehud escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond

the sculptured stones, and escaped to Seirah.<sup>27</sup> When he arrived, he sounded the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites went down with him from the hill country, having him at their head.<sup>28</sup> He said to them, "Follow after me; for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him, and seized the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites, and allowed no one to cross over.<sup>29</sup> At that time they killed about ten thousand of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; no one escaped.<sup>30</sup> So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest eighty years.

### *Shamgar*

<sup>31</sup> After him came Shamgar son of Anath, who killed six hundred of the Philistines with an oxgoad. He too delivered Israel.

### **Luke 22:14–23** (NRSV)

*The Institution  
of the Lord's Supper  
(Mt 26:20–30; Mk 14:17–26;  
Jn 13:21–30)*

<sup>14</sup> When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him.<sup>15</sup> He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;<sup>16</sup> for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."<sup>17</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves;<sup>18</sup> for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."<sup>19</sup> Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."<sup>20</sup> And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."<sup>21</sup> But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table.<sup>22</sup> For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!"<sup>23</sup> Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.

**Psalms 93:1-5 (NRSV)**

*The Majesty of God's Rule*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is king, he is  
robed in majesty;  
the LORD is robed, he is  
girded with strength.  
He has established the  
world; it shall never be  
moved;  
<sup>2</sup> your throne is  
established from of  
old;  
you are from everlasting.  
<sup>3</sup> The floods have lifted up,  
O LORD,  
the floods have lifted up  
their voice;  
the floods lift up their  
roaring.  
<sup>4</sup> More majestic than the  
thunders of mighty  
waters,  
more majestic than the  
waves of the sea,  
majestic on high is the  
LORD!  
<sup>5</sup> Your decrees are very sure;  
holiness befits your  
house,  
O LORD, forevermore.

**Proverbs 21:14-16 (NRSV)**

- <sup>14</sup> A gift in secret averts  
anger;

and a concealed bribe in  
the bosom, strong  
wrath.

- <sup>15</sup> When justice is done, it is a  
joy to the righteous,  
but dismay to evildoers.  
<sup>16</sup> Whoever wanders from  
the way of  
understanding will rest  
in the assembly of the  
dead.

**August  
17**



**Judges 4:1-24 (NRSV)**

*Deborah and Barak*

- 4** The Israelites again did what  
was evil in the sight of the  
LORD, after Ehud died. <sup>2</sup> So the  
LORD sold them into the hand  
of King Jabin of Canaan, who  
reigned in Hazor; the  
commander of his army was  
Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-  
ha-goiim. <sup>3</sup> Then the Israelites  
cried out to the LORD for help;  
for he had nine hundred  
chariots of iron, and had

oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years.

<sup>4</sup> At that time Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. <sup>5</sup> She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment.

<sup>6</sup> She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, “The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you, ‘Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. <sup>7</sup> I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin’s army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.’ ”

<sup>8</sup> Barak said to her, “If you will go with me, I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go.” <sup>9</sup> And she said, “I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” Then Deborah got up and went with Barak to

Kedesh. <sup>10</sup> Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and ten thousand warriors went up behind him; and Deborah went up with him.

<sup>11</sup> Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the other Kenites, that is, the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had encamped as far away as Elon-bezaananim, which is near Kedesh.

<sup>12</sup> When Sisera was told that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor,

<sup>13</sup> Sisera called out all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the troops who were with him, from Harosheth-ha-goiim to the Wadi Kishon. <sup>14</sup> Then Deborah said to Barak, “Up! For this is the day on which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. The LORD is indeed going out before you.” So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand warriors following him. <sup>15</sup> And the LORD threw Sisera and all his chariots and all his army into a panic before Barak; Sisera got down from his

chariot and fled away on foot,<sup>16</sup> while Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-ha-goiim. All the army of Sisera fell by the sword; no one was left.

<sup>17</sup> Now Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between King Jabin of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite.

<sup>18</sup> Jael came out to meet Sisera, and said to him, “Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; have no fear.” So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. <sup>19</sup> Then he said to her, “Please give me a little water to drink; for I am thirsty.” So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. <sup>20</sup> He said to her, “Stand at the entrance of the tent, and if anybody comes and asks you, ‘Is anyone here?’ say, ‘No.’ ”

<sup>21</sup> But Jael wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, until it went down into the ground—he was lying fast asleep from weariness—

and he died. <sup>22</sup> Then, as Barak came in pursuit of Sisera, Jael went out to meet him, and said to him, “Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking.” So he went into her tent; and there was Sisera lying dead, with the tent peg in his temple.

<sup>23</sup> So on that day God subdued King Jabin of Canaan before the Israelites. <sup>24</sup> Then the hand of the Israelites bore harder and harder on King Jabin of Canaan, until they destroyed King Jabin of Canaan.

#### **Luke 22:24–34 (NRSV)**

##### *The Dispute about Greatness*

<sup>24</sup> A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. <sup>25</sup> But he said to them, “**The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. <sup>26</sup> But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. <sup>27</sup> For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not**

the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

<sup>28</sup> “You are those who have stood by me in my trials; <sup>29</sup> and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, <sup>30</sup> so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

*Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial*

(Mt 26:31–35; Mk 14:27–31;  
Jn 13:36–38)

<sup>31</sup> “Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” <sup>33</sup> And he said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me.”

**Psalm 94:1-13** (NRSV)

*God the Avenger  
of the Righteous*

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, you God of vengeance,

you God of vengeance,  
shine forth!

<sup>2</sup> Rise up, O judge of the earth;

give to the proud what they deserve!

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, how long shall the wicked,

how long shall the wicked exult?

<sup>4</sup> They pour out their arrogant words;

all the evildoers boast.

<sup>5</sup> They crush your people, O LORD,

and afflict your heritage.

<sup>6</sup> They kill the widow and the stranger,

they murder the orphan,

<sup>7</sup> and they say, “The LORD does not see;

the God of Jacob does not perceive.”

<sup>8</sup> Understand, O dullest of the people;

fools, when will you be wise?

<sup>9</sup> He who planted the ear, does he not hear?

He who formed the eye, does he not see?

<sup>10</sup> He who disciplines the nations,

he who teaches knowledge to humankind,

does he not chastise?  
11 The LORD knows our  
thoughts,  
that they are but an  
empty breath.  
12 Happy are those whom  
you discipline, O LORD,  
and whom you teach out  
of your law,  
13 giving them respite from  
days of trouble,  
until a pit is dug for the  
wicked.

**Proverbs 21:17–18 (NRSV)**

17 Whoever loves pleasure  
will suffer want;  
whoever loves wine and  
oil will not be rich.  
18 The wicked is a ransom for  
the righteous,  
and the faithless for the  
upright.

**August  
18**



**Judges 5:1–31 (NRSV)**

*The Song of Deborah*

Then Deborah and Barak  
son of Abinoam sang on that  
day, saying:  
2 “When locks are long in  
Israel,  
when the people offer  
themselves willingly—  
bless the LORD!  
3 “Hear, O kings; give ear, O  
princes;  
to the LORD I will sing,  
I will make melody to the  
LORD, the God of Israel.  
4 “LORD, when you went out  
from Seir,  
when you marched from  
the region of Edom,  
the earth trembled,  
and the heavens poured,  
the clouds indeed  
poured water.  
5 The mountains quaked  
before the LORD, the  
One of Sinai,  
before the LORD, the God  
of Israel.  
6 “In the days of Shamgar  
son of Anath,  
in the days of Jael,  
caravans ceased  
and travelers kept to the  
byways.  
7 The peasantry prospered  
in Israel,  
they grew fat on plunder,



because you arose,  
Deborah,  
arose as a mother in  
Israel.  
8 When new gods were  
chosen,  
then war was in the  
gates.  
Was shield or spear to be  
seen  
among forty thousand in  
Israel?  
9 My heart goes out to the  
commanders of Israel  
who offered themselves  
willingly among the  
people.  
Bless the LORD.  
10 "Tell of it, you who ride on  
white donkeys,  
you who sit on rich  
carpets  
and you who walk by the  
way.  
11 To the sound of musicians  
at the watering places,  
there they repeat the  
triumphs of the LORD,  
the triumphs of his  
peasantry in Israel.  
"Then down to the gates  
marched the people of  
the LORD.  
12 "Awake, awake, Deborah!

Awake, awake, utter a  
song!  
Arise, Barak, lead away  
your captives,  
O son of Abinoam.  
13 Then down marched the  
remnant of the noble;  
the people of the LORD  
marched down for him  
against the mighty.  
14 From Ephraim they set out  
into the valley,  
following you, Benjamin,  
with your kin;  
from Machir marched  
down the  
commanders,  
and from Zebulun those  
who bear the marshal's  
staff;  
15 the chiefs of Issachar came  
with Deborah,  
and Issachar faithful to  
Barak;  
into the valley they  
rushed out at his heels.  
Among the clans of  
Reuben  
there were great  
searchings of heart.  
16 Why did you tarry among  
the sheepfolds,  
to hear the piping for the  
flocks?

Among the clans of  
Reuben  
there were great  
searchings of heart.  
17 Gilead stayed beyond the  
Jordan;  
and Dan, why did he  
abide with the ships?  
Asher sat still at the coast  
of the sea,  
settling down by his  
landings.  
18 Zebulun is a people that  
scorned death;  
Naphtali too, on the  
heights of the field.  
19 "The kings came, they  
fought;  
then fought the kings of  
Canaan,  
at Taanach, by the waters  
of Megiddo;  
they got no spoils of  
silver.  
20 The stars fought from  
heaven,  
from their courses they  
fought against Sisera.  
21 The torrent Kishon swept  
them away,  
the onrushing torrent,  
the torrent Kishon.  
March on, my soul, with  
might!

22 "Then loud beat the  
horses' hoofs  
with the galloping,  
galloping of his steeds.  
23 "Curse Meroz, says the  
angel of the LORD,  
curse bitterly its  
inhabitants,  
because they did not come  
to the help of the LORD,  
to the help of the LORD  
against the mighty.  
24 "Most blessed of women  
be Jael,  
the wife of Heber the  
Kenite,  
of tent-dwelling women  
most blessed.  
25 He asked water and she  
gave him milk,  
she brought him curds in  
a lordly bowl.  
26 She put her hand to the  
tent peg  
and her right hand to the  
workmen's mallet;  
she struck Sisera a blow,  
she crushed his head,  
she shattered and  
pierced his temple.  
27 He sank, he fell,  
he lay still at her feet;  
at her feet he sank, he fell;  
where he sank, there he  
fell dead.


28 “Out of the window she  
peered,  
the mother of Sisera  
gazed through the  
lattice:  
‘Why is his chariot so long  
in coming?  
Why tarry the hoofbeats  
of his chariots?’  
29 Her wisest ladies make  
answer,  
indeed, she answers the  
question herself:  
30 ‘Are they not finding and  
dividing the spoil?—  
A girl or two for every  
man;  
spoil of dyed stuffs for  
Sisera,  
spoil of dyed stuffs  
embroidered,  
two pieces of dyed work  
embroidered for my  
neck as spoil?’  
31 “So perish all your  
enemies, O LORD!  
But may your friends be  
like the sun as it rises  
in its might.” And the  
land had rest forty  
years.

**Luke 22:35-38** (NRSV)  
*Purse, Bag, and Sword*

35 He said to them, “When I  
sent you out without a purse,  
bag, or sandals, did you lack  
anything?” They said, “No, not  
a thing.” 36 He said to them,  
“But now, the one who has a  
purse must take it, and  
likewise a bag. And the one  
who has no sword must sell  
his cloak and buy one. 37 For I  
tell you, this scripture must be  
fulfilled in me, ‘And he was  
counted among the lawless’;  
and indeed what is written  
about me is being fulfilled.”  
38 They said, “Lord, look, here  
are two swords.” He replied,  
“It is enough.”

**Psalm 94:14-23** (NRSV)

14 For the LORD will not  
forsake his people;  
he will not abandon his  
heritage;  
15 for justice will return to  
the righteous,  
and all the upright in  
heart will follow it.  
16 Who rises up for me  
against the wicked?  
Who stands up for me  
against evildoers?  
17 If the LORD had not been  
my help,



my soul would soon have  
lived in the land of  
silence.

<sup>18</sup> When I thought, “My foot  
is slipping,”  
your steadfast love, O  
LORD, held me up.

<sup>19</sup> When the cares of my  
heart are many,  
your consolations cheer  
my soul.

<sup>20</sup> Can wicked rulers be allied  
with you,  
those who contrive  
mischief by statute?

<sup>21</sup> They band together  
against the life of the  
righteous,  
and condemn the  
innocent to death.

<sup>22</sup> But the LORD has become  
my stronghold,  
and my God the rock of  
my refuge.

<sup>23</sup> He will repay them for  
their iniquity  
and wipe them out for  
their wickedness;  
the LORD our God will  
wipe them out.

**Proverbs 21:19–20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> It is better to live in a  
desert land

than with a contentious  
and fretful wife.

<sup>20</sup> Precious treasure remains  
in the house of the  
wise, but the fool  
devours it.

## August 19

**Judges 6:1–32**  
(NRSV)



### *The Midianite Oppression*

The Israelites did what  
was evil in the sight of the  
LORD, and the LORD gave them  
into the hand of Midian seven  
years. <sup>2</sup>The hand of Midian  
prevailed over Israel; and  
because of Midian the  
Israelites provided for  
themselves hiding places in  
the mountains, caves and  
strongholds. <sup>3</sup>For whenever  
the Israelites put in seed, the  
Midianites and the Amalekites  
and the people of the east  
would come up against them.  
<sup>4</sup>They would encamp against  
them and destroy the produce

of the land, as far as the neighborhood of Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel, and no sheep or ox or donkey.

<sup>5</sup> For they and their livestock would come up, and they would even bring their tents, as thick as locusts; neither they nor their camels could be counted; so they wasted the land as they came in. <sup>6</sup> Thus Israel was greatly impoverished because of Midian; and the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help.

<sup>7</sup> When the Israelites cried to the LORD on account of the Midianites, <sup>8</sup> the LORD sent a prophet to the Israelites; and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt, and brought you out of the house of slavery; <sup>9</sup> and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you, and gave you their land; <sup>10</sup> and I said to you, 'I am the LORD your God; you shall not pay reverence to the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not given heed to my voice."

### *The Call of Gideon*

<sup>11</sup> Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites. <sup>12</sup> The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty warrior." <sup>13</sup> Gideon answered him, "But sir, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian." <sup>14</sup> Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you." <sup>15</sup> He responded, "But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." <sup>16</sup> The LORD said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike down the Midianites, every one of them." <sup>17</sup> Then he

said to him, "If now I have found favor with you, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me."<sup>18</sup> Do not depart from here until I come to you, and bring out my present, and set it before you." And he said, "I will stay until you return."

<sup>19</sup> So Gideon went into his house and prepared a kid, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour; the meat he put in a basket, and the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the oak and presented them.<sup>20</sup> The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so.<sup>21</sup> Then the angel of the LORD reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes; and the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.<sup>22</sup> Then Gideon perceived that it was the angel of the LORD; and Gideon said, "Help me, Lord GOD! For I have

seen the angel of the LORD face to face."<sup>23</sup> But the LORD said to him, "Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die."<sup>24</sup> Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it, The LORD is peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites.

<sup>25</sup> That night the LORD said to him, "Take your father's bull, the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that belongs to your father, and cut down the sacred pole that is beside it;<sup>26</sup> and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of the stronghold here, in proper order; then take the second bull, and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the sacred pole that you shall cut down."<sup>27</sup> So Gideon took ten of his servants, and did as the LORD had told him; but because he was too afraid of his family and the townspeople to do it by day, he did it by night.

*Gideon Destroys the  
Altar of Baal*

<sup>28</sup> When the townspeople rose early in the morning, the

altar of Baal was broken down, and the sacred pole beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered on the altar that had been built.<sup>29</sup> So they said to one another, "Who has done this?" After searching and inquiring, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it."

<sup>30</sup> Then the townspeople said to Joash, "Bring out your son, so that he may die, for he has pulled down the altar of Baal and cut down the sacred pole beside it."<sup>31</sup> But Joash said to all who were arrayed against him, "Will you contend for Baal? Or will you defend his cause? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because his altar has been pulled down."<sup>32</sup> Therefore on that day Gideon was called Jerubbaal, that is to say, "Let Baal contend against him," because he pulled down his altar.

**Luke 22:39-53** (NRSV)

*Jesus Prays on the  
Mount of Olives*

(Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Jn 18:1)

<sup>39</sup> He came out and went, as was his custom, to the

Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him.

<sup>40</sup> When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial."<sup>41</sup>

Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed,<sup>42</sup> "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." [[<sup>43</sup> Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength.

<sup>44</sup> In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.]]<sup>45</sup> When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief,<sup>46</sup> and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

*The Betrayal and  
Arrest of Jesus*

(Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52;

Jn 18:1-11)

<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached

Jesus to kiss him; <sup>48</sup> but Jesus said to him, “**Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?**” <sup>49</sup> When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, “Lord, should we strike with the sword?” <sup>50</sup> Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. <sup>51</sup> But Jesus said, “**No more of this!**” And he touched his ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, “**Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit?**” <sup>53</sup> **When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!**”

**Psalms 95:1-11** (NRSV)

*A Call to Worship and  
Obedience*

<sup>1</sup> O come, let us sing to the  
LORD;  
let us make a joyful noise  
to the rock of our  
salvation!  
<sup>2</sup> Let us come into his  
presence with  
thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise  
to him with songs of  
praise!  
<sup>3</sup> For the LORD is a great God,  
and a great King above  
all gods.  
<sup>4</sup> In his hand are the depths  
of the earth;  
the heights of the  
mountains are his also.  
<sup>5</sup> The sea is his, for he made  
it,  
and the dry land, which  
his hands have formed.  
<sup>6</sup> O come, let us worship and  
bow down,  
let us kneel before the  
LORD, our Maker!  
<sup>7</sup> For he is our God,  
and we are the people of  
his pasture,  
and the sheep of his  
hand.  
O that today you would  
listen to his voice!  
<sup>8</sup> Do not harden your  
hearts, as at Meribah,  
as on the day at Massah  
in the wilderness,  
<sup>9</sup> when your ancestors  
tested me,  
and put me to the proof,  
though they had seen  
my work.



<sup>10</sup> For forty years I loathed  
that generation  
and said, “They are a  
people whose hearts  
go astray,  
and they do not regard  
my ways.”

<sup>11</sup> Therefore in my anger I  
swore,  
“They shall not enter my  
rest.”

**Proverbs 21:21–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> Whoever pursues  
righteousness and  
kindness  
will find life and honor.

<sup>22</sup> One wise person went up  
against a city of  
warriors  
and brought down the  
stronghold in which  
they trusted.

**August  
20**



**Judges 6:33–40 (NRSV)**

<sup>33</sup> Then all the Midianites and  
the Amalekites and the people

of the east came together, and  
crossing the Jordan they  
encamped in the Valley of  
Jezreel. <sup>34</sup> But the spirit of the  
LORD took possession of  
Gideon; and he sounded the  
trumpet, and the Abiezrites  
were called out to follow him.  
<sup>35</sup> He sent messengers  
throughout all Manasseh, and  
they too were called out to  
follow him. He also sent  
messengers to Asher, Zebulun,  
and Naphtali, and they went  
up to meet them.

*The Sign of the Fleece*

<sup>36</sup> Then Gideon said to God, “In  
order to see whether you will  
deliver Israel by my hand, as  
you have said, <sup>37</sup> I am going to  
lay a fleece of wool on the  
threshing floor; if there is dew  
on the fleece alone, and it is  
dry on all the ground, then I  
shall know that you will deliver  
Israel by my hand, as you have  
said.” <sup>38</sup> And it was so. When  
he rose early next morning  
and squeezed the fleece, he  
wrung enough dew from the  
fleece to fill a bowl with water.  
<sup>39</sup> Then Gideon said to God,  
“Do not let your anger burn  
against me, let me speak one

more time; let me, please, make trial with the fleece just once more; let it be dry only on the fleece, and on all the ground let there be dew.”

<sup>40</sup> And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew.

### **Luke 22:54–71** (NRSV)

#### *Peter Denies Jesus*

(Mt 25:69–75; Mk 14:66–72;

Jn 18:15–18, 25–27)

<sup>54</sup> Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house. But Peter was following at a distance. <sup>55</sup> When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. <sup>56</sup> Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, “This man also was with him.” <sup>57</sup> But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.” <sup>58</sup> A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, “You also are one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” <sup>59</sup> Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, “Surely this man also was with him; for he is a

Galilean.” <sup>60</sup> But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about!” At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed.

<sup>61</sup> The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.”

<sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly.

#### *The Mocking and Beating of Jesus*

(Mt 26:67–68; Mk 14:65)

<sup>63</sup> Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; <sup>64</sup> they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, “Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?” <sup>65</sup> They kept heaping many other insults on him.

#### *Jesus before the Council*

(Mt 26:57–68; Mk 14:61–64;

Jn 18:12–14, 19–24)

<sup>66</sup> When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. <sup>67</sup> They said, “If you are the Messiah, tell us.” He

replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe;<sup>68</sup> and if I question you, you will not answer.

<sup>69</sup> But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

<sup>70</sup> All of them asked, "Are you, then, the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am."

<sup>71</sup> Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!"

**Psalms 96:1-13 (NRSV)**

*Praise to God Who Comes in Judgment*

*(1 Chr 16:23-33)*

<sup>1</sup> O sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Sing to the LORD, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.

<sup>3</sup> Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous works among all the peoples.

<sup>4</sup> For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;  
he is to be revered above all gods.

<sup>5</sup> For all the gods of the peoples are idols,

but the LORD made the heavens.

<sup>6</sup> Honor and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

<sup>7</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

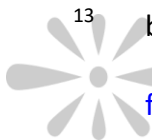
<sup>8</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts.

<sup>9</sup> Worship the LORD in holy splendor;  
tremble before him, all the earth.

<sup>10</sup> Say among the nations,  
"The LORD is king!  
The world is firmly established;  
it shall never be moved.  
He will judge the peoples with equity."

<sup>11</sup> Let the heavens be glad,  
and let the earth rejoice;  
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
let the field exult, and everything in it.

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy



before the LORD; for he is coming,  
for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with his truth.

**Proverbs 21:23–24** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> To watch over mouth and tongue  
is to keep out of trouble.

<sup>24</sup> The proud, haughty person, named  
“Scoffer,”  
acts with arrogant pride.

**August  
21**



**Judges 7:1–25** (NRSV)

*Gideon Surprises and Routs the Midianites*

Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the troops that were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was north of them,

below the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD said to Gideon, “The troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, ‘My own hand has delivered me.’” <sup>3</sup> Now therefore proclaim this in the hearing of the troops, ‘Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home.’” Thus Gideon sifted them out; twenty-two thousand returned, and ten thousand remained.

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Gideon, “The troops are still too many; take them down to the water and I will sift them out for you there. When I say, ‘This one shall go with you,’ he shall go with you; and when I say, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ he shall not go.” <sup>5</sup> So he brought the troops down to the water; and the LORD said to Gideon, “All those who lap the water with their tongues, as a dog laps, you shall put to one side; all those who kneel down to drink, putting their hands to their mouths, you shall put to the other side.” <sup>6</sup> The number

of those that lapped was three hundred; but all the rest of the troops knelt down to drink water. <sup>7</sup> Then the LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred that lapped I will deliver you, and give the Midianites into your hand. Let all the others go to their homes." <sup>8</sup> So he took the jars of the troops from their hands, and their trumpets; and he sent all the rest of Israel back to their own tents, but retained the three hundred. The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

<sup>9</sup> That same night the LORD said to him, "Get up, attack the camp; for I have given it into your hand. <sup>10</sup> But if you fear to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah; <sup>11</sup> and you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to attack the camp." Then he went down with his servant Purah to the outposts of the armed men that were in the camp. <sup>12</sup> The Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east lay along the valley as thick as locusts; and their camels were without

number, countless as the sand on the seashore. <sup>13</sup> When Gideon arrived, there was a man telling a dream to his comrade; and he said, "I had a dream, and in it a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell; it turned upside down, and the tent collapsed." <sup>14</sup> And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel; into his hand God has given Midian and all the army."

<sup>15</sup> When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and said, "Get up; for the LORD has given the army of Midian into your hand."

<sup>16</sup> After he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them, and empty jars, with torches inside the jars, <sup>17</sup> he said to them, "Look at me, and do the same; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. <sup>18</sup> When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with

me, then you also blow the trumpets around the whole camp, and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!' "

<sup>19</sup> So Gideon and the hundred who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. <sup>20</sup> So the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they cried, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" <sup>21</sup> Every man stood in his place all around the camp, and all the men in camp ran; they cried out and fled. <sup>22</sup> When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. <sup>23</sup> And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all

Manasseh, and they pursued after the Midianites.

<sup>24</sup> Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and seize the waters against them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were called out, and they seized the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan. <sup>25</sup> They captured the two captains of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the wine press of Zeeb, as they pursued the Midianites. They brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon beyond the Jordan.

#### **Luke 23:1-12 (NRSV)**

##### *Jesus before Pilate*

*(Mt 27:1-2, 11-14; Mk 15:1-5;*

*Jn 18:28-38)*

<sup>1</sup> Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. <sup>2</sup> They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king." <sup>3</sup> Then Pilate asked him,

“Are you the king of the Jews?” He answered, “**You say so.**”<sup>4</sup> Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no basis for an accusation against this man.”<sup>5</sup> But they were insistent and said, “He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.”

#### *Jesus before Herod*

<sup>6</sup> When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.<sup>7</sup> And when he learned that he was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.<sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign.<sup>9</sup> He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer.<sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him.<sup>11</sup> Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe

on him, and sent him back to Pilate.<sup>12</sup> That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

#### **Psalm 97:1-12 (NRSV)**

##### *The Glory of God’s Reign*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice;  
let the many coastlands be glad!
- <sup>2</sup> Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;  
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
- <sup>3</sup> Fire goes before him,  
and consumes his adversaries on every side.
- <sup>4</sup> His lightnings light up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles.
- <sup>5</sup> The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,  
before the Lord of all the earth.
- <sup>6</sup> The heavens proclaim his righteousness;  
and all the peoples behold his glory.
- <sup>7</sup> All worshipers of images are put to shame,

those who make their  
boast in worthless  
idols;  
all gods bow down  
before him.

8 Zion hears and is glad,  
and the towns of Judah  
rejoice,

because of your  
judgments, O God.

9 For you, O LORD, are most  
high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above  
all gods.

10 The LORD loves those who  
hate evil;  
he guards the lives of his  
faithful;  
he rescues them from  
the hand of the  
wicked.

11 Light dawns for the  
righteous,  
and joy for the upright in  
heart.

12 Rejoice in the LORD, O you  
righteous,  
and give thanks to his  
holy name!

**Proverbs 21:25–26** (NRSV)

25 The craving of the lazy  
person is fatal,  
for lazy hands refuse to  
labor.

26 All day long the wicked  
covet, but the  
righteous give and do  
not hold back.

**August  
22**



**Judges 8:1–17** (NRSV)

*Gideon's Triumph and  
Vengeance*

Then the Ephraimites said to him, “What have you done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against the Midianites?” And they upbraided him violently. <sup>2</sup> So he said to them, “What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? <sup>3</sup> God has given into your hands the captains of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; what have I been able to do in comparison with you?” When he said this, their anger against him subsided.

<sup>4</sup> Then Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over, he



and the three hundred who were with him, exhausted and famished. <sup>5</sup> So he said to the people of Succoth, "Please give some loaves of bread to my followers, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." <sup>6</sup> But the officials of Succoth said, "Do you already have in your possession the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna, that we should give bread to your army?"

<sup>7</sup> Gideon replied, "Well then, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will trample your flesh on the thorns of the wilderness and on briers."

<sup>8</sup> From there he went up to Penuel, and made the same request of them; and the people of Penuel answered him as the people of Succoth had answered. <sup>9</sup> So he said to the people of Penuel, "When I come back victorious, I will break down this tower."

<sup>10</sup> Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about fifteen thousand men, all who were left of all the army of the people of the east; for one

hundred twenty thousand men bearing arms had fallen.

<sup>11</sup> So Gideon went up by the caravan route east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and attacked the army; for the army was off its guard. <sup>12</sup> Zebah and Zalmunna fled; and he pursued them and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and threw all the army into a panic.

<sup>13</sup> When Gideon son of Joash returned from the battle by the ascent of Heres, <sup>14</sup> he caught a young man, one of the people of Succoth, and questioned him; and he listed for him the officials and elders of Succoth, seventy-seven people. <sup>15</sup> Then he came to the people of Succoth, and said, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, 'Do you already have in your possession the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna, that we should give bread to your troops who are exhausted?' " <sup>16</sup> So he took the elders of the city and he took thorns of the wilderness and briers and with them he trampled the people of Succoth. <sup>17</sup> He also broke down

the tower of Penuel, and killed the men of the city.

**Luke 23:13-25** (NRSV)

*Jesus Sentenced to Death*

(Mt 27:15–26; Mk 15:6–15;

Jn 18:38b–19:16a)

<sup>13</sup> Pilate then called

together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, <sup>14</sup> and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him.

<sup>15</sup> Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. <sup>16</sup> I will therefore have him flogged and release him.”

<sup>18</sup> Then they all shouted out together, “Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!” <sup>19</sup> (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) <sup>20</sup> Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; <sup>21</sup> but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” <sup>22</sup> A third time he said to them, “Why, what evil has he

done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.” <sup>23</sup> But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. <sup>24</sup> So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. <sup>25</sup> He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

**Psalm 98:1-9** (NRSV)

*Praise the Judge of  
the World*

A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> O sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have gotten him victory.
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD has made known his victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
- <sup>3</sup> He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness

to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth  
have seen  
the victory of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the  
LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous  
song and sing praises.

5 Sing praises to the LORD  
with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the  
sound of melody.

6 With trumpets and the  
sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise  
before the King, the  
LORD.

7 Let the sea roar, and all  
that fills it;  
the world and those who  
live in it.

8 Let the floods clap their  
hands;  
let the hills sing together  
for joy

9 at the presence of the  
LORD, for he is coming  
to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world  
with righteousness,  
and the peoples with  
equity.

### **Proverbs 21:27** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> The sacrifice of the wicked  
is an abomination;  
how much more when  
brought with evil  
intent.

## **August 23**



### **Judges 8:18–32** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, “What about the men whom you killed at Tabor?” They answered, “As you are, so were they, every one of them; they resembled the sons of a king.” <sup>19</sup> And he replied, “They were my brothers, the sons of my mother; as the LORD lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you.” <sup>20</sup> So he said to Jether his firstborn, “Go kill them!” But the boy did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, because he was still a boy. <sup>21</sup> Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, “You come and kill us; for as the man is, so is

his strength.” So Gideon proceeded to kill Zebah and Zalmunna; and he took the crescents that were on the necks of their camels.

### *Gideon’s Idolatry*

<sup>22</sup> Then the Israelites said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also; for you have delivered us out of the hand of Midian.”

<sup>23</sup> Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you.” <sup>24</sup> Then Gideon said to them, “Let me make a request of you; each of you give me an earring he has taken as booty.” (For the enemy had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) <sup>25</sup> “We will willingly give them,” they answered. So they spread a garment, and each threw into it an earring he had taken as booty. <sup>26</sup> The weight of the golden earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold (apart from the crescents and the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian, and the collars that

were on the necks of their camels). <sup>27</sup> Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his town, in Ophrah; and all Israel prostituted themselves to it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family.

<sup>28</sup> So Midian was subdued before the Israelites, and they lifted up their heads no more. So the land had rest forty years in the days of Gideon.

### *Death of Gideon*

<sup>29</sup> Jerubbaal son of Joash went to live in his own house.

<sup>30</sup> Now Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring, for he had many wives. <sup>31</sup> His concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech.

<sup>32</sup> Then Gideon son of Joash died at a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash at Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

### **Luke 23:26-43 (NRSV)**

#### *The Crucifixion of Jesus*

(Mt 27:32–44; Mk 15:21–32;

Jn 19:16b–24)

<sup>26</sup> As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the

cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.<sup>27</sup> A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.<sup>28</sup> But Jesus turned to them and said, **“Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.<sup>29</sup> For the days are surely coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.’<sup>30</sup> Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us’; and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’<sup>31</sup> For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”**

<sup>32</sup>Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.<sup>33</sup> When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[<sup>34</sup>Then Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”**]] And they cast lots to divide his

clothing.<sup>35</sup> And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, **“He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!”<sup>36</sup>** The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine,<sup>37</sup> and saying, **“If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”<sup>38</sup>** There was also an inscription over him, **“This is the King of the Jews.”<sup>39</sup>** One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, **“Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”<sup>40</sup>** But the other rebuked him, saying, **“Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?<sup>41</sup>** And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.”<sup>42</sup> **Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”<sup>43</sup>** He replied, **“Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”**

**Psalm 99:1-4** (NRSV)

*Praise to God for His Holiness*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble!  
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples.
- <sup>3</sup> Let them praise your great and awesome name.  
Holy is he!
- <sup>4</sup> Mighty King, lover of justice,  
you have established equity;  
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

**Proverbs 21:28–29** (NRSV)

- <sup>28</sup> A false witness will perish,  
but a good listener will testify successfully.
- <sup>29</sup> The wicked put on a bold face,  
but the upright give thought to their ways.

**August  
24**



**Judges 8:33–9:21** (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> As soon as Gideon died, the Israelites relapsed and prostituted themselves with the Baals, making Baal-berith their god. <sup>34</sup> The Israelites did not remember the LORD their God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies on every side; <sup>35</sup> and they did not exhibit loyalty to the house of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel.

*Abimelech Attempts to  
Establish a Monarchy*

**9** Now Abimelech son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to his mother's kinsfolk and said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's family, <sup>2</sup> "Say in the hearing of all the lords of Shechem, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal rule over you, or that one rule over you?' Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh."

<sup>3</sup> So his mother's kinsfolk spoke all these words on his behalf in the hearing of all the lords of Shechem; and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother." <sup>4</sup> They gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the temple of Baal-berith with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless fellows, who followed him.

<sup>5</sup> He went to his father's house at Ophrah, and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone; but Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, survived, for he hid himself.

<sup>6</sup> Then all the lords of Shechem and all Beth-millo came together, and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar at Shechem.

#### *The Parable of the Trees*

<sup>7</sup> When it was told to Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, and cried aloud and said to them, "Listen to me, you lords of Shechem, so that God may listen to you.

<sup>8</sup> The trees once went out

to anoint a king over themselves.

So they said to the olive tree,

'Reign over us.'

<sup>9</sup> The olive tree answered them,

'Shall I stop producing my rich oil

by which gods and mortals are honored,

and go to sway over the trees?'

<sup>10</sup> Then the trees said to the fig tree,

'You come and reign over us.'

<sup>11</sup> But the fig tree answered them,

'Shall I stop producing my sweetness

and my delicious fruit,

and go to sway over the trees?'

<sup>12</sup> Then the trees said to the vine,

'You come and reign over us.'

<sup>13</sup> But the vine said to them,

'Shall I stop producing my wine

that cheers gods and mortals,

and go to sway over the trees?'

14 So all the trees said to the  
bramble,  
‘You come and reign  
over us.’  
15 And the bramble said to  
the trees,  
‘If in good faith you are  
anointing me king over  
you,  
then come and take refuge  
in my shade;  
but if not, let fire come  
out of the bramble  
and devour the cedars of  
Lebanon.’

16 “Now therefore, if you  
acted in good faith and honor  
when you made Abimelech  
king, and if you have dealt well  
with Jerubbaal and his house,  
and have done to him as his  
actions deserved—<sup>17</sup> for my  
father fought for you, and  
risked his life, and rescued you  
from the hand of Midian;  
<sup>18</sup> but you have risen up  
against my father’s house this  
day, and have killed his sons,  
seventy men on one stone,  
and have made Abimelech,  
the son of his slave woman,  
king over the lords of  
Shechem, because he is your  
kinsman—<sup>19</sup> if, I say, you have  
acted in good faith and honor

with Jerubbaal and with his  
house this day, then rejoice in  
Abimelech, and let him also  
rejoice in you; <sup>20</sup> but if not, let  
fire come out from Abimelech,  
and devour the lords of  
Shechem, and Beth-millo; and  
let fire come out from the  
lords of Shechem, and from  
Beth-millo, and devour  
Abimelech.” <sup>21</sup> Then Jotham  
ran away and fled, going to  
Beer, where he remained for  
fear of his brother Abimelech.

**Luke 23:44-56 (NRSV)**

*The Death of Jesus*

(Mt 27:45–56; Mk 15:33–41;

Jn 19:25–30)

<sup>44</sup> It was now about noon,  
and darkness came over the  
whole land until three in the  
afternoon, <sup>45</sup> while the sun’s  
light failed; and the curtain of  
the temple was torn in two.  
<sup>46</sup> Then Jesus, crying with a  
loud voice, said, “**Father, into  
your hands I commend my  
spirit.**” Having said this, he  
breathed his last. <sup>47</sup> When the  
centurion saw what had taken  
place, he praised God and  
said, “Certainly this man was  
innocent.” <sup>48</sup> And when all the  
crowds who had gathered  
there for this spectacle saw



what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. <sup>49</sup> But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

*The Burial of Jesus*  
(Mt 27:57–61; Mk 15:42–47;  
Jn 19:38–42)

<sup>50</sup> Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, <sup>51</sup> had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. <sup>52</sup> This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. <sup>53</sup> Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. <sup>54</sup> It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. <sup>55</sup> The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. <sup>56</sup> Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.

On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

**Psalm 99:5-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Extol the LORD our God;  
worship at his footstool.  
Holy is he!

<sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron were  
among his priests,  
Samuel also was among  
those who called on his  
name.  
They cried to the LORD,  
and he answered  
them.

<sup>7</sup> He spoke to them in the  
pillar of cloud;  
they kept his decrees,  
and the statutes that he  
gave them.

<sup>8</sup> O LORD our God, you  
answered them;  
you were a forgiving God  
to them,  
but an avenger of their  
wrongdoings.

<sup>9</sup> Extol the LORD our God,  
and worship at his holy  
mountain;  
for the LORD our God is  
holy.

**Proverbs 21:30–31 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel, can avail against the LORD.  
<sup>31</sup> The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

**August  
25**



**Judges 9:22–57 (NRSV)**

*The Downfall of Abimelech*

<sup>22</sup> Abimelech ruled over Israel three years. <sup>23</sup> But God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the lords of Shechem; and the lords of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech. <sup>24</sup> This happened so that the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might be avenged and their blood be laid on their brother Abimelech, who killed them, and on the lords of Shechem, who

strengthened his hands to kill his brothers. <sup>25</sup> So, out of hostility to him, the lords of Shechem set ambushes on the mountain tops. They robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was reported to Abimelech.

<sup>26</sup> When Gaal son of Ebed moved into Shechem with his kinsfolk, the lords of Shechem put confidence in him. <sup>27</sup> They went out into the field and gathered the grapes from their vineyards, trod them, and celebrated. Then they went into the temple of their god, ate and drank, and ridiculed Abimelech. <sup>28</sup> Gaal son of Ebed said, “Who is Abimelech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Did not the son of Jerubbaal and Zebul his officer serve the men of Hamor father of Shechem? Why then should we serve him? <sup>29</sup> If only this people were under my command! Then I would remove Abimelech; I would say to him, ‘Increase your army, and come out.’ ”

<sup>30</sup> When Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed, his anger

was kindled.<sup>31</sup> He sent messengers to Abimelech at Arumah, saying, "Look, Gaal son of Ebed and his kinsfolk have come to Shechem, and they are stirring up the city against you."<sup>32</sup> Now therefore, go by night, you and the troops that are with you, and lie in wait in the fields.<sup>33</sup> Then early in the morning, as soon as the sun rises, get up and rush on the city; and when he and the troops that are with him come out against you, you may deal with them as best you can."

<sup>34</sup> So Abimelech and all the troops with him got up by night and lay in wait against Shechem in four companies.

<sup>35</sup> When Gaal son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city, Abimelech and the troops with him rose from the ambush.

<sup>36</sup> And when Gaal saw them, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the mountain tops!" And Zebul said to him, "The shadows on the mountains look like people to you."<sup>37</sup> Gaal spoke again and said, "Look, people are coming down from Tabbur-

erez, and one company is coming from the direction of Elon-meonenim."<sup>38</sup> Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your boast now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Are not these the troops you made light of? Go out now and fight with them."<sup>39</sup> So Gaal went out at the head of the lords of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.<sup>40</sup> Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him. Many fell wounded, up to the entrance of the gate.<sup>41</sup> So Abimelech resided at Arumah; and Zebul drove out Gaal and his kinsfolk, so that they could not live on at Shechem.

<sup>42</sup> On the following day the people went out into the fields. When Abimelech was told,<sup>43</sup> he took his troops and divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the fields. When he looked and saw the people coming out of the city, he rose against them and killed them.

<sup>44</sup> Abimelech and the company that was with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, while the two companies

rushed on all who were in the fields and killed them.

<sup>45</sup> Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city, and killed the people that were in it; and he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

<sup>46</sup> When all the lords of the Tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the temple of El-berith.

<sup>47</sup> Abimelech was told that all the lords of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together. <sup>48</sup> So Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the troops that were with him. Abimelech took an ax in his hand, cut down a bundle of brushwood, and took it up and laid it on his shoulder. Then he said to the troops with him, "What you have seen me do, do quickly, as I have done." <sup>49</sup> So every one of the troops cut down a bundle and following Abimelech put it against the stronghold, and they set the stronghold on fire over them, so that all the people of the Tower of Shechem also died, about a thousand men and women.

<sup>50</sup> Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. <sup>51</sup> But there was a strong tower within the city, and all the men and women and all the lords of the city fled to it and shut themselves in; and they went to the roof of the tower.

<sup>52</sup> Abimelech came to the tower, and fought against it, and came near to the entrance of the tower to burn it with fire. <sup>53</sup> But a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, and crushed his skull.

<sup>54</sup> Immediately he called to the young man who carried his armor and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, so people will not say about me, 'A woman killed him.'" So the young man thrust him through, and he died. <sup>55</sup> When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went home. <sup>56</sup> Thus God repaid Abimelech for the crime he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers; <sup>57</sup> and God also made all the wickedness of the people of Shechem fall back on their heads, and on them

came the curse of Jotham son of Jerubbaal.

**Luke 24:1-12 (NRSV)**

*The Resurrection of Jesus*  
(Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-8; Jn 20:1-10)

<sup>1</sup> But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared.

<sup>2</sup> They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they went in, they did not find the body. <sup>4</sup> While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them.

<sup>5</sup> The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.

<sup>6</sup> Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." <sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with

them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

<sup>12</sup> But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

**Psalm 100:1-2 (NRSV)**

*All Lands Summoned  
to Praise God*

A Psalm of thanksgiving.

<sup>1</sup> Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Worship the LORD with gladness;  
come into his presence  
with singing.

**Proverbs 22:1 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,  
and favor is better than silver or gold.

# August 26



## Judges 10:1–18 (NRSV)

### *Tola and Jair*

After Abimelech, Tola son of Puah son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, who lived at Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim, rose to deliver Israel. <sup>2</sup> He judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he died, and was buried at Shamir.

<sup>3</sup> After him came Jair the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years. <sup>4</sup> He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; and they had thirty towns, which are in the land of Gilead, and are called Havvoth-jair to this day. <sup>5</sup> Jair died, and was buried in Kamon.

### *Oppression by the Ammonites*

<sup>6</sup> The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, worshiping the Baals and the Astartes, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. Thus they abandoned the LORD, and did

not worship him. <sup>7</sup> So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites, <sup>8</sup> and they crushed and oppressed the Israelites that year. For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites that were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. <sup>9</sup> The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was greatly distressed.

<sup>10</sup> So the Israelites cried to the LORD, saying, “We have sinned against you, because we have abandoned our God and have worshiped the Baals.” <sup>11</sup> And the LORD said to the Israelites, “Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the Philistines? <sup>12</sup> The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, oppressed you; and you cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. <sup>13</sup> Yet you have abandoned me and worshiped

other gods; therefore I will deliver you no more. <sup>14</sup> Go and cry to the gods whom you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress.” <sup>15</sup> And the Israelites said to the LORD, “We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to you; but deliver us this day!” <sup>16</sup> So they put away the foreign gods from among them and worshiped the LORD; and he could no longer bear to see Israel suffer.

<sup>17</sup> Then the Ammonites were called to arms, and they encamped in Gilead; and the Israelites came together, and they encamped at Mizpah.

<sup>18</sup> The commanders of the people of Gilead said to one another, “Who will begin the fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

### **Luke 24:13-34** (NRSV)

#### *The Walk to Emmaus*

(Mk 16:12-13)

<sup>13</sup> Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and talking with each other about all these things that had

happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?”

<sup>19</sup> He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. <sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. <sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, <sup>23</sup> and when they did not find

his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.

<sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” <sup>25</sup> Then he said to them, **“Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?”**

<sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

<sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. <sup>29</sup> But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

<sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized

him; and he vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” <sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup> They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!”

#### **Psalm 100:3-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Know that the LORD is God.  
It is he that made us, and  
we are his;  
we are his people, and  
the sheep of his  
pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with  
thanksgiving,  
and his courts with  
praise.

Give thanks to him, bless  
his name.

<sup>5</sup> For the LORD is good;  
his steadfast love  
endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all  
generations.





**Proverbs 22:2–4 (NRSV)**

- <sup>2</sup> The rich and the poor have this in common:  
the LORD is the maker of them all.
- <sup>3</sup> The clever see danger and hide;  
but the simple go on,  
and suffer for it.
- <sup>4</sup> The reward for humility  
and fear of the LORD  
is riches and honor and life.

**August  
27**



**Judges 11:1–28 (NRSV)**

*Jephthah*

Now Jephthah the Gileadite, the son of a prostitute, was a mighty warrior. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. <sup>2</sup> Gilead's wife also bore him sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah away, saying to him, "You shall not inherit anything in our father's house; for you are the son of another

woman." <sup>3</sup> Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Outlaws collected around Jephthah and went raiding with him.

<sup>4</sup> After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. <sup>5</sup> And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob. <sup>6</sup> They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, so that we may fight with the Ammonites."

<sup>7</sup> But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Are you not the very ones who rejected me and drove me out of my father's house? So why do you come to me now when you are in trouble?" <sup>8</sup> The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "Nevertheless, we have now turned back to you, so that you may go with us and fight with the Ammonites, and become head over us, over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

<sup>9</sup> Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight with the Ammonites, and the LORD gives them over to me, I will be your head." <sup>10</sup> And the

elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD will be witness between us; we will surely do as you say."<sup>11</sup> So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah.

<sup>12</sup> Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites and said, "What is there between you and me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?"<sup>13</sup> The king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel, on coming from Egypt, took away my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore restore it peaceably."<sup>14</sup> Once again Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites<sup>15</sup> and said to him: "Thus says Jephthah: Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites,<sup>16</sup> but when they came up from Egypt, Israel went through the wilderness to the Red Sea and came to Kadesh.<sup>17</sup> Israel then sent messengers to the king of

Edom, saying, 'Let us pass through your land'; but the king of Edom would not listen. They also sent to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained at Kadesh.<sup>18</sup> Then they journeyed through the wilderness, went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, arrived on the east side of the land of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon. They did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was the boundary of Moab.<sup>19</sup> Israel then sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel said to him, 'Let us pass through your land to our country.'<sup>20</sup> But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory; so Sihon gathered all his people together, and encamped at Jahaz, and fought with Israel.<sup>21</sup> Then the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them; so Israel occupied all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country.<sup>22</sup> They occupied all the territory of the

Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. <sup>23</sup> So now the LORD, the God of Israel, has conquered the Amorites for the benefit of his people Israel. Do you intend to take their place? <sup>24</sup> Should you not possess what your god Chemosh gives you to possess? And should we not be the ones to possess everything that the LORD our God has conquered for our benefit? <sup>25</sup> Now are you any better than King Balak son of Zippor of Moab? Did he ever enter into conflict with Israel, or did he ever go to war with them? <sup>26</sup> While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the towns that are along the Arnon, three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time? <sup>27</sup> It is not I who have sinned against you, but you are the one who does me wrong by making war on me. Let the LORD, who is judge, decide today for the Israelites or for the Ammonites.” <sup>28</sup> But the king of the Ammonites did not heed

the message that Jephthah sent him.

**Luke 24:35-53 (NRSV)**

<sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

*Jesus Appears to His Disciples (Jn 20:19–23; Acts 1:3–5; 1 Cor 15:5)*

<sup>36</sup> While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, **“Peace be with you.”** <sup>37</sup> They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. <sup>38</sup> He said to them, **“Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”** <sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. <sup>41</sup> While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, **“Have you anything here to eat?”** <sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish, <sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate in their presence.

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”

<sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, <sup>46</sup> and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

*The Ascension of Jesus*  
(Mk 16:19–20; Acts 1:9)

<sup>50</sup> Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; <sup>53</sup> and they

were continually in the temple blessing God.

**Psalm 101:1-3** (NRSV)

*A Sovereign's Pledge of Integrity and Justice*  
Of David. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> I will sing of loyalty and of justice;  
to you, O LORD, I will sing.  
<sup>2</sup> I will study the way that is blameless.  
When shall I attain it?  
I will walk with integrity of heart  
within my house;  
<sup>3</sup> I will not set before my eyes  
anything that is base.  
I hate the work of those  
who fall away;  
it shall not cling to me.

**Proverbs 22:5–6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse;  
the cautious will keep far from them.  
<sup>6</sup> Train children in the right way,  
and when old, they will not stray.

# August 28



**Judges 11:29-12:15** (NRSV)

## *Jephthah's Vow*

<sup>29</sup> Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh. He passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites. <sup>30</sup> And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, <sup>31</sup> then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the LORD's, to be offered up by me as a burnt offering." <sup>32</sup> So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them; and the LORD gave them into his hand. <sup>33</sup> He inflicted a massive defeat on them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty towns, and as far as Abel-keramim. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.

## *Jephthah's Daughter*

<sup>34</sup> Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and there was his daughter coming out to meet him with timbrels and with dancing. She was his only child; he had no son or daughter except her. <sup>35</sup> When he saw her, he tore his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low; you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my vow." <sup>36</sup> She said to him, "My father, if you have opened your mouth to the LORD, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, now that the LORD has given you vengeance against your enemies, the Ammonites." <sup>37</sup> And she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me: Grant me two months, so that I may go and wander on the mountains, and bewail my virginity, my companions and I." <sup>38</sup> "Go," he said and sent her away for two months. So she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains.

<sup>39</sup> At the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to the vow he had made. She had never slept with a man. So there arose an Israelite custom that <sup>40</sup> for four days every year the daughters of Israel would go out to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

### *Intertribal Dissension*

**12** The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed to Zaphon and said to Jephthah, “Why did you cross over to fight against the Ammonites, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down over you!” <sup>2</sup> Jephthah said to them, “My people and I were engaged in conflict with the Ammonites who oppressed us severely. But when I called you, you did not deliver me from their hand. <sup>3</sup> When I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hand, and crossed over against the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day, to fight against me?”

<sup>4</sup> Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought with Ephraim; and the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, “You are fugitives from Ephraim, you Gileadites—in the heart of Ephraim and Manasseh.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the Gileadites took the fords of the Jordan against the Ephraimites. Whenever one of the fugitives of Ephraim said, “Let me go over,” the men of Gilead would say to him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” When he said, “No,” <sup>6</sup> they said to him, “Then say Shibboleth,” and he said, “Sibboleth,” for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand of the Ephraimites fell at that time.

<sup>7</sup> Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died, and was buried in his town in Gilead.

### *Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon*

<sup>8</sup> After him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. <sup>9</sup> He had thirty sons. He gave his thirty daughters in marriage outside his clan and brought in thirty young women from

outside for his sons. He judged Israel seven years. <sup>10</sup> Then Ibzan died, and was buried at Bethlehem.

<sup>11</sup> After him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years.

<sup>12</sup> Then Elon the Zebulunite died, and was buried at Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

<sup>13</sup> After him Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. <sup>14</sup> He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys; he judged Israel eight years. <sup>15</sup> Then Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

### **John 1:1-18** (NRSV)

*The Word Became Flesh*  
(Gen 1:1-2:4a)

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines

in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

<sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

<sup>12</sup> **But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.**

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") <sup>16</sup> From his



fullness we have all received,  
grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law  
indeed was given through  
Moses; grace and truth came  
through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one  
has ever seen God. It is God  
the only Son, who is close to  
the Father's heart, who has  
made him known.

**Psalms 101:4-8** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Perverseness of heart shall  
be far from me;  
I will know nothing of  
evil.  
<sup>5</sup> One who secretly slanders  
a neighbor  
I will destroy.  
A haughty look and an  
arrogant heart  
I will not tolerate.  
<sup>6</sup> I will look with favor on the  
faithful in the land,  
so that they may live  
with me;  
whoever walks in the way  
that is blameless  
shall minister to me.  
<sup>7</sup> No one who practices  
deceit  
shall remain in my  
house;  
no one who utters lies  
shall continue in my  
presence.

<sup>8</sup> Morning by morning I will  
destroy  
all the wicked in the  
land,  
cutting off all evildoers  
from the city of the LORD.

**Proverbs 22:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> The rich rules over the  
poor,  
and the borrower is the  
slave of the lender.

**August  
29**



**Judges 13:1–25** (NRSV)

*The Birth of Samson*  
(Cp Num 6:1–21)

**13** The Israelites again did  
what was evil in the sight of  
the LORD, and the LORD gave  
them into the hand of the  
Philistines forty years.

<sup>2</sup> There was a certain man  
of Zorah, of the tribe of the  
Danites, whose name was  
Manoah. His wife was barren,  
having borne no children.

<sup>3</sup> And the angel of the LORD



appeared to the woman and said to her, "Although you are barren, having borne no children, you shall conceive and bear a son." <sup>4</sup> Now be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, or to eat anything unclean, <sup>5</sup> for you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor is to come on his head, for the boy shall be a nazirite to God from birth. It is he who shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines." <sup>6</sup> Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like that of an angel of God, most awe-inspiring; I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name; <sup>7</sup> but he said to me, 'You shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the boy shall be a nazirite to God from birth to the day of his death.' "

<sup>8</sup> Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, "O LORD, I pray, let the man of God whom you sent come to us again and teach us what we are to do concerning the boy

who will be born." <sup>9</sup> God listened to Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her. <sup>10</sup> So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "The man who came to me the other day has appeared to me." <sup>11</sup> Manoah got up and followed his wife, and came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I am." <sup>12</sup> Then Manoah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be the boy's rule of life; what is he to do?" <sup>13</sup> The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Let the woman give heed to all that I said to her. <sup>14</sup> She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine. She is not to drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. She is to observe everything that I commanded her."

<sup>15</sup> Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Allow us to detain you, and prepare a kid for you." <sup>16</sup> The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat your

food; but if you want to prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD.” (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.)

<sup>17</sup> Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that we may honor you when your words come true?” <sup>18</sup> But the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name? It is too wonderful.”

<sup>19</sup> So Manoah took the kid with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to him who works wonders. <sup>20</sup> When the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar while Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground.

<sup>21</sup> The angel of the LORD did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. Then Manoah realized that it was the angel of the LORD. <sup>22</sup> And Manoah said to his wife, “We shall surely die, for we have seen God.” <sup>23</sup> But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and

a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these.”

<sup>24</sup> The woman bore a son, and named him Samson. The boy grew, and the LORD blessed him. <sup>25</sup> The spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

### **John 1:19-28 (NRSV)**

#### *The Testimony of John the Baptist*

*(Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8; Lk 3:1-20)*

<sup>19</sup> This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” <sup>20</sup> He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” <sup>21</sup> And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” <sup>22</sup> Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” <sup>23</sup> He said,

“I am the voice of one  
crying out in the  
wilderness,

‘Make straight the way of  
the Lord,’ ”

as the prophet Isaiah said.

<sup>24</sup> Now they had been sent  
from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup> They  
asked him, “Why then are you  
baptizing if you are neither the  
Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the  
prophet?” <sup>26</sup> John answered  
them, “I baptize with water.  
Among you stands one whom  
you do not know, <sup>27</sup> the one  
who is coming after me; I am  
not worthy to untie the thong  
of his sandal.” <sup>28</sup> This took  
place in Bethany across the  
Jordan where John was  
baptizing.

**Psalms 102:1-17 (NRSV)**

*Prayer to the  
Eternal King for Help*

A prayer of one afflicted, when faint  
and pleading before the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Hear my prayer, O LORD;  
let my cry come to you.  
<sup>2</sup> Do not hide your face from  
me  
in the day of my distress.  
Incline your ear to me;  
answer me speedily in  
the day when I call.  
<sup>3</sup> For my days pass away like  
smoke,  
and my bones burn like a  
furnace.

<sup>4</sup> My heart is stricken and  
withered like grass;  
I am too wasted to eat  
my bread.  
<sup>5</sup> Because of my loud  
groaning  
my bones cling to my  
skin.  
<sup>6</sup> I am like an owl of the  
wilderness,  
like a little owl of the  
waste places.  
<sup>7</sup> I lie awake;  
I am like a lonely bird on  
the housetop.  
<sup>8</sup> All day long my enemies  
taunt me;  
those who deride me use  
my name for a curse.  
<sup>9</sup> For I eat ashes like bread,  
and mingle tears with my  
drink,  
<sup>10</sup> because of your  
indignation and anger;  
for you have lifted me up  
and thrown me aside.  
<sup>11</sup> My days are like an  
evening shadow;  
I wither away like grass.  
<sup>12</sup> But you, O LORD, are  
enthroned forever;  
your name endures to all  
generations.  
<sup>13</sup> You will rise up and have  
compassion on Zion,

for it is time to favor it;  
the appointed time has  
come.

- 14 For your servants hold its  
stones dear,  
and have pity on its dust.
- 15 The nations will fear the  
name of the LORD,  
and all the kings of the  
earth your glory.
- 16 For the LORD will build up  
Zion;  
he will appear in his  
glory.
- 17 He will regard the prayer  
of the destitute,  
and will not despise their  
prayer.

**Proverbs 22:8–9 (NRSV)**

- 8 Whoever sows injustice  
will reap calamity,  
and the rod of anger will  
fail.
- 9 Those who are generous  
are blessed,  
for they share their  
bread with the poor.

**August  
30**



**Judges 14:1–20 (NRSV)**

*Samson's Marriage*

Once Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw a Philistine woman. <sup>2</sup> Then he came up, and told his father and mother, "I saw a Philistine woman at Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." <sup>3</sup> But his father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among your kin, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, because she pleases me." <sup>4</sup> His father and mother did not know that this was from the LORD; for he was seeking a pretext to act against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

<sup>5</sup> Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah. When he came to the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion roared at him.

<sup>6</sup> The spirit of the LORD rushed

on him, and he tore the lion apart barehanded as one might tear apart a kid. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.<sup>7</sup> Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson.<sup>8</sup> After a while he returned to marry her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey.<sup>9</sup> He scraped it out into his hands, and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.

<sup>10</sup> His father went down to the woman, and Samson made a feast there as the young men were accustomed to do.

<sup>11</sup> When the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him.

<sup>12</sup> Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments."<sup>13</sup> But if

you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments." So they said to him, "Ask your riddle; let us hear it."<sup>14</sup> He said to them,

"Out of the eater came something to eat.

Out of the strong came something sweet."

But for three days they could not explain the riddle.

<sup>15</sup> On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Coax your husband to explain the riddle to us, or we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?"<sup>16</sup> So Samson's wife wept before him, saying, "You hate me; you do not really love me. You have asked a riddle of my people, but you have not explained it to me." He said to her, "Look, I have not told my father or my mother. Why should I tell you?"<sup>17</sup> She wept before him the seven days that their feast lasted; and because she nagged him, on the seventh day he told her. Then she explained the riddle to her people.<sup>18</sup> The men of the town said to him on the

seventh day before the sun  
went down,

“What is sweeter than  
honey?

What is stronger than a  
lion?”

And he said to them,

“If you had not plowed  
with my heifer,  
you would not have found  
out my riddle.”

<sup>19</sup> Then the spirit of the LORD  
rushed on him, and he went  
down to Ashkelon. He killed  
thirty men of the town, took  
their spoil, and gave the festal  
garments to those who had  
explained the riddle. In hot  
anger he went back to his  
father’s house. <sup>20</sup> And  
Samson’s wife was given to his  
companion, who had been his  
best man.

### **John 1:29-42 (NRSV)**

#### *The Lamb of God*

(Mt 3:13–17; Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–22)

<sup>29</sup> The next day he saw  
Jesus coming toward him and  
declared, “Here is the Lamb of  
God who takes away the sin of  
the world! <sup>30</sup> This is he of  
whom I said, ‘After me comes  
a man who ranks ahead of me  
because he was before me.’

<sup>31</sup> I myself did not know him;

but I came baptizing with  
water for this reason, that he  
might be revealed to Israel.”

<sup>32</sup> And John testified, “I saw  
the Spirit descending from  
heaven like a dove, and it  
remained on him. <sup>33</sup> I myself  
did not know him, but the one  
who sent me to baptize with  
water said to me, ‘He on  
whom you see the Spirit  
descend and remain is the one  
who baptizes with the Holy  
Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup> And I myself have  
seen and have testified that  
this is the Son of God.”

#### *The First Disciples of Jesus*

<sup>35</sup> The next day John again  
was standing with two of his  
disciples, <sup>36</sup> and as he watched  
Jesus walk by, he exclaimed,  
“Look, here is the Lamb of  
God!” <sup>37</sup> The two disciples  
heard him say this, and they  
followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> When Jesus  
turned and saw them  
following, he said to them,  
“**What are you looking for?**”  
They said to him, “Rabbi”  
(which translated means  
Teacher), “where are you  
staying?” <sup>39</sup> He said to them,  
“**Come and see.**” They came  
and saw where he was staying,

and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

<sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). <sup>42</sup> He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

### **Psalm 102:18-22** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet unborn may praise the LORD:  
<sup>19</sup> that he looked down from his holy height, from heaven the LORD looked at the earth, to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die;  
<sup>21</sup> so that the name of the LORD may be declared in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem,

<sup>22</sup> when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the LORD.

### **Proverbs 22:10–12** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Drive out a scoffer, and strife goes out; quarreling and abuse will cease.  
<sup>11</sup> Those who love a pure heart and are gracious in speech will have the king as a friend.  
<sup>12</sup> The eyes of the LORD keep watch over knowledge, but he overthrows the words of the faithless.

## **August 31**



### **Judges 15:1–16:9** (NRSV)

#### *Samson Defeats the Philistines*

After a while, at the time of the wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife, bringing along a kid. He said, "I want to go into my wife's room." But

her father would not allow him to go in.<sup>2</sup> Her father said, "I was sure that you had rejected her; so I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister prettier than she? Why not take her instead?"<sup>3</sup> Samson said to them, "This time, when I do mischief to the Philistines, I will be without blame."<sup>4</sup> So Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took some torches; and he turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails.<sup>5</sup> When he had set fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves.<sup>6</sup> Then the Philistines asked, "Who has done this?" And they said, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken Samson's wife and given her to his companion." So the Philistines came up, and burned her and her father.<sup>7</sup> Samson said to them, "If this is what you do, I swear I will not stop until I have taken revenge on you."<sup>8</sup> He struck

them down hip and thigh with great slaughter; and he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

<sup>9</sup> Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah, and made a raid on Lehi.<sup>10</sup> The men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us."<sup>11</sup> Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and they said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then have you done to us?" He replied, "As they did to me, so I have done to them."<sup>12</sup> They said to him, "We have come down to bind you, so that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines." Samson answered them, "Swear to me that you yourselves will not attack me."<sup>13</sup> They said to him, "No, we will only bind you and give you into their hands; we will not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes, and brought him up from the rock.<sup>14</sup> When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting



to meet him; and the spirit of the LORD rushed on him, and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. <sup>15</sup> Then he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached down and took it, and with it he killed a thousand men. <sup>16</sup> And Samson said,

“With the jawbone of a donkey,  
heaps upon heaps,  
with the jawbone of a donkey  
I have slain a thousand men.”

<sup>17</sup> When he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone; and that place was called Ramath-lehi.

<sup>18</sup> By then he was very thirsty, and he called on the LORD, saying, “You have granted this great victory by the hand of your servant. Am I now to die of thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?” <sup>19</sup> So God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came from it. When he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore it was

named En-hakkore, which is at Lehi to this day. <sup>20</sup> And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

### *Samson and Delilah*

**16** Once Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute and went in to her. <sup>2</sup> The Gazites were told, “Samson has come here.” So they circled around and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They kept quiet all night, thinking, “Let us wait until the light of the morning; then we will kill him.” <sup>3</sup> But Samson lay only until midnight. Then at midnight he rose up, took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.

<sup>4</sup> After this he fell in love with a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. <sup>5</sup> The lords of the Philistines came to her and said to her, “Coax him, and find out what makes his strength so great, and how we may overpower him, so that

we may bind him in order to subdue him; and we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.”<sup>6</sup> So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me what makes your strength so great, and how you could be bound, so that one could subdue you.”<sup>7</sup> Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that are not dried out, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else.”<sup>8</sup> Then the lords of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not dried out, and she bound him with them.<sup>9</sup> While men were lying in wait in an inner chamber, she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he snapped the bowstrings, as a strand of fiber snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

**John 1:43-51** (NRSV)

*Jesus Calls Philip  
and Nathanael*

<sup>43</sup> The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “**Follow me.**”<sup>44</sup> Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of

Andrew and Peter.<sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.”<sup>46</sup> Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “**Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!**”

<sup>48</sup> Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “**I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.**”<sup>49</sup> Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”<sup>50</sup> Jesus answered, “**Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.**”<sup>51</sup> And he said to him, “**Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.**”

**Psalm 102:23-28** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> He has broken my strength in midcourse;

he has shortened my  
days.

<sup>24</sup> “O my God,” I say, “do not  
take me away  
at the midpoint of my  
life,  
you whose years endure  
throughout all  
generations.”

<sup>25</sup> Long ago you laid the  
foundation of the  
earth,  
and the heavens are the  
work of your hands.  
<sup>26</sup> They will perish, but you  
endure;  
they will all wear out like  
a garment.  
You change them like  
clothing, and they pass  
away;  
<sup>27</sup> but you are the same,  
and your years have no  
end.

<sup>28</sup> The children of your  
servants shall live  
secure;  
their offspring shall be  
established in your  
presence.

**Proverbs 22:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> The lazy person says,  
“There is a lion  
outside!

I shall be killed in the  
streets!”

**Sept. 1**



**Judges 16:10–31 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> Then Delilah said to  
Samson, “You have mocked  
me and told me lies; please  
tell me how you could be  
bound.” <sup>11</sup> He said to her, “If  
they bind me with new ropes  
that have not been used, then  
I shall become weak, and be  
like anyone else.” <sup>12</sup> So Delilah  
took new ropes and bound  
him with them, and said to  
him, “The Philistines are upon  
you, Samson!” (The men lying  
in wait were in an inner  
chamber.) But he snapped the  
ropes off his arms like a  
thread.

<sup>13</sup> Then Delilah said to  
Samson, “Until now you have  
mocked me and told me lies;  
tell me how you could be  
bound.” He said to her, “If you  
weave the seven locks of my

head with the web and make it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else.”<sup>14</sup> So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web, and made them tight with the pin. Then she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.

<sup>15</sup> Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me three times now and have not told me what makes your strength so great.”<sup>16</sup> Finally, after she had nagged him with her words day after day, and pestered him, he was tired to death.<sup>17</sup> So he told her his whole secret, and said to her, “A razor has never come upon my head; for I have been a nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If my head were shaved, then my strength would leave me; I would become weak, and be like anyone else.”

<sup>18</sup> When Delilah realized that he had told her his whole

secret, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “This time come up, for he has told his whole secret to me.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands.<sup>19</sup> She let him fall asleep on her lap; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. He began to weaken, and his strength left him.

<sup>20</sup> Then she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, “I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the LORD had left him.<sup>21</sup> So the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles; and he ground at the mill in the prison.<sup>22</sup> But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

### *Samson’s Death*

<sup>23</sup> Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon, and to rejoice; for they

said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand." <sup>24</sup> When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us." <sup>25</sup> And when their hearts were merry, they said, "Call Samson, and let him entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. They made him stand between the pillars; <sup>26</sup> and Samson said to the attendant who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, so that I may lean against them." <sup>27</sup> Now the house was full of men and women; all the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about three thousand men and women, who looked on while Samson performed.

<sup>28</sup> Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "Lord GOD, remember me and strengthen me only this once, O God, so that with this one act of revenge I may pay back the Philistines for my two eyes."

<sup>29</sup> And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. <sup>30</sup> Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." He strained with all his might; and the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So those he killed at his death were more than those he had killed during his life. <sup>31</sup> Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.

### **John 2:1-11 (NRSV)**

#### *The Wedding at Cana*

<sup>1</sup> On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup> When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup> And Jesus said to her, "**Woman, what concern is that**

to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.”<sup>5</sup> His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”<sup>6</sup> Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim.<sup>8</sup> He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.” So they took it.<sup>9</sup> When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom<sup>10</sup> and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.”<sup>11</sup> Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

**Psalm 103:1-12 (NRSV)**  
*Thanksgiving for God's  
Goodness*  
Of David.

<sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all that is within me,  
bless his holy name.  
<sup>2</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and do not forget all his  
benefits—  
<sup>3</sup> who forgives all your  
iniquity,  
who heals all your  
diseases,  
<sup>4</sup> who redeems your life  
from the Pit,  
who crowns you with  
steadfast love and  
mercy,  
<sup>5</sup> who satisfies you with  
good as long as you live  
so that your youth is  
renewed like the  
eagle's.  
<sup>6</sup> The LORD works vindication  
and justice for all who  
are oppressed.  
<sup>7</sup> He made known his ways  
to Moses,  
his acts to the people of  
Israel.  
<sup>8</sup> The LORD is merciful and  
gracious,  
slow to anger and  
abounding in steadfast  
love.  
<sup>9</sup> He will not always accuse,  
nor will he keep his  
anger forever.

<sup>10</sup> He does not deal with us  
according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to  
our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup> For as the heavens are  
high above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast  
love toward those who  
fear him;

<sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from  
the west,  
so far he removes our  
transgressions from us.

**Proverbs 22:14 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> The mouth of a loose  
woman is a deep pit;  
he with whom the LORD  
is angry falls into it.

**Sept. 2**



**Judges 17:1–18:21 (NRSV)**

*Micah and the Levite*

There was a man in the hill  
country of Ephraim whose  
name was Micah. <sup>2</sup> He said to  
his mother, “The eleven  
hundred pieces of silver that

were taken from you, about  
which you uttered a curse, and  
even spoke it in my hearing,—  
that silver is in my possession;  
I took it; but now I will return  
it to you.” And his mother  
said, “May my son be blessed  
by the LORD!” <sup>3</sup> Then he  
returned the eleven hundred  
pieces of silver to his mother;  
and his mother said, “I  
consecrate the silver to the  
LORD from my hand for my  
son, to make an idol of cast  
metal.” <sup>4</sup> So when he returned  
the money to his mother, his  
mother took two hundred  
pieces of silver, and gave it to  
the silversmith, who made it  
into an idol of cast metal; and  
it was in the house of Micah.  
<sup>5</sup> This man Micah had a shrine,  
and he made an ephod and  
teraphim, and installed one of  
his sons, who became his  
priest. <sup>6</sup> In those days there  
was no king in Israel; all the  
people did what was right in  
their own eyes.

<sup>7</sup> Now there was a young  
man of Bethlehem in Judah, of  
the clan of Judah. He was a  
Levite residing there. <sup>8</sup> This  
man left the town of  
Bethlehem in Judah, to live

wherever he could find a place. He came to the house of Micah in the hill country of Ephraim to carry on his work.<sup>9</sup> Micah said to him, "From where do you come?" He replied, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to live wherever I can find a place."<sup>10</sup> Then Micah said to him, "Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a set of clothes, and your living."<sup>11</sup> The Levite agreed to stay with the man; and the young man became to him like one of his sons.<sup>12</sup> So Micah installed the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.<sup>13</sup> Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, because the Levite has become my priest."

### *The Migration of Dan*

**18** In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking for itself a territory to live in; for until then no territory among the tribes of Israel had been

allotted to them.<sup>2</sup> So the Danites sent five valiant men from the whole number of their clan, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it; and they said to them, "Go, explore the land." When they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they stayed there.<sup>3</sup> While they were at Micah's house, they recognized the voice of the young Levite; so they went over and asked him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?"<sup>4</sup> He said to them, "Micah did such and such for me, and he hired me, and I have become his priest."<sup>5</sup> Then they said to him, "Inquire of God that we may know whether the mission we are undertaking will succeed."<sup>6</sup> The priest replied, "Go in peace. The mission you are on is under the eye of the LORD."

<sup>7</sup> The five men went on, and when they came to Laish, they observed the people who were there living securely, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and



unsuspecting, lacking nothing on earth, and possessing wealth. Furthermore, they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with Aram.<sup>8</sup> When they came to their kinsfolk at Zorah and Eshtaol, they said to them, “What do you report?”<sup>9</sup> They said, “Come, let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and it is very good. Will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, but enter in and possess the land.<sup>10</sup> When you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The land is broad—God has indeed given it into your hands—a place where there is no lack of anything on earth.”

<sup>11</sup> Six hundred men of the Danite clan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol,<sup>12</sup> and went up and encamped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. On this account that place is called Mahaneh-dan to this day; it is west of Kiriath-jearim.<sup>13</sup> From there they passed on to the hill country of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

<sup>14</sup> Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land

(that is, Laish) said to their comrades, “Do you know that in these buildings there are an ephod, teraphim, and an idol of cast metal? Now therefore consider what you will do.”

<sup>15</sup> So they turned in that direction and came to the house of the young Levite, at the home of Micah, and greeted him.<sup>16</sup> While the six hundred men of the Danites, armed with their weapons of war, stood by the entrance of the gate,<sup>17</sup> the five men who had gone to spy out the land proceeded to enter and take the idol of cast metal, the ephod, and the teraphim. The priest was standing by the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war.<sup>18</sup> When the men went into Micah’s house and took the idol of cast metal, the ephod, and the teraphim, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?”<sup>19</sup> They said to him, “Keep quiet! Put your hand over your mouth, and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one person, or to be priest to a tribe and clan

in Israel?”<sup>20</sup> Then the priest accepted the offer. He took the ephod, the teraphim, and the idol, and went along with the people.

<sup>21</sup> So they resumed their journey, putting the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them.

### **John 2:12-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.

*Jesus Cleanses the Temple*  
(Mt 21:12–17; Mk 11:15–19;  
Lk 19:45–48)

<sup>13</sup> The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup> Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup> He told those who were selling the doves, **“Take these things out of here! Stop making my**

**Father’s house a**

**marketplace!”** <sup>17</sup> His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” <sup>18</sup> The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” <sup>19</sup> **Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”**

<sup>20</sup> The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” <sup>21</sup> But he was speaking of the temple of his body. <sup>22</sup> After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

<sup>23</sup> When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. <sup>24</sup> But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people <sup>25</sup> and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

**Psalms 103:13-22 (NRSV)**

13 As a father has compassion  
for his children,  
so the LORD has  
compassion for those  
who fear him.  
14 For he knows how we  
were made;  
he remembers that we  
are dust.  
15 As for mortals, their days  
are like grass;  
they flourish like a flower  
of the field;  
16 for the wind passes over it,  
and it is gone,  
and its place knows it no  
more.  
17 But the steadfast love of  
the LORD is from  
everlasting to  
everlasting  
on those who fear him,  
and his righteousness to  
children's children,  
18 to those who keep his  
covenant  
and remember to do his  
commandments.  
19 The LORD has established  
his throne in the  
heavens,  
and his kingdom rules  
over all.

20 Bless the LORD, O you his  
angels,  
you mighty ones who do  
his bidding,  
obedient to his spoken  
word.  
21 Bless the LORD, all his  
hosts,  
his ministers that do his  
will.  
22 Bless the LORD, all his  
works,  
in all places of his  
dominion.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul.

**Proverbs 22:15 (NRSV)**

15 Folly is bound up in the  
heart of a boy, but the  
rod of discipline drives  
it far away.

**Sept. 3**



**Judges 18:22-31 (NRSV)**

22 When they were some  
distance from the home of  
Micah, the men who were in  
the houses near Micah's house

were called out, and they overtook the Danites.<sup>23</sup> They shouted to the Danites, who turned around and said to Micah, “What is the matter that you come with such a company?”<sup>24</sup> He replied, “You take my gods that I made, and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then can you ask me, ‘What is the matter?’”<sup>25</sup> And the Danites said to him, “You had better not let your voice be heard among us or else hot-tempered fellows will attack you, and you will lose your life and the lives of your household.”<sup>26</sup> Then the Danites went their way. When Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home.

#### *The Danites Settle in Laish*

<sup>27</sup> The Danites, having taken what Micah had made, and the priest who belonged to him, came to Laish, to a people quiet and unsuspecting, put them to the sword, and burned down the city.<sup>28</sup> There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon and they had no dealings with

Aram. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth-rehob. They rebuilt the city, and lived in it.<sup>29</sup> They named the city Dan, after their ancestor Dan, who was born to Israel; but the name of the city was formerly Laish.<sup>30</sup> Then the Danites set up the idol for themselves. Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the time the land went into captivity.<sup>31</sup> So they maintained as their own Micah’s idol that he had made, as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

#### **John 3:1-15 (NRSV)**

##### *Nicodemus Visits Jesus*

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.<sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.”<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, “**Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.**”

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How

can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

<sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

<sup>11</sup> "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except

the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

<sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

### **Psalm 104:1-7 (NRSV)**

*God the Creator and Provider  
(Cp Gen 1:1-31)*

- <sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul.  
O LORD my God, you are very great.  
You are clothed with honor and majesty,  
<sup>2</sup> wrapped in light as with a garment.  
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,  
<sup>3</sup> you set the beams of your chambers on the waters,  
you make the clouds your chariot,  
you ride on the wings of the wind,  
<sup>4</sup> you make the winds your messengers,  
fire and flame your ministers.  
<sup>5</sup> You set the earth on its foundations,  
so that it shall never be shaken.

<sup>6</sup> You cover it with the deep  
as with a garment;  
the waters stood above  
the mountains.  
<sup>7</sup> At your rebuke they flee;  
at the sound of your  
thunder they take to  
flight.

**Proverbs 22:16** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Oppressing the poor in  
order to enrich oneself,  
and giving to the rich,  
will lead only to loss.

**Sept. 4**



**Judges 19:1–30** (NRSV)

*The Levite's Concubine*

**19** In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite, residing in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. <sup>2</sup> But his concubine became angry with him, and she went away from him to her father's house at

Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months.

<sup>3</sup> Then her husband set out after her, to speak tenderly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. When he reached her father's house, the girl's father saw him and came with joy to meet him.

<sup>4</sup> His father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days; so they ate and drank, and he stayed there. <sup>5</sup> On the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he prepared to go; but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Fortify yourself with a bit of food, and after that you may go." <sup>6</sup> So the two men sat and ate and drank together; and the girl's father said to the man, "Why not spend the night and enjoy yourself?" <sup>7</sup> When the man got up to go, his father-in-law kept urging him until he spent the night there again. <sup>8</sup> On the fifth day he got up early in the morning to leave; and the girl's father said, "Fortify yourself." So they lingered until the day declined, and the two of them ate and drank.

<sup>9</sup> When the man with his concubine and his servant got up to leave, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Look, the day has worn on until it is almost evening. Spend the night. See, the day has drawn to a close. Spend the night here and enjoy yourself. Tomorrow you can get up early in the morning for your journey, and go home."

<sup>10</sup> But the man would not spend the night; he got up and departed, and arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a couple of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him. <sup>11</sup> When they were near Jebus, the day was far spent, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites, and spend the night in it." <sup>12</sup> But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel; but we will continue on to Gibeah." <sup>13</sup> Then he said to his servant, "Come, let us try to reach one of these places, and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah." <sup>14</sup> So they

passed on and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. <sup>15</sup> They turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. He went in and sat down in the open square of the city, but no one took them in to spend the night.

<sup>16</sup> Then at evening there was an old man coming from his work in the field. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was residing in Gibeah. (The people of the place were Benjaminites.)

<sup>17</sup> When the old man looked up and saw the wayfarer in the open square of the city, he said, "Where are you going and where do you come from?" <sup>18</sup> He answered him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; and I am going to my home. Nobody has offered to take me in.

<sup>19</sup> We your servants have straw and fodder for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and the woman and

the young man along with us. We need nothing more.”

<sup>20</sup>The old man said, “Peace be to you. I will care for all your wants; only do not spend the night in the square.” <sup>21</sup> So he brought him into his house, and fed the donkeys; they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

### *Gibeah’s Crime*

<sup>22</sup> While they were enjoying themselves, the men of the city, a perverse lot, surrounded the house, and started pounding on the door. They said to the old man, the master of the house, “Bring out the man who came into your house, so that we may have intercourse with him.”

<sup>23</sup> And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. Since this man is my guest, do not do this vile thing.

<sup>24</sup> Here are my virgin daughter and his concubine; let me bring them out now. Ravish them and do whatever you want to them; but against this man do not do such a vile thing.” <sup>25</sup> But the men would

not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine, and put her out to them. They wantonly raped her, and abused her all through the night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. <sup>26</sup> As morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her master was, until it was light.

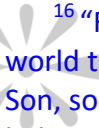
<sup>27</sup> In the morning her master got up, opened the doors of the house, and when he went out to go on his way, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold.

<sup>28</sup> “Get up,” he said to her, “we are going.” But there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey; and the man set out for his home. <sup>29</sup> When he had entered his house, he took a knife, and grasping his concubine he cut her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. <sup>30</sup> Then he commanded the men whom he sent, saying, “Thus shall you say to all the Israelites, ‘Has such a thing ever happened since the day



that the Israelites came up from the land of Egypt until this day? Consider it, take counsel, and speak out.’ ”

**John 3:16-21 (NRSV)**



<sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup> “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

**Psalm 104:8-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys to the place that you appointed for them.

<sup>9</sup> You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.

<sup>10</sup> You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills,

<sup>11</sup> giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst.

<sup>12</sup> By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.

<sup>13</sup> From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

<sup>14</sup> You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth,

<sup>15</sup> and wine to gladden the human heart,

oil to make the face shine,  
and bread to strengthen  
the human heart.

- <sup>16</sup> The trees of the LORD are  
watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon  
that he planted.
- <sup>17</sup> In them the birds build  
their nests;  
the stork has its home in  
the fir trees.
- <sup>18</sup> The high mountains are for  
the wild goats;  
the rocks are a refuge for  
the coney.
- <sup>19</sup> You have made the moon  
to mark the seasons;  
the sun knows its time  
for setting.
- <sup>20</sup> You make darkness, and it  
is night,  
when all the animals of  
the forest come  
creeping out.
- <sup>21</sup> The young lions roar for  
their prey,  
seeking their food from  
God.
- <sup>22</sup> When the sun rises, they  
withdraw  
and lie down in their  
dens.
- <sup>23</sup> People go out to their  
work

and to their labor until  
the evening.

**Proverbs 22:17–19** (NRSV)

*Sayings of the Wise*

- <sup>17</sup> The words of the wise:  
Incline your ear and hear  
my words,  
and apply your mind to  
my teaching;
- <sup>18</sup> for it will be pleasant if you  
keep them within you,  
if all of them are ready  
on your lips.
- <sup>19</sup> So that your trust may be  
in the LORD,  
I have made them known  
to you today—yes, to  
you.

**Sept. 5**



**Judges 20:1–48** (NRSV)

*The Other Tribes  
Attack Benjamin*

Then all the Israelites came  
out, from Dan to Beer-sheba,  
including the land of Gilead,  
and the congregation

assembled in one body before the LORD at Mizpah. <sup>2</sup>The chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot-soldiers bearing arms. <sup>3</sup>(Now the Benjaminites heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the Israelites said, "Tell us, how did this criminal act come about?" <sup>4</sup>The Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered, "I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. <sup>5</sup>The lords of Gibeah rose up against me, and surrounded the house at night. They intended to kill me, and they raped my concubine until she died. <sup>6</sup>Then I took my concubine and cut her into pieces, and sent her throughout the whole extent of Israel's territory; for they have committed a vile outrage in Israel. <sup>7</sup>So now, you Israelites, all of you, give your advice and counsel here."

<sup>8</sup>All the people got up as one, saying, "We will not any

of us go to our tents, nor will any of us return to our houses.

<sup>9</sup>But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot. <sup>10</sup>We will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the troops, who are going to repay Gibeah of Benjamin for all the disgrace that they have done in Israel."

<sup>11</sup>So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one.

<sup>12</sup>The tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What crime is this that has been committed among you?"

<sup>13</sup>Now then, hand over those scoundrels in Gibeah, so that we may put them to death, and purge the evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to their kinsfolk, the Israelites. <sup>14</sup>The Benjaminites came together out of the towns to Gibeah, to go out to battle against the Israelites. <sup>15</sup>On that day the Benjaminites mustered twenty-six thousand armed

men from their towns, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah.

<sup>16</sup> Of all this force, there were seven hundred picked men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair, and not miss. <sup>17</sup> And the Israelites, apart from Benjamin, mustered four hundred thousand armed men, all of them warriors.

<sup>18</sup> The Israelites proceeded to go up to Bethel, where they inquired of God, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the Benjaminites?" And the LORD answered, "Judah shall go up first."

<sup>19</sup> Then the Israelites got up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah.

<sup>20</sup> The Israelites went out to battle against Benjamin; and the Israelites drew up the battle line against them at Gibeah. <sup>21</sup> The Benjaminites came out of Gibeah, and struck down on that day twenty-two thousand of the Israelites. <sup>23</sup> The Israelites went up and wept before the LORD until the evening; and they inquired of the LORD, "Shall we again draw near to battle against our kinsfolk the

Benjaminites?" And the LORD said, "Go up against them."

<sup>22</sup> The Israelites took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day.

<sup>24</sup> So the Israelites advanced against the Benjaminites the second day.

<sup>25</sup> Benjamin moved out against them from Gibeah the second day, and struck down eighteen thousand of the Israelites, all of them armed men. <sup>26</sup> Then all the Israelites, the whole army, went back to Bethel and wept, sitting there before the LORD; they fasted that day until evening. Then they offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being before the LORD.

<sup>27</sup> And the Israelites inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, <sup>28</sup> and Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, "Shall we go out once more to battle against our kinsfolk the Benjaminites, or shall we desist?" The LORD answered, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand."

<sup>29</sup> So Israel stationed men in ambush around Gibeah. <sup>30</sup> Then the Israelites went up against the Benjaminites on the third day, and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as before. <sup>31</sup> When the Benjaminites went out against the army, they were drawn away from the city. As before they began to inflict casualties on the troops, along the main roads, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, as well as in the open country, killing about thirty men of Israel. <sup>32</sup> The Benjaminites thought, “They are being routed before us, as previously.” But the Israelites said, “Let us retreat and draw them away from the city toward the roads.” <sup>33</sup> The main body of the Israelites drew back its battle line to Baaltamar, while those Israelites who were in ambush rushed out of their place west of Geba. <sup>34</sup> There came against Gibeah ten thousand picked men out of all Israel, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjaminites did not realize that disaster was close upon them.

<sup>35</sup> The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel; and the Israelites destroyed twenty-five thousand one hundred men of Benjamin that day, all of them armed.

<sup>36</sup> Then the Benjaminites saw that they were defeated. The Israelites gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted to the troops in ambush that they had stationed against Gibeah. <sup>37</sup> The troops in ambush rushed quickly upon Gibeah. Then they put the whole city to the sword. <sup>38</sup> Now the agreement between the main body of Israel and the men in ambush was that when they sent up a cloud of smoke out of the city <sup>39</sup> the main body of Israel should turn in battle. But Benjamin had begun to inflict casualties on the Israelites, killing about thirty of them; so they thought, “Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle.” <sup>40</sup> But when the cloud, a column of smoke, began to rise out of the city, the Benjaminites looked behind them—and there was the whole city going up in smoke toward the sky! <sup>41</sup> Then

the main body of Israel turned, and the Benjaminites were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them.

<sup>42</sup> Therefore they turned away from the Israelites in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and those who came out of the city were slaughtering them in between. <sup>43</sup> Cutting down the Benjaminites, they pursued them from Nohah and trod them down as far as a place east of Gibeah.

<sup>44</sup> Eighteen thousand Benjaminites fell, all of them courageous fighters. <sup>45</sup> When they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, five thousand of them were cut down on the main roads, and they were pursued as far as Gidom, and two thousand of them were slain. <sup>46</sup> So all who fell that day of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand arms-bearing men, all of them courageous fighters. <sup>47</sup> But six hundred turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and remained at the rock of Rimmon for four months. <sup>48</sup> Meanwhile, the

Israelites turned back against the Benjaminites, and put them to the sword—the city, the people, the animals, and all that remained. Also the remaining towns they set on fire.

### **John 3:22-30 (NRSV)**

*Jesus and John the Baptist*

<sup>22</sup> After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. <sup>23</sup> John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized <sup>24</sup> — John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.

<sup>25</sup> Now a discussion about purification arose between John's disciples and a Jew.

<sup>26</sup> They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him." <sup>27</sup> John answered, "No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven.

<sup>28</sup> You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not

the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.’<sup>29</sup> He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. For this reason my joy has been fulfilled.<sup>30</sup> He must increase, but I must decrease.”

**Psalms 104:24-30** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> O LORD, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.  
<sup>25</sup> Yonder is the sea, great and wide,  
creeping things innumerable are there,  
living things both small and great.  
<sup>26</sup> There go the ships,  
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.  
<sup>27</sup> These all look to you to give them their food  
in due season;  
<sup>28</sup> when you give to them,  
they gather it up;  
when you open your hand,  
they are filled with good things.

<sup>29</sup> When you hide your face,  
they are dismayed;  
when you take away their breath,  
they die and return to their dust.  
<sup>30</sup> When you send forth your spirit,  
they are created;  
and you renew the face of the ground.

**Proverbs 22:20-21** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> Have I not written for you thirty sayings  
of admonition and knowledge,  
<sup>21</sup> to show you what is right and true,  
so that you may give a true answer  
to those who sent you?

**Sept. 6**



**Judges 21:1-25** (NRSV)

*The Benjaminites  
Saved from Extinction*

**21** Now the Israelites had sworn at Mizpah, “No one of us shall give his daughter in

marriage to Benjamin.”<sup>2</sup> And the people came to Bethel, and sat there until evening before God, and they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly.

<sup>3</sup> They said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, why has it come to pass that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?”

<sup>4</sup> On the next day, the people got up early, and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being.

<sup>5</sup> Then the Israelites said, “Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the LORD?” For a solemn oath had been taken concerning whoever did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah, saying, “That one shall be put to death.”

<sup>6</sup> But the Israelites had compassion for Benjamin their kin, and said, “One tribe is cut off from Israel this day.”<sup>7</sup> What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them any of our daughters as wives?”

<sup>8</sup> Then they said, “Is there anyone from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah?” It turned

out that no one from Jabesh-gilead had come to the camp, to the assembly.<sup>9</sup> For when the roll was called among the people, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there.<sup>10</sup> So the congregation sent twelve thousand soldiers there and commanded them, “Go, put the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead to the sword, including the women and the little ones.

<sup>11</sup> This is what you shall do; every male and every woman that has lain with a male you shall devote to destruction.”

<sup>12</sup> And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who had never slept with a man and brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

<sup>13</sup> Then the whole congregation sent word to the Benjaminites who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them.

<sup>14</sup> Benjamin returned at that time; and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead; but they did not suffice for them.



<sup>15</sup> The people had compassion on Benjamin because the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

<sup>16</sup> So the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since there are no women left in Benjamin?"

<sup>17</sup> And they said, "There must be heirs for the survivors of Benjamin, in order that a tribe may not be blotted out from Israel. <sup>18</sup> Yet we cannot give any of our daughters to them as wives." For the Israelites had sworn, "Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to Benjamin."

<sup>19</sup> So they said, "Look, the yearly festival of the LORD is taking place at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." <sup>20</sup> And they instructed the Benjaminites, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, <sup>21</sup> and watch; when the young women of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then come out of the vineyards and each of you carry off a wife for himself from the young women of Shiloh, and go to the land of

Benjamin. <sup>22</sup> Then if their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we will say to them, 'Be generous and allow us to have them; because we did not capture in battle a wife for each man. But neither did you incur guilt by giving your daughters to them.' " <sup>23</sup> The Benjaminites did so; they took wives for each of them from the dancers whom they abducted. Then they went and returned to their territory, and rebuilt the towns, and lived in them. <sup>24</sup> So the Israelites departed from there at that time by tribes and families, and they went out from there to their own territories.

<sup>25</sup> In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes.

**John 3:31-4:3** (NRSV)

*The One Who*

*Comes from Heaven*

<sup>31</sup> The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from

heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup> He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup> Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified this, that God is true. <sup>34</sup> He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. <sup>35</sup> The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. <sup>36</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

*Jesus and the  
Woman of Samaria*

**4** Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John" <sup>2</sup> — although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized— <sup>3</sup> he left Judea and started back to Galilee.

**Psalms 104:31-35** (NRSV)

<sup>31</sup> May the glory of the LORD endure forever;  
may the LORD rejoice in his works—  
<sup>32</sup> who looks on the earth and it trembles,

who touches the mountains and they smoke.

<sup>33</sup> I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;  
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.  
<sup>34</sup> May my meditation be pleasing to him,  
for I rejoice in the LORD.  
<sup>35</sup> Let sinners be consumed from the earth,  
and let the wicked be no more.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 22:22-23** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Do not rob the poor because they are poor,  
or crush the afflicted at the gate;  
<sup>23</sup> for the LORD pleads their cause  
and despoils of life those who despoil them.

**Sept. 7**



**Ruth 1:1–22 (NRSV)**

*Elimelech's Family  
Goes to Moab*

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons.

<sup>2</sup>The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.

<sup>3</sup>But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup>both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

*Naomi and Her Moabite  
Daughters-in-Law*

<sup>6</sup>Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup>So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. <sup>8</sup>But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. <sup>9</sup>The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. <sup>10</sup>They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." <sup>11</sup>But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?" <sup>12</sup>Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a

husband tonight and bear sons, <sup>13</sup> would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me.” <sup>14</sup> Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

<sup>15</sup> So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” <sup>16</sup> But Ruth said,

“Do not press me to leave you

or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;  
where you lodge, I will lodge;

your people shall be my people,  
and your God my God.

<sup>17</sup> Where you die, I will die—  
there will I be buried.

May the LORD do thus and so to me,  
and more as well,  
if even death parts me  
from you!”

<sup>18</sup> When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

<sup>19</sup> So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, “Is this Naomi?” <sup>20</sup> She said to them, “Call me no longer Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.

<sup>21</sup> I went away full,  
but the LORD has brought me back empty;  
why call me Naomi  
when the LORD has dealt harshly with me,  
and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?”

<sup>22</sup> So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

**John 4:4-30 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> But he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar,

near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.<sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, **"Give me a drink."**

<sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, **"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."**<sup>11</sup>

The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"<sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"<sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, **"Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,<sup>14</sup> but those who drink of the water that I will**

**give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."**<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, **"Go, call your husband, and come back."**<sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, **"You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"**<sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet."<sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, **"Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem."<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.<sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and**

is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”<sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.”<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

<sup>27</sup> Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?”<sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,<sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?”<sup>30</sup> They left the city and were on their way to him.

### **Psalms 105:1-7 (NRSV)**

*God’s Faithfulness to Israel*  
(Ex 7:8–11:10; 1 Chr 16:8–22)

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
call on his name,

make known his deeds  
among the peoples.  
<sup>2</sup> Sing to him, sing praises to  
him;  
tell of all his wonderful  
works.  
<sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name;  
let the hearts of those  
who seek the LORD  
rejoice.  
<sup>4</sup> Seek the LORD and his  
strength;  
seek his presence  
continually.  
<sup>5</sup> Remember the wonderful  
works he has done,  
his miracles, and the  
judgments he has  
uttered,  
<sup>6</sup> O offspring of his servant  
Abraham,  
children of Jacob, his  
chosen ones.  
<sup>7</sup> He is the LORD our God;  
his judgments are in all  
the earth.

### **Proverbs 22:24–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> Make no friends with  
those given to anger,  
and do not associate  
with hotheads,  
<sup>25</sup> or you may learn their  
ways

and entangle yourself in a snare.

## Sept. 8



### Ruth 2:1–3:6 (NRSV)

#### *Ruth Meets Boaz*

Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband's side, a prominent rich man, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. <sup>2</sup> And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone in whose sight I may find favor." She said to her, "Go, my daughter." <sup>3</sup> So she went. She came and gleaned in the field behind the reapers. As it happened, she came to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. <sup>4</sup> Just then Boaz came from Bethlehem. He said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you." They answered, "The LORD bless you." <sup>5</sup> Then

Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "To whom does this young woman belong?" <sup>6</sup> The servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is the Moabite who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab." <sup>7</sup> She said, 'Please, let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.' So she came, and she has been on her feet from early this morning until now, without resting even for a moment."

<sup>8</sup> Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. <sup>9</sup> Keep your eyes on the field that is being reaped, and follow behind them. I have ordered the young men not to bother you. If you get thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." <sup>10</sup> Then she fell prostrate, with her face to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your sight, that you should take notice of me, when I am a foreigner?" <sup>11</sup> But Boaz

answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD reward you for your deeds, and may you have a full reward from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge!"

<sup>13</sup> Then she said, "May I continue to find favor in your sight, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, even though I am not one of your servants."

<sup>14</sup> At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here, and eat some of this bread, and dip your morsel in the sour wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he heaped up for her some parched grain. She ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. <sup>15</sup> When she got up to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, "Let her glean even among the standing sheaves, and do not reproach her. <sup>16</sup> You must also

pull out some handfuls for her from the bundles, and leave them for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

<sup>17</sup> So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. <sup>18</sup> She picked it up and came into the town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gleaned. Then she took out and gave her what was left over after she herself had been satisfied.

<sup>19</sup> Her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz." <sup>20</sup> Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin."

<sup>21</sup> Then Ruth the Moabite said, "He even said to me, 'Stay close by my servants, until



they have finished all my harvest.’”<sup>22</sup> Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, “It is better, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, otherwise you might be bothered in another field.”

<sup>23</sup> So she stayed close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests; and she lived with her mother-in-law.

### *Ruth and Boaz at the Threshing Floor*

**3** Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, I need to seek some security for you, so that it may be well with you.”<sup>2</sup> Now here is our kinsman Boaz, with whose young women you have been working. See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.<sup>3</sup> Now wash and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.<sup>4</sup> When he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover his feet and lie down;

and he will tell you what to do.”<sup>5</sup> She said to her, “All that you tell me I will do.”

<sup>6</sup> So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her.

### **John 4:31-42** (NRSV)

<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.”<sup>32</sup> But he said to them, **“I have food to eat that you do not know about.”**<sup>33</sup> So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?”<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, **“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.”**<sup>35</sup> Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting.<sup>36</sup> The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.<sup>37</sup> For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’<sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have

labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days.

<sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word. <sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

**Psalms 105:8-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> He is mindful of his covenant forever,  
of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,  
<sup>9</sup> the covenant that he made with Abraham,  
his sworn promise to Isaac,  
<sup>10</sup> which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,  
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,  
<sup>11</sup> saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan

as your portion for an inheritance.”

<sup>12</sup> When they were few in number,  
of little account, and strangers in it,  
<sup>13</sup> wandering from nation to nation,  
from one kingdom to another people,  
<sup>14</sup> he allowed no one to oppress them;  
he rebuked kings on their account,  
<sup>15</sup> saying, “Do not touch my anointed ones;  
do my prophets no harm.”

**Proverbs 22:26–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> Do not be one of those who give pledges,  
who become surety for debts.  
<sup>27</sup> If you have nothing with which to pay,  
why should your bed be taken from under you?

## Sept. 9



### **Ruth 3:7–4:22** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he was in a contented mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came stealthily and uncovered his feet, and lay down. <sup>8</sup> At midnight the man was startled, and turned over, and there, lying at his feet, was a woman! <sup>9</sup> He said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth, your servant; spread your cloak over your servant, for you are next-of-kin.” <sup>10</sup> He said, “May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; this last instance of your loyalty is better than the first; you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. <sup>11</sup> And now, my daughter, do not be afraid, I will do for you all that you ask, for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman. <sup>12</sup> But now, though it is true that I am a near kinsman, there is another kinsman more closely related than I. <sup>13</sup> Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will

act as next-of-kin for you, good; let him do it. If he is not willing to act as next-of-kin for you, then, as the LORD lives, I will act as next-of-kin for you. Lie down until the morning.”

<sup>14</sup> So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before one person could recognize another; for he said, “It must not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” <sup>15</sup> Then he said, “Bring the cloak you are wearing and hold it out.” So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley, and put it on her back; then he went into the city. <sup>16</sup> She came to her mother-in-law, who said, “How did things go with you, my daughter?” Then she told her all that the man had done for her, <sup>17</sup> saying, “He gave me these six measures of barley, for he said, ‘Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’ ” <sup>18</sup> She replied, “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.”

*The Marriage of  
Boaz and Ruth*

**4** No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate and sat down there than the next-of-kin, of whom Boaz had spoken, came passing by. So Boaz said, "Come over, friend; sit down here." And he went over and sat down. <sup>2</sup> Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here"; so they sat down. <sup>3</sup> He then said to the next-of-kin, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. <sup>4</sup> So I thought I would tell you of it, and say: Buy it in the presence of those sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, so that I may know; for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I come after you." So he said, "I will redeem it." <sup>5</sup> Then Boaz said, "The day you acquire the field from the hand of Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead man, to maintain the dead man's name on his

inheritance." <sup>6</sup> At this, the next-of-kin said, "I cannot redeem it for myself without damaging my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

<sup>7</sup> Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one took off a sandal and gave it to the other; this was the manner of attesting in Israel. <sup>8</sup> So when the next-of-kin said to Boaz, "Acquire it for yourself," he took off his sandal. <sup>9</sup> Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have acquired from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. <sup>10</sup> I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife, to maintain the dead man's name on his inheritance, in order that the name of the dead may not be cut off from his kindred and from the gate of his native place; today you are witnesses." <sup>11</sup> Then all the

people who were at the gate, along with the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you produce children in Ephrathah and bestow a name in Bethlehem; <sup>12</sup>and, through the children that the LORD will give you by this young woman, may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

*The Genealogy of David*  
(Matt 1:2–6)

<sup>13</sup>So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When they came together, the LORD made her conceive, and she bore a son. <sup>14</sup>Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel! <sup>15</sup>He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him." <sup>16</sup>Then Naomi took the child

and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse. <sup>17</sup>The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David.

<sup>18</sup>Now these are the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron, <sup>19</sup>Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab, <sup>20</sup>Amminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon, <sup>21</sup>Salmon of Boaz, Boaz of Obed, <sup>22</sup>Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.

**John 4:43-45** (NRSV)

*Jesus Returns to Galilee*

<sup>43</sup>When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee <sup>44</sup>(for Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet's own country). <sup>45</sup>When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival.

**Psalm 105:16-26** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> When he summoned  
famine against the  
land,  
and broke every staff of  
bread,  
<sup>17</sup> he had sent a man ahead  
of them,  
Joseph, who was sold as  
a slave.  
<sup>18</sup> His feet were hurt with  
fetters,  
his neck was put in a  
collar of iron;  
<sup>19</sup> until what he had said  
came to pass,  
the word of the LORD  
kept testing him.  
<sup>20</sup> The king sent and released  
him;  
the ruler of the peoples  
set him free.  
<sup>21</sup> He made him lord of his  
house,  
and ruler of all his  
possessions,  
<sup>22</sup> to instruct his officials at  
his pleasure,  
and to teach his elders  
wisdom.  
<sup>23</sup> Then Israel came to Egypt;  
Jacob lived as an alien in  
the land of Ham.  
<sup>24</sup> And the LORD made his  
people very fruitful,

and made them stronger  
than their foes,  
<sup>25</sup> whose hearts he then  
turned to hate his  
people,  
to deal craftily with his  
servants.  
<sup>26</sup> He sent his servant Moses,  
and Aaron whom he had  
chosen.

**Proverbs 22:28–29** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Do not remove the ancient  
landmark  
that your ancestors set  
up.  
<sup>29</sup> Do you see those who are  
skillful in their work?  
They will serve kings;  
they will not serve  
common people.

**Sept. 10**



**1 Samuel 1:1-23** (NRSV)

*Samuel's Birth and Dedication*

There was a certain man of  
Ramathaim, a Zuphite from  
the hill country of Ephraim,  
whose name was Elkanah son

of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. <sup>2</sup> He had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

<sup>3</sup> Now this man used to go up year by year from his town to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD. <sup>4</sup> On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters; <sup>5</sup> but to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb. <sup>6</sup> Her rival used to provoke her severely, to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. <sup>7</sup> So it went on year by year; as often as she went up to the house of the LORD, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. <sup>8</sup> Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? Why is

your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

<sup>9</sup> After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose and presented herself before the LORD. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the LORD. <sup>10</sup> She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD, and wept bitterly. <sup>11</sup> She made this vow: "O LORD of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head."

<sup>12</sup> As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. <sup>13</sup> Hannah was praying silently; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she was drunk. <sup>14</sup> So Eli said to her, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Put away your wine." <sup>15</sup> But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a

woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD. <sup>16</sup> Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation all this time.” <sup>17</sup> Then Eli answered, “Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him.” <sup>18</sup> And she said, “Let your servant find favor in your sight.” Then the woman went to her quarters, ate and drank with her husband, and her countenance was sad no longer.

<sup>19</sup> They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD; then they went back to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. <sup>20</sup> In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, “I have asked him of the LORD.”

<sup>21</sup> The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow.

<sup>22</sup> But Hannah did not go up,

for she said to her husband, “As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD, and remain there forever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.” <sup>23</sup> Her husband Elkanah said to her, “Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only—may the LORD establish his word.” So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him.

#### **John 4:46-54 (NRSV)**

##### *Jesus Heals an Official's Son*

<sup>46</sup> Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. <sup>47</sup> When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. <sup>48</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “**Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.**” <sup>49</sup> The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my little boy dies.” <sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, “**Go; your son will live.**” The man



believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. <sup>51</sup> As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. <sup>52</sup> So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, “Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him.” <sup>53</sup> The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he himself believed, along with his whole household. <sup>54</sup> Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

**Psalms 105:27-36** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> They performed his signs  
among them,  
and miracles in the land  
of Ham.  
<sup>28</sup> He sent darkness, and  
made the land dark;  
they rebelled against his  
words.  
<sup>29</sup> He turned their waters  
into blood,  
and caused their fish to  
die.  
<sup>30</sup> Their land swarmed with  
frogs,

even in the chambers of  
their kings.  
<sup>31</sup> He spoke, and there came  
swarms of flies,  
and gnats throughout  
their country.  
<sup>32</sup> He gave them hail for rain,  
and lightning that  
flashed through their  
land.  
<sup>33</sup> He struck their vines and  
fig trees,  
and shattered the trees  
of their country.  
<sup>34</sup> He spoke, and the locusts  
came,  
and young locusts  
without number;  
<sup>35</sup> they devoured all the  
vegetation in their  
land,  
and ate up the fruit of  
their ground.  
<sup>36</sup> He struck down all the  
firstborn in their land,  
the first issue of all their  
strength.

**Proverbs 23:1-3** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> When you sit down to eat  
with a ruler,  
observe carefully what is  
before you,  
<sup>2</sup> and put a knife to your  
throat

if you have a big  
appetite.

- <sup>3</sup> Do not desire the ruler's  
delicacies, for they are  
deceptive food.

## Sept. 11



### **1 Samuel 1:24-2:21** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young. <sup>25</sup> Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. <sup>26</sup> And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. <sup>27</sup> For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me the petition that I made to him. <sup>28</sup> Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD."

She left him there for the  
LORD.

### *Hannah's Prayer* (Cp Lk 1:46-55)

- 2** Hannah prayed and said,  
"My heart exults in the  
LORD;  
my strength is exalted in  
my God.  
My mouth derides my  
enemies,  
because I rejoice in my  
victory.
- <sup>2</sup> "There is no Holy One like  
the LORD,  
no one besides you;  
there is no Rock like our  
God.
- <sup>3</sup> Talk no more so very  
proudly,  
let not arrogance come  
from your mouth;  
for the LORD is a God of  
knowledge,  
and by him actions are  
weighed.
- <sup>4</sup> The bows of the mighty  
are broken,  
but the feeble gird on  
strength.
- <sup>5</sup> Those who were full have  
hired themselves out  
for bread,


but those who were  
hungry are fat with  
spoil.

The barren has borne  
seven,  
but she who has many  
children is forlorn.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD kills and brings to  
life;  
he brings down to Sheol  
and raises up.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD makes poor and  
makes rich;  
he brings low, he also  
exalts.

<sup>8</sup> He raises up the poor from  
the dust;  
he lifts the needy from  
the ash heap,  
to make them sit with  
princes  
and inherit a seat of  
honor.



For the pillars of the earth  
are the LORD's,  
and on them he has set  
the world.

<sup>9</sup> "He will guard the feet of  
his faithful ones,  
but the wicked shall be  
cut off in darkness;  
for not by might does  
one prevail.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD! His adversaries  
shall be shattered;

the Most High will  
thunder in heaven.  
The LORD will judge the  
ends of the earth;  
he will give strength to  
his king,  
and exalt the power of  
his anointed."

*Eli's Wicked Sons*

<sup>11</sup> Then Elkanah went  
home to Ramah, while the boy  
remained to minister to the  
LORD, in the presence of the  
priest Eli.

<sup>12</sup> Now the sons of Eli were  
scoundrels; they had no  
regard for the LORD <sup>13</sup> or for  
the duties of the priests to the  
people. When anyone offered  
sacrifice, the priest's servant  
would come, while the meat  
was boiling, with a three-  
pronged fork in his hand,  
<sup>14</sup> and he would thrust it into  
the pan, or kettle, or caldron,  
or pot; all that the fork  
brought up the priest would  
take for himself. This is what  
they did at Shiloh to all the  
Israelites who came there.

<sup>15</sup> Moreover, before the fat  
was burned, the priest's  
servant would come and say  
to the one who was sacrificing,

“Give meat for the priest to roast; for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but only raw.”<sup>16</sup> And if the man said to him, “Let them burn the fat first, and then take whatever you wish,” he would say, “No, you must give it now; if not, I will take it by force.”<sup>17</sup> Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the LORD; for they treated the offerings of the LORD with contempt.

#### *The Child Samuel at Shiloh*

<sup>18</sup> Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod.<sup>19</sup> His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.<sup>20</sup> Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “May the LORD repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the LORD”; and then they would return to their home.

<sup>21</sup> And the LORD took note of Hannah; she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy

Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

#### **John 5:1-18 (NRSV)**

##### *Jesus Heals on the Sabbath*

<sup>1</sup> After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes.<sup>3</sup> In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.<sup>5</sup> One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”<sup>7</sup> The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.”<sup>8</sup> Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.”<sup>9</sup> At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a sabbath.<sup>10</sup> So the Jews said to the man who had been cured,

“It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.” <sup>11</sup> But he answered them, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your mat and walk.’ ” <sup>12</sup> They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take it up and walk?’ ” <sup>13</sup> Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. <sup>14</sup> Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, **“See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you.”** <sup>15</sup> The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. <sup>16</sup> Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the sabbath. <sup>17</sup> But Jesus answered them, **“My Father is still working, and I also am working.”** <sup>18</sup> For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

**Psalm 105:37-45 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> Then he brought Israel out  
with silver and gold,  
and there was no one  
among their tribes who  
stumbled.  
<sup>38</sup> Egypt was glad when they  
departed,  
for dread of them had  
fallen upon it.  
<sup>39</sup> He spread a cloud for a  
covering,  
and fire to give light by  
night.  
<sup>40</sup> They asked, and he  
brought quails,  
and gave them food  
from heaven in  
abundance.  
<sup>41</sup> He opened the rock, and  
water gushed out;  
it flowed through the  
desert like a river.  
<sup>42</sup> For he remembered his  
holy promise,  
and Abraham, his  
servant.  
<sup>43</sup> So he brought his people  
out with joy,  
his chosen ones with  
singing.  
<sup>44</sup> He gave them the lands of  
the nations,

and they took possession  
of the wealth of the  
peoples,  
<sup>45</sup> that they might keep his  
statutes  
and observe his laws.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 23:4–5** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Do not wear yourself out  
to get rich;  
be wise enough to desist.  
<sup>5</sup> When your eyes light upon  
it, it is gone;  
for suddenly it takes  
wings to itself,  
flying like an eagle  
toward heaven.

**Sept. 12**



**1 Samuel 2:22-3:18** (NRSV)

*Prophecy against Eli's  
Household*

<sup>22</sup> Now Eli was very old. He  
heard all that his sons were  
doing to all Israel, and how  
they lay with the women who  
served at the entrance to the  
tent of meeting. <sup>23</sup> He said to

them, “Why do you do such  
things? For I hear of your evil  
dealings from all these people.

<sup>24</sup> No, my sons; it is not a good  
report that I hear the people  
of the LORD spreading abroad.

<sup>25</sup> If one person sins against  
another, someone can  
intercede for the sinner with  
the LORD; but if someone sins  
against the LORD, who can  
make intercession?” But they  
would not listen to the voice  
of their father; for it was the  
will of the LORD to kill them.

<sup>26</sup> Now the boy Samuel  
continued to grow both in  
stature and in favor with the  
LORD and with the people.

<sup>27</sup> A man of God came to Eli  
and said to him, “Thus the  
LORD has said, ‘I revealed  
myself to the family of your  
ancestor in Egypt when they  
were slaves to the house of  
Pharaoh. <sup>28</sup> I chose him out of  
all the tribes of Israel to be my  
priest, to go up to my altar, to  
offer incense, to wear an  
ephod before me; and I gave  
to the family of your ancestor  
all my offerings by fire from  
the people of Israel. <sup>29</sup> Why  
then look with greedy eye at  
my sacrifices and my offerings

that I commanded, and honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?’

<sup>30</sup> Therefore the LORD the God of Israel declares: ‘I promised that your family and the family of your ancestor should go in and out before me forever’; but now the LORD declares: ‘Far be it from me; for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be treated with contempt.’ <sup>31</sup> See, a time is coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your ancestor’s family, so that no one in your family will live to old age. <sup>32</sup> Then in distress you will look with greedy eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed upon Israel; and no one in your family shall ever live to old age. <sup>33</sup> The only one of you whom I shall not cut off from my altar shall be spared to weep out his eyes and grieve his heart; all the members of your household shall die by the sword. <sup>34</sup> The fate of your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be the sign to you—both of them shall die

on the same day. <sup>35</sup> I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before my anointed one forever. <sup>36</sup> Everyone who is left in your family shall come to implore him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread, and shall say, Please put me in one of the priest’s places, that I may eat a morsel of bread.’ ”

### *Samuel’s Calling and Prophetic Activity*

**3** Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

<sup>2</sup> At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; <sup>3</sup> the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD called, “Samuel! Samuel!” and he said, “Here I am!” <sup>5</sup> and ran to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I

did not call; lie down again.”  
So he went and lay down.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD called again,  
“Samuel!” Samuel got up and  
went to Eli, and said, “Here I  
am, for you called me.” But he  
said, “I did not call, my son; lie  
down again.” <sup>7</sup>Now Samuel  
did not yet know the LORD, and  
the word of the LORD had not  
yet been revealed to him.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD called Samuel again,  
a third time. And he got up  
and went to Eli, and said,  
“Here I am, for you called me.”  
Then Eli perceived that the  
LORD was calling the boy.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore Eli said to Samuel,  
“Go, lie down; and if he calls  
you, you shall say, ‘Speak,  
LORD, for your servant is  
listening.’” So Samuel went  
and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup>Now the LORD came and  
stood there, calling as before,  
“Samuel! Samuel!” And  
Samuel said, “Speak, for your  
servant is listening.” <sup>11</sup>Then  
the LORD said to Samuel, “See,  
I am about to do something in  
Israel that will make both ears  
of anyone who hears of it  
tingle. <sup>12</sup>On that day I will  
fulfill against Eli all that I have  
spoken concerning his house,

from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup>For I  
have told him that I am about  
to punish his house forever,  
for the iniquity that he knew,  
because his sons were  
blaspheming God, and he did  
not restrain them. <sup>14</sup>Therefore  
I swear to the house of Eli that  
the iniquity of Eli’s house shall  
not be expiated by sacrifice or  
offering forever.”

<sup>15</sup>Samuel lay there until  
morning; then he opened the  
doors of the house of the  
LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell  
the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup>But Eli  
called Samuel and said,  
“Samuel, my son.” He said,  
“Here I am.” <sup>17</sup>Eli said, “What  
was it that he told you? Do not  
hide it from me. May God do  
so to you and more also, if you  
hide anything from me of all  
that he told you.” <sup>18</sup>So Samuel  
told him everything and hid  
nothing from him. Then he  
said, “It is the LORD; let him do  
what seems good to him.”

### **John 5:19-23 (NRSV)**

*The Authority of the Son*

<sup>19</sup>Jesus said to them, “Very  
truly, I tell you, the Son can do  
nothing on his own, but only  
what he sees the Father doing;



for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.<sup>20</sup> The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished.

<sup>21</sup> Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes.<sup>22</sup> The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son,<sup>23</sup> so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

### **Psalms 106:1-2** (NRSV)

*A Confession of Israel's Sins*

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.
- <sup>2</sup> Who can utter the mighty doings of the LORD, or declare all his praise?

### **Proverbs 23:6-8** (NRSV)

- <sup>6</sup> Do not eat the bread of the stingy; do not desire their delicacies;

- <sup>7</sup> for like a hair in the throat, so are they.  
“Eat and drink!” they say to you; but they do not mean it.

## Sept. 13



### **1 Samuel 3:19-4:22** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.<sup>20</sup> And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.<sup>21</sup> The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

**4**<sup>1</sup> And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

### *The Ark of God Captured*

In those days the Philistines mustered for war against Israel, and Israel went out to battle against them; they encamped at Ebenezer,

and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. <sup>2</sup>The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle was joined, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. <sup>3</sup>When the troops came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD put us to rout today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, so that he may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies." <sup>4</sup>So the people sent to Shiloh, and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

<sup>5</sup>When the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. <sup>6</sup>When the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" When they learned that the

ark of the LORD had come to the camp, <sup>7</sup>the Philistines were afraid; for they said, "Gods have come into the camp." They also said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. <sup>8</sup>Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. <sup>9</sup>Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, in order not to become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight."

<sup>10</sup>So the Philistines fought; Israel was defeated, and they fled, everyone to his home. There was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. <sup>11</sup>The ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

### *Death of Eli*

<sup>12</sup>A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line, and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes torn and with earth upon his head. <sup>13</sup>When he arrived, Eli was sitting upon his seat by the road watching, for

his heart trembled for the ark of God. When the man came into the city and told the news, all the city cried out.

<sup>14</sup> When Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he said, “What is this uproar?” Then the man came quickly and told Eli.

<sup>15</sup> Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes were set, so that he could not see.

<sup>16</sup> The man said to Eli, “I have just come from the battle; I fled from the battle today.” He said, “How did it go, my son?”

<sup>17</sup> The messenger replied, “Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a great slaughter among the troops; your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.” <sup>18</sup> When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and heavy. He had judged Israel forty years.

<sup>19</sup> Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant, about to give birth. When she heard the news that the ark of God was captured,

and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed and gave birth; for her labor pains overwhelmed her.

<sup>20</sup> As she was about to die, the women attending her said to her, “Do not be afraid, for you have borne a son.” But she did not answer or give heed.

<sup>21</sup> She named the child Ichabod, meaning, “The glory has departed from Israel,” because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. <sup>22</sup> She said, “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

### **John 5:24-38 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

<sup>25</sup> “Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

<sup>26</sup> For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in

himself; <sup>27</sup> and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup> Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice <sup>29</sup> and will come out—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

*Witnesses to Jesus*

<sup>30</sup> “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

<sup>31</sup> “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true.

<sup>32</sup> There is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that his testimony to me is true. <sup>33</sup> You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. <sup>34</sup> Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. <sup>35</sup> He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. <sup>36</sup> But I have a testimony greater than John’s. The works that the

Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. <sup>37</sup> And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, <sup>38</sup> and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

**Psalm 106:3-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times.

<sup>4</sup> Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you deliver them;

<sup>5</sup> that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory in your heritage.

**Proverbs 23:9–11 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,

who will only despise the  
wisdom of your words.  
<sup>10</sup> Do not remove an ancient  
landmark  
or encroach on the fields  
of orphans,  
<sup>11</sup> for their redeemer is  
strong;  
he will plead their cause  
against you.

## Sept. 14



### 1 Samuel 5:1-6:12 (NRSV)

#### *The Philistines and the Ark*

When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod; <sup>2</sup> then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of Dagon and placed it beside Dagon. <sup>3</sup> When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and put him back in his place. <sup>4</sup> But when they rose early on the next

morning, Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off upon the threshold; only the trunk of Dagon was left to him. <sup>5</sup> This is why the priests of Dagon and all who enter the house of Dagon do not step on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

<sup>6</sup> The hand of the LORD was heavy upon the people of Ashdod, and he terrified and struck them with tumors, both in Ashdod and in its territory. <sup>7</sup> And when the inhabitants of Ashdod saw how things were, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us; for his hand is heavy on us and on our god Dagon." <sup>8</sup> So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" The inhabitants of Gath replied, "Let the ark of God be moved on to us." So they moved the ark of the God of Israel to Gath. <sup>9</sup> But after they had brought it to Gath, the hand of the LORD was against the city, causing a very

great panic; he struck the inhabitants of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them.<sup>10</sup> So they sent the ark of the God of Israel to Ekron. But when the ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, "Why have they brought around to us the ark of the God of Israel to kill us and our people?"<sup>11</sup> They sent therefore and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, that it may not kill us and our people." For there was a deathly panic throughout the whole city. The hand of God was very heavy there;<sup>12</sup> those who did not die were stricken with tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

### *The Ark Returned to Israel*

**6** The ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months.<sup>2</sup> Then the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us

what we should send with it to its place."<sup>3</sup> They said, "If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it empty, but by all means return him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed and will be ransomed; will not his hand then turn from you?"<sup>4</sup> And they said, "What is the guilt offering that we shall return to him?" They answered, "Five gold tumors and five gold mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines; for the same plague was upon all of you and upon your lords."<sup>5</sup> So you must make images of your tumors and images of your mice that ravage the land, and give glory to the God of Israel; perhaps he will lighten his hand on you and your gods and your land.<sup>6</sup> Why should you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? After he had made fools of them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?<sup>7</sup> Now then, get ready a new cart and two milch cows that have never borne a yoke, and yoke the cows to the cart, but take their calves home, away from them.

<sup>8</sup> Take the ark of the LORD and place it on the cart, and put in a box at its side the figures of gold, which you are returning to him as a guilt offering. Then send it off, and let it go its way. <sup>9</sup> And watch; if it goes up on the way to its own land, to Beth-shemesh, then it is he who has done us this great harm; but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that struck us; it happened to us by chance.”

<sup>10</sup> The men did so; they took two milch cows and yoked them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. <sup>11</sup> They put the ark of the LORD on the cart, and the box with the gold mice and the images of their tumors. <sup>12</sup> The cows went straight in the direction of Beth-shemesh along one highway, lowing as they went; they turned neither to the right nor to the left, and the lords of the Philistines went after them as far as the border of Beth-shemesh.

**John 5:39-47 (NRSV)**

<sup>39</sup> “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal

life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. <sup>40</sup> Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. <sup>41</sup> I do not accept glory from human beings. <sup>42</sup> But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. <sup>43</sup> I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. <sup>44</sup> How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? <sup>45</sup> Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. <sup>46</sup> If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. <sup>47</sup> But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?”

**Psalm 106:6-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity, have done wickedly.  
<sup>7</sup> Our ancestors, when they were in Egypt,

did not consider your  
wonderful works;  
they did not remember the  
abundance of your  
steadfast love,  
but rebelled against the  
Most High at the Red  
Sea.

8 Yet he saved them for his  
name's sake,  
so that he might make  
known his mighty  
power.

9 He rebuked the Red Sea,  
and it became dry;  
he led them through the  
deep as through a  
desert.

10 So he saved them from the  
hand of the foe,  
and delivered them from  
the hand of the enemy.

11 The waters covered their  
adversaries;  
not one of them was left.

12 Then they believed his  
words;  
they sang his praise.

**Proverbs 23:12** (NRSV)

12 Apply your mind to  
instruction  
and your ear to words of  
knowledge.

**Sept. 15**



**1 Samuel 6:13-7:17** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Now the people of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley.

When they looked up and saw the ark, they went with rejoicing to meet it. <sup>14</sup> The cart

came into the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh, and stopped there. A large stone was there; so they split up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> The Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the box that was beside it, in which were the gold objects, and set them upon the large stone.

Then the people of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and presented sacrifices on that day to the LORD. <sup>16</sup> When the five lords of the Philistines saw it, they returned that day to Ekron.

<sup>17</sup> These are the gold tumors, which the Philistines returned as a guilt offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron;

<sup>18</sup> also the gold mice,



according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both fortified cities and unwallled villages. The great stone, beside which they set down the ark of the LORD, is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

### *The Ark at Kiriath-jearim*

<sup>19</sup>The descendants of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the people of Beth-shemesh when they greeted the ark of the LORD; and he killed seventy men of them. The people mourned because the LORD had made a great slaughter among the people. <sup>20</sup>Then the people of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? To whom shall he go so that we may be rid of him?" <sup>21</sup>So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down and take it up to you."

**7** <sup>1</sup>And the people of Kiriath-jearim came and took up the ark of the LORD, and

brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. They consecrated his son, Eleazar, to have charge of the ark of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>From the day that the ark was lodged at Kiriath-jearim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

### *Samuel as Judge*

<sup>3</sup>Then Samuel said to all the house of Israel, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Astartes from among you. Direct your heart to the LORD, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." <sup>4</sup>So Israel put away the Baals and the Astartes, and they served the LORD only.

<sup>5</sup>Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." <sup>6</sup>So they gathered at Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the LORD. They fasted that day, and said, "We have sinned against the

LORD.” And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah.

<sup>7</sup> When the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the people of Israel heard of it they were afraid of the Philistines. <sup>8</sup> The people of Israel said to Samuel, “Do not cease to cry out to the LORD our God for us, and pray that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.” <sup>9</sup> So Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD; Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him.

<sup>10</sup> As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel; but the LORD thundered with a mighty voice that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion; and they were routed before Israel. <sup>11</sup> And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and struck them down as far as beyond Beth-car.

<sup>12</sup> Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between

Mizpah and Jeshanah, and named it Ebenezer; for he said, “Thus far the LORD has helped us.” <sup>13</sup> So the Philistines were subdued and did not again enter the territory of Israel; the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. <sup>14</sup> The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered their territory from the hand of the Philistines. There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites.

<sup>15</sup> Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. <sup>16</sup> He went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all these places. <sup>17</sup> Then he would come back to Ramah, for his home was there; he administered justice there to Israel, and built there an altar to the LORD.

### **John 6:1-15 (NRSV)**

*Feeding the Five Thousand*  
(Mt 14:13–21; Mk 6:30–44;  
Lk 9:10–17)

<sup>1</sup> After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of

Tiberias. <sup>2</sup> A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. <sup>3</sup> Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. <sup>4</sup> Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. <sup>5</sup> When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” <sup>6</sup> He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. <sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.” <sup>8</sup> One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, <sup>9</sup> “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” <sup>10</sup> Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. <sup>11</sup> Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup> When they were

satisfied, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.” <sup>13</sup> So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. <sup>14</sup> When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.”

<sup>15</sup> When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

#### **Psalm 106:13-23 (NRSV)**

- <sup>13</sup> But they soon forgot his works;  
they did not wait for his counsel.
- <sup>14</sup> But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness,  
and put God to the test in the desert;
- <sup>15</sup> he gave them what they asked,  
but sent a wasting disease among them.
- <sup>16</sup> They were jealous of Moses in the camp,

and of Aaron, the holy  
 one of the LORD.

17 The earth opened and  
 swallowed up Dathan,  
 and covered the faction  
 of Abiram.

18 Fire also broke out in their  
 company;  
 the flame burned up the  
 wicked.

19 They made a calf at Horeb  
 and worshiped a cast  
 image.

20 They exchanged the glory  
 of God  
 for the image of an ox  
 that eats grass.

21 They forgot God, their  
 Savior,  
 who had done great  
 things in Egypt,

22 wondrous works in the  
 land of Ham,  
 and awesome deeds by  
 the Red Sea.

23 Therefore he said he  
 would destroy them—  
 had not Moses, his  
 chosen one,  
 stood in the breach before  
 him,  
 to turn away his wrath  
 from destroying them.

**Proverbs 23:13–14** (NRSV)

13 Do not withhold discipline  
 from your children;  
 if you beat them with a  
 rod, they will not die.

14 If you beat them with the  
 rod,  
 you will save their lives  
 from Sheol.

## Sept. 16



**1 Samuel 8:1-22** (NRSV)

### *Israel Demands a King*

When Samuel became old,  
 he made his sons judges over  
 Israel. <sup>2</sup>The name of his  
 firstborn son was Joel, and the  
 name of his second, Abijah;  
 they were judges in Beer-  
 sheba. <sup>3</sup>Yet his sons did not  
 follow in his ways, but turned  
 aside after gain; they took  
 bribes and perverted justice.

<sup>4</sup>Then all the elders of  
 Israel gathered together and  
 came to Samuel at Ramah,  
<sup>5</sup>and said to him, “You are old  
 and your sons do not follow in  
 your ways; appoint for us,  
 then, a king to govern us, like  
 other nations.” <sup>6</sup>But the thing

displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to govern us." Samuel prayed to the LORD,<sup>7</sup> and the LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them."<sup>8</sup> Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you.<sup>9</sup> Now then, listen to their voice; only—you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

<sup>10</sup> So Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king.<sup>11</sup> He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots;<sup>12</sup> and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his

harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots.<sup>13</sup> He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.<sup>14</sup> He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers.<sup>15</sup> He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers.<sup>16</sup> He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle and donkeys, and put them to his work.<sup>17</sup> He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves.<sup>18</sup> And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

*Israel's Request  
for a King Granted*

<sup>19</sup> But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, "No! but we are determined to have a king over us,<sup>20</sup> so that we also may be like other nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our

battles.”<sup>21</sup> When Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD.<sup>22</sup> The LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to their voice and set a king over them.” Samuel then said to the people of Israel, “Each of you return home.”

**John 6:16-21 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Walks on the Water*  
(Mt 14:22-33; Mk 6:45-52)

<sup>16</sup> When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, <sup>17</sup> got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. <sup>18</sup> The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. <sup>19</sup> When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. <sup>20</sup> But he said to them, “**It is I; do not be afraid.**” <sup>21</sup> Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

**Psalm 106:24-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> Then they despised the pleasant land,  
having no faith in his promise.  
<sup>25</sup> They grumbled in their tents,  
and did not obey the voice of the LORD.  
<sup>26</sup> Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them  
that he would make them fall in the wilderness,  
<sup>27</sup> and would disperse their descendants among the nations,  
scattering them over the lands.  
<sup>28</sup> Then they attached themselves to the Baal of Peor,  
and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;  
<sup>29</sup> they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds,  
and a plague broke out among them.  
<sup>30</sup> Then Phinehas stood up and interceded,  
and the plague was stopped.

<sup>31</sup> And that has been reckoned to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever.

**Proverbs 23:15–16** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> My child, if your heart is wise,  
my heart too will be glad.  
<sup>16</sup> My soul will rejoice when your lips speak what is right.

## Sept. 17



**1 Samuel 9:1-27** (NRSV)

*Saul Chosen to Be King*

**9** There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Becorath son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. <sup>2</sup> He had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he; he stood head and

shoulders above everyone else.

<sup>3</sup> Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, had strayed. So Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the boys with you; go and look for the donkeys." <sup>4</sup> He passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he passed through the land of Benjamin, but they did not find them.

<sup>5</sup> When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to the boy who was with him, "Let us turn back, or my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and worry about us."

<sup>6</sup> But he said to him, "There is a man of God in this town; he is a man held in honor.

Whatever he says always comes true. Let us go there now; perhaps he will tell us about the journey on which we have set out." <sup>7</sup> Then Saul replied to the boy, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no

present to bring to the man of God. What have we?"<sup>8</sup> The boy answered Saul again, "Here, I have with me a quarter shekel of silver; I will give it to the man of God, to tell us our way."<sup>9</sup> (Formerly in Israel, anyone who went to inquire of God would say, "Come, let us go to the seer"; for the one who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.)<sup>10</sup> Saul said to the boy, "Good; come, let us go." So they went to the town where the man of God was.

<sup>11</sup> As they went up the hill to the town, they met some girls coming out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?"<sup>12</sup> They answered, "Yes, there he is just ahead of you. Hurry; he has come just now to the town, because the people have a sacrifice today at the shrine."<sup>13</sup> As soon as you enter the town, you will find him, before he goes up to the shrine to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, since he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those eat who are invited. Now go up, for you will meet him

immediately."<sup>14</sup> So they went up to the town. As they were entering the town, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the shrine.

<sup>15</sup> Now the day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed to Samuel:<sup>16</sup> "Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be ruler over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have seen the suffering of my people, because their outcry has come to me."<sup>17</sup> When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. He it is who shall rule over my people."<sup>18</sup> Then Saul approached Samuel inside the gate, and said, "Tell me, please, where is the house of the seer?"<sup>19</sup> Samuel answered Saul, "I am the seer; go up before me to the shrine, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind."<sup>20</sup> As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, give no further



thought to them, for they have been found. And on whom is all Israel's desire fixed, if not on you and on all your ancestral house?" <sup>21</sup> Saul answered, "I am only a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel, and my family is the humblest of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin. Why then have you spoken to me in this way?"

<sup>22</sup> Then Samuel took Saul and his servant-boy and brought them into the hall, and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited, of whom there were about thirty. <sup>23</sup> And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion I gave you, the one I asked you to put aside." <sup>24</sup> The cook took up the thigh and what went with it and set them before Saul. Samuel said, "See, what was kept is set before you. Eat; for it is set before you at the appointed time, so that you might eat with the guests."

So Saul ate with Samuel that day. <sup>25</sup> When they came down from the shrine into the town, a bed was spread for Saul on the roof, and he lay

down to sleep. <sup>26</sup> Then at the break of dawn Samuel called to Saul upon the roof, "Get up, so that I may send you on your way." Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.

#### *Samuel Anoints Saul*

<sup>27</sup> As they were going down to the outskirts of the town, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the boy to go on before us, and when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while, that I may make known to you the word of God."

#### **John 6:22-29** (NRSV)

##### *The Bread from Heaven*

<sup>22</sup> The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there. They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. <sup>23</sup> Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. <sup>24</sup> So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves

got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

<sup>25</sup> When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" <sup>26</sup> Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. <sup>27</sup> Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."

<sup>28</sup> Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

**Psalms 106:32-46** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> They angered the LORD at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses on their account;

<sup>33</sup> for they made his spirit bitter, and he spoke words that were rash.

<sup>34</sup> They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD commanded them,

<sup>35</sup> but they mingled with the nations and learned to do as they did.

<sup>36</sup> They served their idols, which became a snare to them.

<sup>37</sup> They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons;

<sup>38</sup> they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood.

<sup>39</sup> Thus they became unclean by their acts, and prostituted themselves in their doings.

<sup>40</sup> Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people, and he abhorred his heritage;

<sup>41</sup> he gave them into the hand of the nations,

so that those who hated  
them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies oppressed  
them,  
and they were brought  
into subjection under  
their power.

43 Many times he delivered  
them,  
but they were rebellious  
in their purposes,  
and were brought low  
through their iniquity.

44 Nevertheless he regarded  
their distress  
when he heard their cry.

45 For their sake he  
remembered his  
covenant,  
and showed compassion  
according to the  
abundance of his  
steadfast love.

46 He caused them to be  
pitied  
by all who held them  
captive.

### **Proverbs 23:17–18 (NRSV)**

17 Do not let your heart envy  
sinners,  
but always continue in  
the fear of the LORD.

18 Surely there is a future,

and your hope will not  
be cut off.

## **Sept. 18**



### **1 Samuel 10:1-27 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> Samuel took a vial of oil  
and poured it on his head, and  
kissed him; he said, “The LORD  
has anointed you ruler over his  
people Israel. You shall reign  
over the people of the LORD  
and you will save them from  
the hand of their enemies all  
around. Now this shall be the  
sign to you that the LORD has  
anointed you ruler over his  
heritage: <sup>2</sup>When you depart  
from me today you will meet  
two men by Rachel’s tomb in  
the territory of Benjamin at  
Zelzah; they will say to you,  
‘The donkeys that you went to  
seek are found, and now your  
father has stopped worrying  
about them and is worrying  
about you, saying: What shall I  
do about my son?’ <sup>3</sup>Then you  
shall go on from there further  
and come to the oak of Tabor;

three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. <sup>4</sup>They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from them. <sup>5</sup>After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, at the place where the Philistine garrison is; there, as you come to the town, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the shrine with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre playing in front of them; they will be in a prophetic frenzy. <sup>6</sup>Then the spirit of the LORD will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person. <sup>7</sup>Now when these signs meet you, do whatever you see fit to do, for God is with you. <sup>8</sup>And you shall go down to Gilgal ahead of me; then I will come down to you to present burnt offerings and offer sacrifices of well-being. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do.”

### *Saul Prophecies*

<sup>9</sup>As he turned away to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart; and all these signs were fulfilled that day. <sup>10</sup>When they were going from there to Gibeah, a band of prophets met him; and the spirit of God possessed him, and he fell into a prophetic frenzy along with them. <sup>11</sup>When all who knew him before saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, “What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” <sup>12</sup>A man of the place answered, “And who is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” <sup>13</sup>When his prophetic frenzy had ended, he went home. <sup>14</sup>Saul’s uncle said to him and to the boy, “Where did you go?” And he replied, “To seek the donkeys; and when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel.” <sup>15</sup>Saul’s uncle said, “Tell me what Samuel said to you.” <sup>16</sup>Saul said to his uncle, “He told us that the donkeys had been found.” But about the

matter of the kingship, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything.

### *Saul Proclaimed King*

<sup>17</sup> Samuel summoned the people to the LORD at Mizpah <sup>18</sup> and said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' <sup>19</sup> But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses; and you have said, 'No! but set a king over us.' Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."

<sup>20</sup> Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. <sup>21</sup> He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the family of the Matrites was taken by lot. Finally he brought the family of the Matrites near man by man, and Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not

be found. <sup>22</sup> So they inquired again of the LORD, "Did the man come here?" and the LORD said, "See, he has hidden himself among the baggage."

<sup>23</sup> Then they ran and brought him from there. When he took his stand among the people, he was head and shoulders taller than any of them.

<sup>24</sup> Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the one whom the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people." And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

<sup>25</sup> Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship; and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people back to their homes. <sup>26</sup> Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went warriors whose hearts God had touched. <sup>27</sup> But some worthless fellows said, "How can this man save us?" They despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the

Gadites and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had escaped from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead.

**John 6:30-42 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?" <sup>31</sup> Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' " <sup>32</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." <sup>34</sup> They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

<sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

<sup>36</sup> But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. <sup>37</sup> Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; <sup>38</sup> for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup> And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. <sup>40</sup> This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

<sup>41</sup> Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

<sup>42</sup> They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

**Psalm 106:47-48** (NRSV)

<sup>47</sup> Save us, O LORD our God,  
and gather us from  
among the nations,  
that we may give thanks to  
your holy name  
and glory in your praise.  
<sup>48</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the  
God of Israel,  
from everlasting to  
everlasting.  
And let all the people say,  
“Amen.”  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 23:19–21** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> Hear, my child, and be  
wise,  
and direct your mind in  
the way.  
<sup>20</sup> Do not be among  
winebibbers,  
or among gluttonous  
eaters of meat;  
<sup>21</sup> for the drunkard and the  
glutton will come to  
poverty, and  
drowsiness will clothe  
them with rags.

**Sept. 19**



**1 Samuel 11:1-15** (NRSV)

*Saul Defeats the Ammonites*

About a month later,  
Nahash the Ammonite went  
up and besieged Jabesh-  
gilead; and all the men of  
Jabesh said to Nahash, “Make  
a treaty with us, and we will  
serve you.” <sup>2</sup> But Nahash the  
Ammonite said to them, “On  
this condition I will make a  
treaty with you, namely that I  
gouge out everyone’s right  
eye, and thus put disgrace  
upon all Israel.” <sup>3</sup> The elders of  
Jabesh said to him, “Give us  
seven days’ respite that we  
may send messengers through  
all the territory of Israel. Then,  
if there is no one to save us,  
we will give ourselves up to  
you.” <sup>4</sup> When the messengers  
came to Gibeah of Saul, they  
reported the matter in the  
hearing of the people; and all  
the people wept aloud.

<sup>5</sup> Now Saul was coming  
from the field behind the  
oxen; and Saul said, “What is  
the matter with the people,  
that they are weeping?” So  
they told him the message

from the inhabitants of Jabesh. <sup>6</sup> And the spirit of God came upon Saul in power when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. <sup>7</sup> He took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by messengers, saying, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!" Then the dread of the LORD fell upon the people, and they came out as one. <sup>8</sup> When he mustered them at Bezek, those from Israel were three hundred thousand, and those from Judah seventy thousand. <sup>9</sup> They said to the messengers who had come, "Thus shall you say to the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have deliverance.' " When the messengers came and told the inhabitants of Jabesh, they rejoiced. <sup>10</sup> So the inhabitants of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will give ourselves up to you, and you may do to us whatever seems good to you." <sup>11</sup> The next day Saul put the people in three

companies. At the morning watch they came into the camp and cut down the Ammonites until the heat of the day; and those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

<sup>12</sup> The people said to Samuel, "Who is it that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Give them to us so that we may put them to death." <sup>13</sup> But Saul said, "No one shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has brought deliverance to Israel."

<sup>14</sup> Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingship." <sup>15</sup> So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they sacrificed offerings of well-being before the LORD, and there Saul and all the Israelites rejoiced greatly.

#### **John 6:43-52 (NRSV)**

<sup>43</sup> Jesus answered them, "**Do not complain among yourselves.** <sup>44</sup> **No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I**



will raise that person up on the last day.<sup>45</sup> It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’

Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.<sup>46</sup> Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.

<sup>47</sup> Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life.<sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life.

<sup>49</sup> Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.<sup>50</sup> This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.<sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

<sup>52</sup> The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

### **Psalms 107:1-3** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for Deliverance  
from Many Troubles*

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good;

for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the  
LORD say so,  
those he redeemed from  
trouble  
<sup>3</sup> and gathered in from the  
lands,  
from the east and from  
the west,  
from the north and from  
the south.

### **Proverbs 23:22** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Listen to your father who  
begot you,  
and do not despise your  
mother when she is  
old.

## **Sept. 20**



### **1 Samuel 12:1-25** (NRSV)

*Samuel's Farewell Address*

Samuel said to all Israel, “I have listened to you in all that you have said to me, and have set a king over you.<sup>2</sup> See, it is the king who leads you now; I am old and gray, but my sons

are with you. I have led you from my youth until this day.

<sup>3</sup> Here I am; testify against me before the LORD and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? Testify against me and I will restore it to you.” <sup>4</sup> They said, “You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from the hand of anyone.” <sup>5</sup> He said to them, “The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand.” And they said, “He is witness.”

<sup>6</sup> Samuel said to the people, “The LORD is witness, who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your ancestors up out of the land of Egypt. <sup>7</sup> Now therefore take your stand, so that I may enter into judgment with you before the LORD, and I will declare to you all the saving deeds of the LORD that he performed for you and for your ancestors.

<sup>8</sup> When Jacob went into Egypt

and the Egyptians oppressed them, then your ancestors cried to the LORD and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought forth your ancestors out of Egypt, and settled them in this place. <sup>9</sup> But they forgot the LORD their God; and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of King Jabin of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them. <sup>10</sup> Then they cried to the LORD, and said, ‘We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served the Baals and the Astartes; but now rescue us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve you.’ <sup>11</sup> And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak, and Jephthah, and Samson, and rescued you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you lived in safety. <sup>12</sup> But when you saw that King Nahash of the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, ‘No, but a king shall reign over us,’ though the LORD your God was your king. <sup>13</sup> See, here is the king whom you have

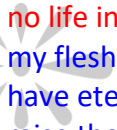
chosen, for whom you have asked; see, the LORD has set a king over you. <sup>14</sup> If you will fear the LORD and serve him and heed his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well; <sup>15</sup> but if you will not heed the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king. <sup>16</sup> Now therefore take your stand and see this great thing that the LORD will do before your eyes. <sup>17</sup> Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call upon the LORD, that he may send thunder and rain; and you shall know and see that the wickedness that you have done in the sight of the LORD is great in demanding a king for yourselves.” <sup>18</sup> So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

<sup>19</sup> All the people said to Samuel, “Pray to the LORD your God for your servants, so that

we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of demanding a king for ourselves.” <sup>20</sup> And Samuel said to the people, “Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart; <sup>21</sup> and do not turn aside after useless things that cannot profit or save, for they are useless. <sup>22</sup> For the LORD will not cast away his people, for his great name’s sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself. <sup>23</sup> Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. <sup>24</sup> Only fear the LORD, and serve him faithfully with all your heart; for consider what great things he has done for you. <sup>25</sup> But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king.”

**John 6:53-71 (NRSV)**

<sup>53</sup> So Jesus said to them, “**Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man**



and drink his blood, you have no life in you.<sup>54</sup> Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day;<sup>55</sup> for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.

<sup>56</sup> Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.<sup>57</sup> Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.<sup>58</sup> This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

<sup>59</sup> He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

### *The Words of Eternal Life*

<sup>60</sup> When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?”<sup>61</sup> But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you?<sup>62</sup> Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he

was before?”<sup>63</sup> It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.<sup>64</sup> But among you there are some who do not believe.”

For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him.

<sup>65</sup> And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

<sup>66</sup> Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.<sup>67</sup> So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?”<sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.<sup>69</sup> We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”<sup>70</sup> Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil.”<sup>71</sup> He was speaking of Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for he, though one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

**Psalms 107:4-32 (NRSV)**

4 Some wandered in desert wastes,  
finding no way to an inhabited town;  
5 hungry and thirsty,  
their soul fainted within them.  
6 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he delivered them  
from their distress;  
7 he led them by a straight way,  
until they reached an inhabited town.  
8 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
9 For he satisfies the thirsty,  
and the hungry he fills  
with good things.  
10 Some sat in darkness and  
in gloom,  
prisoners in misery and  
in irons,  
11 for they had rebelled  
against the words of  
God,  
and spurned the counsel  
of the Most High.  
12 Their hearts were bowed  
down with hard labor;

they fell down, with no  
one to help.  
13 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he saved them from  
their distress;  
14 he brought them out of  
darkness and gloom,  
and broke their bonds  
asunder.  
15 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
16 For he shatters the doors  
of bronze,  
and cuts in two the bars  
of iron.  
17 Some were sick through  
their sinful ways,  
and because of their  
iniquities endured  
affliction;  
18 they loathed any kind of  
food,  
and they drew near to  
the gates of death.  
19 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he saved them from  
their distress;  
20 he sent out his word and  
healed them,  
and delivered them from  
destruction.

21 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
22 And let them offer  
thanksgiving sacrifices,  
and tell of his deeds with  
songs of joy.  
23 Some went down to the  
sea in ships,  
doing business on the  
mighty waters;  
24 they saw the deeds of the  
LORD,  
his wondrous works in  
the deep.  
25 For he commanded and  
raised the stormy  
wind,  
which lifted up the  
waves of the sea.  
26 They mounted up to  
heaven, they went  
down to the depths;  
their courage melted  
away in their calamity;  
27 they reeled and staggered  
like drunkards,  
and were at their wits'  
end.  
28 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he brought them out  
from their distress;  
29 he made the storm be still,

and the waves of the sea  
were hushed.  
30 Then they were glad  
because they had  
quiet,  
and he brought them to  
their desired haven.  
31 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
32 Let them extol him in the  
congregation of the  
people,  
and praise him in the  
assembly of the elders.

**Proverbs 23:23** (NRSV)

23 Buy truth, and do not sell  
it;  
buy wisdom, instruction,  
and understanding.

## Sept. 21



### 1 Samuel 13:1-23 (NRSV)

#### *Saul's Unlawful Sacrifice*

Saul was <sup>1</sup>... years old when he began to reign; and he reigned ... and two years over Israel.

<sup>2</sup> Saul chose three thousand out of Israel; two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin; the rest of the people he sent home to their tents. <sup>3</sup> Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba; and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!" <sup>4</sup> When all Israel heard that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become odious to the Philistines, the people were called out to join Saul at Gilgal.

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<sup>1</sup> In a few Greek manuscripts the numbers are missing. Other ancient authorities say he was 30 yrs old and reigned for 40.

<sup>5</sup> The Philistines mustered to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and troops like the sand on the seashore in multitude; they came up and encamped at Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven. <sup>6</sup> When the Israelites saw that they were in distress (for the troops were hard pressed), the people hid themselves in caves and in holes and in rocks and in tombs and in cisterns. <sup>7</sup> Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

<sup>8</sup> He waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people began to slip away from Saul. <sup>9</sup> So Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the offerings of well-being." And he offered the burnt offering. <sup>10</sup> As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, Samuel arrived; and Saul went out to meet him and salute him. <sup>11</sup> Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul replied,

“When I saw that the people were slipping away from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines were mustering at Michmash, <sup>12</sup> I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down upon me at Gilgal, and I have not entreated the favor of the LORD’; so I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering.” <sup>13</sup> Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which he commanded you. The LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever, <sup>14</sup> but now your kingdom will not continue; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart; and the LORD has appointed him to be ruler over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.” <sup>15</sup> And Samuel left and went on his way from Gilgal. The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army; they went up from Gilgal toward Gibeah of Benjamin.

### *Preparations for Battle*

Saul counted the people who were present with him, about six hundred men.

<sup>16</sup> Saul, his son Jonathan, and the people who were present with them stayed in Geba of Benjamin; but the Philistines encamped at Michmash.

<sup>17</sup> And raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies; one company turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual, <sup>18</sup> another company turned toward Beth-horon, and another company turned toward the mountain that looks down upon the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

<sup>19</sup> Now there was no smith to be found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, “The Hebrews must not make swords or spears for themselves”; <sup>20</sup> so all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen their plowshares, mattocks, axes, or sickles; <sup>21</sup> The charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares and for the mattocks, and one-third of a shekel for sharpening the axes



and for setting the goads. <sup>22</sup> So on the day of the battle neither sword nor spear was to be found in the possession of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan; but Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

*Jonathan Surprises  
and Routs the Philistines*

<sup>23</sup> Now a garrison of the Philistines had gone out to the pass of Michmash.

**John 7:1-13** (NRSV)

*The Unbelief of Jesus' Brothers*

<sup>1</sup> After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish to go about in Judea because the Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him. <sup>2</sup> Now the Jewish festival of Booths was near. <sup>3</sup> So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing; <sup>4</sup> for no one who wants to be widely known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> (For not even his brothers believed in him.) <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. <sup>7</sup> The

world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil. <sup>8</sup> Go to the festival yourselves. I am not going to this festival, for my time has not yet fully come." <sup>9</sup> After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

*Jesus at the Festival of Booths*

<sup>10</sup> But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were in secret. <sup>11</sup> The Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, "Where is he?" <sup>12</sup> And there was considerable complaining about him among the crowds. While some were saying, "He is a good man," others were saying, "No, he is deceiving the crowd." <sup>13</sup> Yet no one would speak openly about him for fear of the Jews.

**Psalm 107:33-43** (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> He turns rivers into a desert,  
springs of water into  
thirsty ground,  
<sup>34</sup> a fruitful land into a salty  
waste,

because of the  
wickedness of its  
inhabitants.  
35 He turns a desert into  
pools of water,  
a parched land into  
springs of water.  
36 And there he lets the  
hungry live,  
and they establish a  
town to live in;  
37 they sow fields, and plant  
vineyards,  
and get a fruitful yield.  
38 By his blessing they  
multiply greatly,  
and he does not let their  
cattle decrease.  
39 When they are diminished  
and brought low  
through oppression,  
trouble, and sorrow,  
40 he pours contempt on  
princes  
and makes them wander  
in trackless wastes;  
41 but he raises up the needy  
out of distress,  
and makes their families  
like flocks.  
42 The upright see it and are  
glad;  
and all wickedness stops  
its mouth.

43 Let those who are wise  
give heed to these  
things,  
and consider the  
steadfast love of the  
LORD.

### **Proverbs 23:24** (NRSV)

24 The father of the righteous  
will greatly rejoice;  
he who begets a wise  
son will be glad in him.

## **Sept. 22**



### **1 Samuel 14:1-23** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> One day Jonathan son of  
Saul said to the young man  
who carried his armor, "Come,  
let us go over to the Philistine  
garrison on the other side."  
But he did not tell his father.

<sup>2</sup> Saul was staying in the  
outskirts of Gibeah under the  
pomegranate tree that is at  
Migron; the troops that were  
with him were about six  
hundred men, <sup>3</sup> along with  
Ahijah son of Ahitub,  
Ichabod's brother, son of  
Phinehas son of Eli, the priest

of the LORD in Shiloh, carrying an ephod. Now the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. <sup>4</sup> In the pass, by which Jonathan tried to go over to the Philistine garrison, there was a rocky crag on one side and a rocky crag on the other; the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. <sup>5</sup> One crag rose on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the LORD will act for us; for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few." <sup>7</sup> His armor-bearer said to him, "Do all that your mind inclines to. I am with you; as your mind is, so is mine."

<sup>8</sup> Then Jonathan said, "Now we will cross over to those men and will show ourselves to them. <sup>9</sup> If they say to us, 'Wait until we come to you,' then we will stand still in our place, and we will not go up to them.

<sup>10</sup> But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up; for the

LORD has given them into our hand. That will be the sign for us." <sup>11</sup> So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines; and the Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves." <sup>12</sup> The men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer, saying, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me; for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel." <sup>13</sup> Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor-bearer following after him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer, coming after him, killed them. <sup>14</sup> In that first slaughter Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed about twenty men within an area about half a furrow long in an acre of land. <sup>15</sup> There was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison and even the raiders trembled; the earth quaked;

and it became a very great panic.

<sup>16</sup> Saul's lookouts in Gibeah of Benjamin were watching as the multitude was surging back and forth. <sup>17</sup> Then Saul said to the troops that were with him, "Call the roll and see who has gone from us." When they had called the roll, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there. <sup>18</sup> Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here." For at that time the ark of God went with the Israelites. <sup>19</sup> While Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines increased more and more; and Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." <sup>20</sup> Then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into the battle; and every sword was against the other, so that there was very great confusion. <sup>21</sup> Now the Hebrews who previously had been with the Philistines and had gone up with them into the camp turned and joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. <sup>22</sup> Likewise, when all the Israelites who had gone into hiding in the hill

country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they too followed closely after them in the battle. <sup>23</sup> So the LORD gave Israel the victory that day.

The battle passed beyond Beth-aven, and the troops with Saul numbered altogether about ten thousand men. The battle spread out over the hill country of Ephraim.

#### **John 7:14-30 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach.

<sup>15</sup> The Jews were astonished at it, saying, "How does this man have such learning, when he has never been taught?"

<sup>16</sup> Then Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me. <sup>17</sup> Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own. <sup>18</sup> Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him.

<sup>19</sup> “Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why are you looking for an opportunity to kill me?” <sup>20</sup> The crowd answered, “You have a demon! Who is trying to kill you?” <sup>21</sup> Jesus answered them, “I performed one work, and all of you are astonished. <sup>22</sup> Moses gave you circumcision (it is, of course, not from Moses, but from the patriarchs), and you circumcise a man on the sabbath. <sup>23</sup> If a man receives circumcision on the sabbath in order that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I healed a man’s whole body on the sabbath? <sup>24</sup> Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”

*Is This the Christ?*

<sup>25</sup> Now some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, “Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill? <sup>26</sup> And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah? <sup>27</sup> Yet we know where this man

is from; but when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.” <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus cried out as he was teaching in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I am from. I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him. <sup>29</sup> I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.” <sup>30</sup> Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> Yet many in the crowd believed in him and were saying, “When the Messiah comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

**Psalm 108:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Praise and Prayer for Victory*

(Ps 57:7–11; 60:5–12)

A Song. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> My heart is steadfast, O  
God, my heart is  
steadfast;  
I will sing and make  
melody.  
Awake, my soul!
- <sup>2</sup> Awake, O harp and lyre!  
I will awake the dawn.
- <sup>3</sup> I will give thanks to you, O  
LORD, among the  
peoples,

and I will sing praises to  
you among the  
nations.

- 4 For your steadfast love is  
higher than the  
heavens,  
and your faithfulness  
reaches to the clouds.

**Proverbs 23:25–28** (NRSV)

- 25 Let your father and mother  
be glad;  
let her who bore you  
rejoice.

26 *My child, give me your  
heart,  
and let your eyes  
observe my ways.*

- 27 For a prostitute is a deep  
pit;  
an adulteress is a narrow  
well.

- 28 She lies in wait like a  
robber  
and increases the  
number of the  
faithless.

**Sept. 23**



**1 Samuel 14:24-52** (NRSV)

*Saul's Rash Oath*

24 Now Saul committed a  
very rash act on that day. He  
had laid an oath on the troops,  
saying, "Cursed be anyone  
who eats food before it is  
evening and I have been  
avenged on my enemies." So  
none of the troops tasted  
food. 25 All the troops came  
upon a honeycomb; and there  
was honey on the ground.

26 When the troops came upon  
the honeycomb, the honey  
was dripping out; but they did  
not put their hands to their  
mouths, for they feared the  
oath. 27 But Jonathan had not  
heard his father charge the  
troops with the oath; so he  
extended the staff that was in  
his hand, and dipped the tip of  
it in the honeycomb, and put  
his hand to his mouth; and his  
eyes brightened. 28 Then one  
of the soldiers said, "Your  
father strictly charged the  
troops with an oath, saying,  
'Cursed be anyone who eats  
food this day.' And so the  
troops are faint." 29 Then

Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land; see how my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.

<sup>30</sup> How much better if today the troops had eaten freely of the spoil taken from their enemies; for now the slaughter among the Philistines has not been great."

<sup>31</sup> After they had struck down the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon, the troops were very faint; <sup>32</sup> so the troops flew upon the spoil, and took sheep and oxen and calves, and slaughtered them on the ground; and the troops ate them with the blood.

<sup>33</sup> Then it was reported to Saul, "Look, the troops are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood." And he said, "You have dealt treacherously; roll a large stone before me here."

<sup>34</sup> Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the troops, and say to them, 'Let all bring their oxen or their sheep, and slaughter them here, and eat; and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.' " So all of the troops brought their oxen with them that

night, and slaughtered them there. <sup>35</sup> And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

*Jonathan in Danger of Death*

<sup>36</sup> Then Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and despoil them until the morning light; let us not leave one of them." They said, "Do whatever seems good to you." But the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here." <sup>37</sup> So Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But he did not answer him that day. <sup>38</sup> Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people; and let us find out how this sin has arisen today. <sup>39</sup> For as the LORD lives who saves Israel, even if it is in my son Jonathan, he shall surely die!" But there was no one among all the people who answered him. <sup>40</sup> He said to all Israel, "You shall be on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other side." The people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you." <sup>41</sup> Then Saul said, "O LORD God of Israel,

why have you not answered your servant today? If this guilt is in me or in my son Jonathan, O LORD God of Israel, give Urim; but if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim.” And Jonathan and Saul were indicated by the lot, but the people were cleared.

<sup>42</sup> Then Saul said, “Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan.” And Jonathan was taken.

<sup>43</sup> Then Saul said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you have done.” Jonathan told him, “I tasted a little honey with the tip of the staff that was in my hand; here I am, I will die.” <sup>44</sup> Saul said, “God do so to me and more also; you shall surely die, Jonathan!”

<sup>45</sup> Then the people said to Saul, “Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great victory in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground; for he has worked with God today.” So the people ransomed Jonathan, and he did not die. <sup>46</sup> Then Saul withdrew from pursuing the Philistines; and the

Philistines went to their own place.

#### *Saul's Continuing Wars*

<sup>47</sup> When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side—against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines; wherever he turned he routed them. <sup>48</sup> He did valiantly, and struck down the Amalekites, and rescued Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

<sup>49</sup> Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua; and the names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn was Merab, and the name of the younger, Michal. <sup>50</sup> The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle; <sup>51</sup> Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

<sup>52</sup> There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul; and when Saul



saw any strong or valiant warrior, he took him into his service.

**John 7:31-36** (NRSV)

*Officers Are Sent  
to Arrest Jesus*

<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering such things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent temple police to arrest him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little while longer, and then I am going to him who sent me.” <sup>34</sup> You will search for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come.” <sup>35</sup> The Jews said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? <sup>36</sup> What does he mean by saying, ‘You will search for me and you will not find me’ and ‘Where I am, you cannot come’?”

**Psalms 108:5-13** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Be exalted, O God, above the heavens,  
and let your glory be  
over all the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Give victory with your right hand, and answer me, so that those whom you love may be rescued.

<sup>7</sup> God has promised in his sanctuary:  
“With exultation I will divide up Shechem, and portion out the Vale of Succoth.

<sup>8</sup> Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine;  
Ephraim is my helmet;  
Judah is my scepter.

<sup>9</sup> Moab is my washbasin;  
on Edom I hurl my shoe;  
over Philistia I shout in triumph.”

<sup>10</sup> Who will bring me to the fortified city?  
Who will lead me to Edom?

<sup>11</sup> Have you not rejected us, O God?  
You do not go out, O God, with our armies.

<sup>12</sup> O grant us help against the foe,  
for human help is worthless.

<sup>13</sup> With God we shall do valiantly;  
it is he who will tread down our foes.

**Proverbs 23:29–35** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> Who has woe? Who has  
sorrow?  
Who has strife? Who has  
complaining?  
Who has wounds without  
cause?  
Who has redness of  
eyes?  
<sup>30</sup> Those who linger late over  
wine,  
those who keep trying  
mixed wines.  
<sup>31</sup> Do not look at wine when  
it is red,  
when it sparkles in the  
cup  
and goes down  
smoothly.  
<sup>32</sup> At the last it bites like a  
serpent,  
and stings like an adder.  
<sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange  
things,  
and your mind utter  
perverse things.  
<sup>34</sup> You will be like one who  
lies down in the midst  
of the sea,  
like one who lies on the  
top of a mast.  
<sup>35</sup> “They struck me,” you will  
say, “but I was not  
hurt;

they beat me, but I did  
not feel it.  
When shall I awake?  
I will seek another  
drink.”

**Sept. 24**



**1 Samuel 15:1-35** (NRSV)

*Saul Defeats the Amalekites  
but Sparing Their King*

Samuel said to Saul, “The  
LORD sent me to anoint you  
king over his people Israel;  
now therefore listen to the  
words of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Thus says  
the LORD of hosts, ‘I will punish  
the Amalekites for what they  
did in opposing the Israelites  
when they came up out of  
Egypt. <sup>3</sup> Now go and attack  
Amalek, and utterly destroy all  
that they have; do not spare  
them, but kill both man and  
woman, child and infant, ox  
and sheep, camel and  
donkey.’”

<sup>4</sup> So Saul summoned the  
people, and numbered them  
in Telaim, two hundred

thousand foot soldiers, and ten thousand soldiers of Judah. <sup>5</sup> Saul came to the city of the Amalekites and lay in wait in the valley. <sup>6</sup> Saul said to the Kenites, "Go! Leave! Withdraw from among the Amalekites, or I will destroy you with them; for you showed kindness to all the people of Israel when they came up out of Egypt." So the Kenites withdrew from the Amalekites. <sup>7</sup> Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt. <sup>8</sup> He took King Agag of the Amalekites alive, but utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. <sup>9</sup> Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep and of the cattle and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was valuable, and would not utterly destroy them; all that was despised and worthless they utterly destroyed.

#### *Saul Rejected as King*

<sup>10</sup> The word of the LORD came to Samuel: <sup>11</sup> "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned back from

following me, and has not carried out my commands." Samuel was angry; and he cried out to the LORD all night. <sup>12</sup> Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, and Samuel was told, "Saul went to Carmel, where he set up a monument for himself, and on returning he passed on down to Gilgal." <sup>13</sup> When Samuel came to Saul, Saul said to him, "May you be blessed by the LORD; I have carried out the command of the LORD." <sup>14</sup> But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of cattle that I hear?" <sup>15</sup> Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the cattle, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed." <sup>16</sup> Then Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! I will tell you what the LORD said to me last night." He replied, "Speak."

<sup>17</sup> Samuel said, "Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel.

<sup>18</sup> And the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' <sup>19</sup> Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?" <sup>20</sup> Saul said to Samuel, "I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. <sup>21</sup> But from the spoil the people took sheep and cattle, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal." <sup>22</sup> And Samuel said,

    "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obedience to the voice of the LORD? Surely, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.

<sup>23</sup> For rebellion is no less a sin than divination,

and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king."

<sup>24</sup> Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. <sup>25</sup> Now therefore, I pray, pardon my sin, and return with me, so that I may worship the LORD." <sup>26</sup> Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel."

<sup>27</sup> As Samuel turned to go away, Saul caught hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore.

<sup>28</sup> And Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this very day, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. <sup>29</sup> Moreover the Glory of Israel will not recant or change his mind; for he is not a mortal, that he should change his mind."

<sup>30</sup> Then Saul said, "I have

sinned; yet honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, so that I may worship the LORD your God.”<sup>31</sup> So Samuel turned back after Saul; and Saul worshiped the LORD.

<sup>32</sup> Then Samuel said, “Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me.” And Agag came to him haltingly. Agag said, “Surely this is the bitterness of death.”<sup>33</sup> But Samuel said,

“As your sword has made women childless, so your mother shall be childless among women.”

And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

<sup>34</sup> Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul.

<sup>35</sup> Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD was sorry that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,<sup>38</sup> and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ ”<sup>39</sup> Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

#### *Division among the People*

<sup>40</sup> When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, “This is really the prophet.”<sup>41</sup> Others said, “This is the Messiah.” But some asked, “Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he?”<sup>42</sup> Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?”

<sup>43</sup> So there was a division in the crowd because of him.

<sup>44</sup> Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

#### **John 7:37-53 (NRSV)**

##### *Rivers of Living Water*

<sup>37</sup> On the last day of the festival, the great day, while

*The Unbelief of  
Those in Authority*

<sup>45</sup> Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why did you not arrest him?” <sup>46</sup> The police answered, “Never has anyone spoken like this!” <sup>47</sup> Then the Pharisees replied, “Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? <sup>48</sup> Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd, which does not know the law—they are accursed.”

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, <sup>51</sup> “Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?” <sup>52</sup> They replied, “Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee.”

[<sup>53</sup> Then each of them went home,  
*(Most ancient manuscripts don't include John 7:53-8:11)*

**Psalm 109:1-21a (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Vindication  
and Vengeance*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

- 1 Do not be silent, O God of my praise.
- 2 For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues.
- 3 They beset me with words of hate, and attack me without cause.
- 4 In return for my love they accuse me, even while I make prayer for them.
- 5 So they reward me evil for good, and hatred for my love.
- 6 They say, “Appoint a wicked man against him; let an accuser stand on his right.
- 7 When he is tried, let him be found guilty; let his prayer be counted as sin.
- 8 May his days be few; may another seize his position.
- 9 May his children be orphans,

and his wife a widow.  
10 May his children wander  
about and beg;  
may they be driven out  
of the ruins they  
inhabit.  
11 May the creditor seize all  
that he has;  
may strangers plunder  
the fruits of his toil.  
12 May there be no one to do  
him a kindness,  
nor anyone to pity his  
orphaned children.  
13 May his posterity be cut  
off;  
may his name be blotted  
out in the second  
generation.  
14 May the iniquity of his  
father be remembered  
before the LORD,  
and do not let the sin of  
his mother be blotted  
out.  
15 Let them be before the  
LORD continually,  
and may his memory be  
cut off from the earth.  
16 For he did not remember  
to show kindness,  
but pursued the poor  
and needy  
and the brokenhearted  
to their death.

17 He loved to curse; let  
curses come on him.  
He did not like blessing;  
may it be far from him.  
18 He clothed himself with  
cursing as his coat,  
may it soak into his body  
like water,  
like oil into his bones.  
19 May it be like a garment  
that he wraps around  
himself,  
like a belt that he wears  
every day.”  
20 May that be the reward of  
my accusers from the  
LORD,  
of those who speak evil  
against my life.  
21a But you, O LORD my Lord,  
act on my behalf for your  
name’s sake;

**Proverbs 24:1–2 (NRSV)**

1 Do not envy the wicked,  
nor desire to be with  
them;  
2 for their minds devise  
violence,  
and their lips talk of  
mischief.

## Sept. 25



### 1 Samuel 16:1-23 (NRSV)

#### *David Anointed as King*

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." <sup>2</sup> Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" <sup>3</sup> Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you."

<sup>4</sup> Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" <sup>5</sup> He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons

and invited them to the sacrifice.

<sup>6</sup> When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

<sup>8</sup> Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one."

<sup>9</sup> Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one."

<sup>10</sup> Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." <sup>11</sup> Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."

<sup>12</sup> He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had



beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." <sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

*David Plays the Lyre for Saul*

<sup>14</sup> Now the spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him. <sup>15</sup> And Saul's servants said to him, "See now, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you." <sup>16</sup> Let our lord now command the servants who attend you to look for someone who is skillful in playing the lyre; and when the evil spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will feel better." <sup>17</sup> So Saul said to his servants, "Provide for me someone who can play well, and bring him to me."

<sup>18</sup> One of the young men answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a warrior, prudent in

speech, and a man of good presence; and the LORD is with him." <sup>19</sup> So Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David who is with the sheep." <sup>20</sup> Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a kid, and sent them by his son David to Saul. <sup>21</sup> And David came to Saul, and entered his service. Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. <sup>22</sup> Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight." <sup>23</sup> And whenever the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand, and Saul would be relieved and feel better, and the evil spirit would depart from him.

**John 8:1-11 (NRSV)**

*The Woman Caught  
in Adultery*

<sup>1</sup> while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. <sup>2</sup> Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. <sup>3</sup> The scribes and the Pharisees

brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, <sup>4</sup> they said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. <sup>5</sup> Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” <sup>6</sup> They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. <sup>7</sup> When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “**Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.**” <sup>8</sup> And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. <sup>9</sup> When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. <sup>10</sup> Jesus straightened up and said to her, “**Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?**” <sup>11</sup> She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “**Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.**”]]

*(Most ancient manuscripts don't include John 7:53-8:11)*

**Psalm 109:21b-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>21b</sup> because your steadfast  
love is good, deliver  
me.  
<sup>22</sup> For I am poor and needy,  
and my heart is pierced  
within me.  
<sup>23</sup> I am gone like a shadow at  
evening;  
I am shaken off like a  
locust.  
<sup>24</sup> My knees are weak  
through fasting;  
my body has become  
gaunt.  
<sup>25</sup> I am an object of scorn to  
my accusers;  
when they see me, they  
shake their heads.  
<sup>26</sup> Help me, O LORD my God!  
Save me according to  
your steadfast love.  
<sup>27</sup> Let them know that this is  
your hand;  
you, O LORD, have done  
it.  
<sup>28</sup> Let them curse, but you  
will bless.  
Let my assailants be put  
to shame; may your  
servant be glad.  
<sup>29</sup> May my accusers be  
clothed with dishonor;

may they be wrapped in  
their own shame as in  
a mantle.

<sup>30</sup> With my mouth I will give  
great thanks to the  
LORD;

I will praise him in the  
midst of the throng.

<sup>31</sup> For he stands at the right  
hand of the needy,  
to save them from those  
who would condemn  
them to death.

### **Proverbs 24:3–4 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> By wisdom a house is built,  
and by understanding it  
is established;

<sup>4</sup> by knowledge the rooms  
are filled  
with all precious and  
pleasant riches.

## **Sept. 26**



### **1 Samuel 17:1-40 (NRSV)**

#### *David and Goliath*

Now the Philistines  
gathered their armies for  
battle; they were gathered at

Socoh, which belongs to  
Judah, and encamped  
between Socoh and Azekah, in  
Ephes-dammim. <sup>2</sup> Saul and the  
Israelites gathered and  
encamped in the valley of  
Elah, and formed ranks against  
the Philistines. <sup>3</sup> The Philistines  
stood on the mountain on the  
one side, and Israel stood on  
the mountain on the other  
side, with a valley between  
them. <sup>4</sup> And there came out  
from the camp of the  
Philistines a champion named  
Goliath, of Gath, whose height  
was six cubits and a span. <sup>5</sup> He  
had a helmet of bronze on his  
head, and he was armed with  
a coat of mail; the weight of  
the coat was five thousand  
shekels of bronze. <sup>6</sup> He had  
greaves of bronze on his legs  
and a javelin of bronze slung  
between his shoulders. <sup>7</sup> The  
shaft of his spear was like a  
weaver's beam, and his  
spear's head weighed six  
hundred shekels of iron; and  
his shield-bearer went before  
him. <sup>8</sup> He stood and shouted to  
the ranks of Israel, "Why have  
you come out to draw up for  
battle? Am I not a Philistine,  
and are you not servants of

Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. <sup>9</sup> If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.” <sup>10</sup> And the Philistine said, “Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together.” <sup>11</sup> When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

<sup>12</sup> Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already old and advanced in years. <sup>13</sup> The three eldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle; the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. <sup>14</sup> David was the youngest; the three eldest followed Saul, <sup>15</sup> but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father’s sheep at Bethlehem. <sup>16</sup> For forty days the Philistine came forward

and took his stand, morning and evening.

<sup>17</sup> Jesse said to his son David, “Take for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers; <sup>18</sup> also take these ten cheeses to the commander of their thousand. See how your brothers fare, and bring some token from them.”

<sup>19</sup> Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. <sup>20</sup> David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, took the provisions, and went as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the encampment as the army was going forth to the battle line, shouting the war cry. <sup>21</sup> Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. <sup>22</sup> David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage, ran to the ranks, and went and greeted his brothers. <sup>23</sup> As he talked with them, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the

Philistines, and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

<sup>24</sup> All the Israelites, when they saw the man, fled from him and were very much afraid. <sup>25</sup> The Israelites said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. The king will greatly enrich the man who kills him, and will give him his daughter and make his family free in Israel."

<sup>26</sup> David said to the men who stood by him, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" <sup>27</sup> The people answered him in the same way, "So shall it be done for the man who kills him."

<sup>28</sup> His eldest brother Eliab heard him talking to the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David. He said, "Why have you come down? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart; for you have come down just to see

the battle." <sup>29</sup> David said, "What have I done now? It was only a question." <sup>30</sup> He turned away from him toward another and spoke in the same way; and the people answered him again as before.

<sup>31</sup> When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul; and he sent for him. <sup>32</sup> David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." <sup>33</sup> Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth." <sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and whenever a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth; and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it." <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the

living God.”<sup>37</sup> David said, “The LORD, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.” So Saul said to David, “Go, and may the LORD be with you!”

<sup>38</sup> Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail.<sup>39</sup> David strapped Saul’s sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them.” So David removed them.<sup>40</sup> Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

### **John 8:12-20 (NRSV)**

*Jesus the Light of the World*

<sup>12</sup> Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”

<sup>13</sup> Then the Pharisees said to

him, “You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid.”<sup>14</sup> Jesus answered, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.”<sup>15</sup> You judge by human standards; I judge no one.<sup>16</sup> Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is valid; for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me.<sup>17</sup> In your law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid.<sup>18</sup> I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me testifies on my behalf.”<sup>19</sup> Then they said to him, “Where is your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.”<sup>20</sup> He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple, but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

**Psalm 110:1-3** (NRSV)

*Assurance of Victory  
for God's Priest-King  
(Mt 22:44; Acts 2:34-35)*

Of David. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD says to my lord,  
“Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies  
your footstool.”
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD sends out from  
Zion  
your mighty scepter.  
Rule in the midst of your  
foes.
- <sup>3</sup> Your people will offer  
themselves willingly  
on the day you lead your  
forces  
on the holy mountains.  
From the womb of the  
morning,  
like dew, your youth will  
come to you.

**Proverbs 24:5-6** (NRSV)

- <sup>5</sup> Wise warriors are mightier  
than strong ones,  
and those who have  
knowledge than those  
who have strength;
- <sup>6</sup> for by wise guidance you  
can wage your war,  
and in abundance of  
counselors there is  
victory.

**Sept. 27**



**1 Samuel 17:41-18:4** (NRSV)

<sup>41</sup> The Philistine came on  
and drew near to David, with  
his shield-bearer in front of  
him. <sup>42</sup> When the Philistine  
looked and saw David, he  
disdained him, for he was only  
a youth, ruddy and handsome  
in appearance. <sup>43</sup> The Philistine  
said to David, “Am I a dog, that  
you come to me with sticks?”  
And the Philistine cursed  
David by his gods. <sup>44</sup> The  
Philistine said to David, “Come  
to me, and I will give your  
flesh to the birds of the air and  
to the wild animals of the  
field.” <sup>45</sup> But David said to the  
Philistine, “You come to me  
with sword and spear and  
javelin; but I come to you in  
the name of the LORD of hosts,  
the God of the armies of  
Israel, whom you have defied.  
<sup>46</sup> This very day the LORD will  
deliver you into my hand, and I  
will strike you down and cut  
off your head; and I will give  
the dead bodies of the  
Philistine army this very day to  
the birds of the air and to the  
wild animals of the earth, so

that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,<sup>47</sup> and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's and he will give you into our hand."

<sup>48</sup>When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

<sup>49</sup>David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

<sup>50</sup>So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking down the Philistine and killing him; there was no sword in David's hand.

<sup>51</sup>Then David ran and stood over the Philistine; he grasped his sword, drew it out of its sheath, and killed him; then he cut off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.<sup>52</sup> The troops of Israel and Judah rose up with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron, so that the

wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron.<sup>53</sup> The Israelites came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp.<sup>54</sup> David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.

<sup>55</sup>When Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?" Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know."<sup>56</sup> The king said, "Inquire whose son the stripling is."<sup>57</sup> On David's return from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand.<sup>58</sup> Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

### *Jonathan's Covenant with David*

**18** When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan



loved him as his own soul.

<sup>2</sup> Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. <sup>3</sup> Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. <sup>4</sup> Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.

**John 8:21-24 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Foretells His Death*

<sup>21</sup> Again he said to them, "I am going away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come." <sup>22</sup> Then the Jews said, "Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means by saying, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?" <sup>23</sup> He said to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup> I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he."

**Psalms 110:4-7 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind,  
"You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."  
<sup>5</sup> The Lord is at your right hand;  
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.  
<sup>6</sup> He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter heads over the wide earth.  
<sup>7</sup> He will drink from the stream by the path; therefore he will lift up his head.

**Proverbs 24:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Wisdom is too high for fools;  
in the gate they do not open their mouths.

## Sept. 28



### 1 Samuel 18:5-30 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

<sup>6</sup> As they were coming home, when David returned from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. <sup>7</sup> And the women sang to one another as they made merry,

“Saul has killed his  
thousands,  
and David his ten  
thousands.”

<sup>8</sup> Saul was very angry, for this saying displeased him. He said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; what more can he have but the kingdom?” <sup>9</sup> So Saul eyed David from that day on.

### *Saul Tries to Kill David*

<sup>10</sup> The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; <sup>11</sup> and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, “I will pin David to the wall.” But David eluded him twice.

<sup>12</sup> Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. <sup>13</sup> So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army. <sup>14</sup> David had success in all his undertakings; for the LORD was with him. <sup>15</sup> When Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in awe of him. <sup>16</sup> But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

### *David Marries Michal*

<sup>17</sup> Then Saul said to David, “Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife; only be valiant for me and fight the LORD’s battles.”

For Saul thought, "I will not raise a hand against him; let the Philistines deal with him."

<sup>18</sup> David said to Saul, "Who am I and who are my kinsfolk, my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" <sup>19</sup> But at the time when Saul's daughter Merab should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.

<sup>20</sup> Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. Saul was told, and the thing pleased him. <sup>21</sup> Saul thought, "Let me give her to him that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You shall now be my son-in-law." <sup>22</sup> Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David in private and say, 'See, the king is delighted with you, and all his servants love you; now then, become the king's son-in-law.'" <sup>23</sup> So Saul's servants reported these words to David in private. And David said, "Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man and of

no repute?" <sup>24</sup> The servants of Saul told him, "This is what David said." <sup>25</sup> Then Saul said, "Thus shall you say to David, 'The king desires no marriage present except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged on the king's enemies.'" Now Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. <sup>26</sup> When his servants told David these words, David was well pleased to be the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired, <sup>27</sup> David rose and went, along with his men, and killed one hundred of the Philistines; and David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Saul gave him his daughter Michal as a wife. <sup>28</sup> But when Saul realized that the LORD was with David, and that Saul's daughter Michal loved him, <sup>29</sup> Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul was David's enemy from that time forward.

<sup>30</sup> Then the commanders of the Philistines came out to battle; and as often as they

came out, David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that his fame became very great.

**John 8:25-30** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> They said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them,

“Why do I speak to you at all?

<sup>26</sup> I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the one who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him.” <sup>27</sup> They did not

understand that he was speaking to them about the Father. <sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me.” <sup>29</sup> And the one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him.” <sup>30</sup> As he

was saying these things, many believed in him.

**Psalm 111:1-4a** (NRSV)

*Praise for God’s*

*Wonderful Works*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

<sup>2</sup> Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them.

<sup>3</sup> Full of honor and majesty is his work,  
and his righteousness endures forever.

<sup>4a</sup> He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;

**Proverbs 24:8** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Whoever plans to do evil will be called a mischief-maker.

Sept. 29



**1 Samuel 19:1-24** (NRSV)

*Jonathan Intercedes for David*

Saul spoke with his son Jonathan and with all his servants about killing David. But Saul's son Jonathan took great delight in David.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan told David, "My father Saul is trying to kill you; therefore be on guard tomorrow morning; stay in a secret place and hide yourself.

<sup>3</sup> I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you; if I learn anything I will tell you."

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan spoke well of David to his father Saul, saying to him, "The king should not sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have been of good service to you; <sup>5</sup> for he took his life in his hand when he attacked the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great victory for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced; why then will you sin against an innocent person by killing

David without cause?" <sup>6</sup> Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan; Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."

<sup>7</sup> So Jonathan called David and related all these things to him. Jonathan then brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

*Michal Helps David  
Escape from Saul*

<sup>8</sup> Again there was war, and David went out to fight the Philistines. He launched a heavy attack on them, so that they fled before him. <sup>9</sup> Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand, while David was playing music. <sup>10</sup> Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear; but he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped that night.

<sup>11</sup> Saul sent messengers to David's house to keep watch over him, planning to kill him in the morning. David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed."

<sup>12</sup> So Michal let David down

through the window; he fled away and escaped.<sup>13</sup> Michal took an idol and laid it on the bed; she put a net of goats' hair on its head, and covered it with the clothes.<sup>14</sup> When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."<sup>15</sup> Then Saul sent the messengers to see David for themselves. He said, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him."<sup>16</sup> When the messengers came in, the idol was in the bed, with the covering of goats' hair on its head.<sup>17</sup> Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go; why should I kill you?' "

#### *David Joins Samuel in Ramah*

<sup>18</sup> Now David fled and escaped; he came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. He and Samuel went and settled at Naioth.<sup>19</sup> Saul was told, "David is at Naioth in Ramah."<sup>20</sup> Then Saul sent messengers to take David. When they saw the company of the prophets in a

frenzy, with Samuel standing in charge of them, the spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also fell into a prophetic frenzy.<sup>21</sup> When Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they also fell into a frenzy. Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also fell into a frenzy.<sup>22</sup> Then he himself went to Ramah. He came to the great well that is in Secu; he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "They are at Naioth in Ramah."<sup>23</sup> He went there, toward Naioth in Ramah; and the spirit of God came upon him. As he was going, he fell into a prophetic frenzy, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.<sup>24</sup> He too stripped off his clothes, and he too fell into a frenzy before Samuel. He lay naked all that day and all that night. Therefore it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

#### **John 8:31-36** (NRSV)

##### *True Disciples*

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word,

you are truly my disciples;  
<sup>32</sup>and you will know the truth,  
and the truth will make you  
free.”<sup>33</sup> They answered him,  
“We are descendants of  
Abraham and have never been  
slaves to anyone. What do you  
mean by saying, ‘You will be  
made free’?”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them,  
“Very truly, I tell you,  
everyone who commits sin is a  
slave to sin.”<sup>35</sup> The slave does  
not have a permanent place in  
the household; the son has a  
place there forever.<sup>36</sup> So if the  
Son makes you free, you will  
be free indeed.

**Psalms 111:4b-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>4b</sup> the LORD is gracious and  
merciful.  
<sup>5</sup> He provides food for those  
who fear him;  
he is ever mindful of his  
covenant.  
<sup>6</sup> He has shown his people  
the power of his works,  
in giving them the  
heritage of the nations.  
<sup>7</sup> The works of his hands are  
faithful and just;  
all his precepts are  
trustworthy.

<sup>8</sup> They are established  
forever and ever,  
to be performed with  
faithfulness and  
uprightness.  
<sup>9</sup> He sent redemption to his  
people;  
he has commanded his  
covenant forever.  
Holy and awesome is his  
name.

<sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom;  
all those who practice it  
have a good  
understanding.  
His praise endures  
forever.

**Proverbs 24:9-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> The devising of folly is sin,  
and the scoffer is an  
abomination to all.  
<sup>10</sup> If you faint in the day of  
adversity,  
your strength being  
small;

## Sept. 30



### 1 Samuel 20:1-34 (NRSV)

#### *The Friendship of David and Jonathan*

David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came before Jonathan and said, "What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin against your father that he is trying to take my life?" <sup>2</sup> He said to him, "Far from it! You shall not die. My father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me; and why should my father hide this from me? Never!" <sup>3</sup> But David also swore, "Your father knows well that you like me; and he thinks, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But truly, as the LORD lives and as you yourself live, there is but a step between me and death."

<sup>4</sup> Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you." <sup>5</sup> David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at the meal; but let me go, so that I may hide in the field until the

third evening. <sup>6</sup> If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city; for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' <sup>7</sup> If he says, 'Good!' it will be well with your servant; but if he is angry, then know that evil has been determined by him. <sup>8</sup> Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a sacred covenant with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself; why should you bring me to your father?" <sup>9</sup> Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! If I knew that it was decided by my father that evil should come upon you, would I not tell you?" <sup>10</sup> Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?" <sup>11</sup> Jonathan replied to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So they both went out into the field. <sup>12</sup> Jonathan said to David, "By the LORD, the God of Israel! When I have sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or on the third day, if he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send



and disclose it to you? <sup>13</sup> But if my father intends to do you harm, the LORD do so to Jonathan, and more also, if I do not disclose it to you, and send you away, so that you may go in safety. May the LORD be with you, as he has been with my father. <sup>14</sup> If I am still alive, show me the faithful love of the LORD; but if I die, <sup>15</sup> never cut off your faithful love from my house, even if the LORD were to cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.”

<sup>16</sup> Thus Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the LORD seek out the enemies of David.” <sup>17</sup> Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him; for he loved him as he loved his own life.

<sup>18</sup> Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon; you will be missed, because your place will be empty. <sup>19</sup> On the day after tomorrow, you shall go a long way down; go to the place where you hid yourself earlier, and remain beside the stone there. <sup>20</sup> I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a

mark. <sup>21</sup> Then I will send the boy, saying, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to the boy, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you, collect them,’ then you are to come, for, as the LORD lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger. <sup>22</sup> But if I say to the young man, ‘Look, the arrows are beyond you,’ then go; for the LORD has sent you away. <sup>23</sup> As for the matter about which you and I have spoken, the LORD is witness between you and me forever.”

<sup>24</sup> So David hid himself in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat at the feast to eat. <sup>25</sup> The king sat upon his seat, as at other times, upon the seat by the wall. Jonathan stood, while Abner sat by Saul’s side; but David’s place was empty.

<sup>26</sup> Saul did not say anything that day; for he thought, “Something has befallen him; he is not clean, surely he is not clean.” <sup>27</sup> But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David’s place was empty. And Saul said to his son Jonathan, “Why has the son of Jesse not come to the feast, either yesterday or

today?" <sup>28</sup> Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem; <sup>29</sup> he said, 'Let me go; for our family is holding a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your sight, let me get away, and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

<sup>30</sup> Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan. He said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? <sup>31</sup> For as long as the son of Jesse lives upon the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die."

<sup>32</sup> Then Jonathan answered his father Saul, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" <sup>33</sup> But Saul threw his spear at him to strike him; so Jonathan knew that it was the decision of his father to put David to death. <sup>34</sup> Jonathan

rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food on the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, and because his father had disgraced him.

### **John 8:37-59 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you look for an opportunity to kill me, because there is no place in you for my word. <sup>38</sup> I declare what I have seen in the Father's presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father."

#### *Jesus and Abraham*

<sup>39</sup> They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did, <sup>40</sup> but now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. <sup>41</sup> You are indeed doing what your father does." They said to him, "We are not illegitimate children; we have one father, God himself."

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God

were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. <sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. <sup>44</sup> You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. <sup>46</sup> Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? <sup>47</sup> Whoever is from God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God."

<sup>48</sup> The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" <sup>49</sup> Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. <sup>50</sup> Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it and

he is the judge. <sup>51</sup> Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death."

<sup>52</sup> The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets; yet you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.' <sup>53</sup> Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?" <sup>54</sup> Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, he of whom you say, 'He is our God,' <sup>55</sup> though you do not know him. But I know him; if I would say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him and I keep his word. <sup>56</sup> Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad." <sup>57</sup> Then the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am." <sup>59</sup> So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

**Psalm 112:1-3** (NRSV)

*Blessings of the Righteous*

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Happy are those who  
fear the LORD,  
who greatly delight in his  
commandments.

- <sup>2</sup> Their descendants will be  
mighty in the land;  
the generation of the  
upright will be blessed.

- <sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches are in  
their houses,  
and their righteousness  
endures forever.

- <sup>4</sup> They rise in the darkness  
as a light for the  
upright;  
they are gracious,  
merciful, and  
righteous.

**Proverbs 24:11–12** (NRSV)

- <sup>11</sup> if you hold back from  
rescuing those taken  
away to death,  
those who go staggering  
to the slaughter;
- <sup>12</sup> if you say, “Look, we did  
not know this” —  
does not he who weighs  
the heart perceive it?  
Does not he who keeps  
watch over your soul  
know it?

And will he not repay all  
according to their  
deeds?

**October  
1**



**1 Samuel 20:35–21:15** (NRSV)

<sup>35</sup> In the morning Jonathan  
went out into the field to the  
appointment with David, and  
with him was a little boy. <sup>36</sup> He  
said to the boy, “Run and find  
the arrows that I shoot.” As  
the boy ran, he shot an arrow  
beyond him. <sup>37</sup> When the boy  
came to the place where  
Jonathan’s arrow had fallen,  
Jonathan called after the boy  
and said, “Is the arrow not  
beyond you?” <sup>38</sup> Jonathan  
called after the boy, “Hurry, be  
quick, do not linger.” So  
Jonathan’s boy gathered up  
the arrows and came to his  
master. <sup>39</sup> But the boy knew  
nothing; only Jonathan and  
David knew the arrangement.  
<sup>40</sup> Jonathan gave his weapons  
to the boy and said to him,  
“Go and carry them to the

city.”<sup>41</sup> As soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He bowed three times, and they kissed each other, and wept with each other; David wept the more.

<sup>42</sup> Then Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, since both of us have sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, ‘The LORD shall be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.’ ” He got up and left; and Jonathan went into the city.

### *David and the Holy Bread*

**21** David came to Nob to the priest Ahimelech. Ahimelech came trembling to meet David, and said to him, “Why are you alone, and no one with you?”<sup>2</sup> David said to the priest Ahimelech, “The king has charged me with a matter, and said to me, ‘No one must know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.’ I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place.

<sup>3</sup> Now then, what have you at

hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here.”

<sup>4</sup> The priest answered David, “I have no ordinary bread at hand, only holy bread—provided that the young men have kept themselves from women.”<sup>5</sup> David answered the priest, “Indeed women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition; the vessels of the young men are holy even when it is a common journey; how much more today will their vessels be holy?”<sup>6</sup> So the priest gave him the holy bread; for there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the LORD, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

<sup>7</sup> Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD; his name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul’s shepherds.

<sup>8</sup> David said to Ahimelech, “Is there no spear or sword here with you? I did not bring my sword or my weapons with me, because the king’s business required haste.”<sup>9</sup> The

priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the valley of Elah, is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod; if you will take that, take it, for there is none here except that one." David said, "There is none like it; give it to me."

*David Flees to Gath*

<sup>10</sup> David rose and fled that day from Saul; he went to King Achish of Gath. <sup>11</sup> The servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances, 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?"

<sup>12</sup> David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of King Achish of Gath. <sup>13</sup> So he changed his behavior before them; he pretended to be mad when in their presence. He scratched marks on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle run down his beard. <sup>14</sup> Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is mad; why then have you brought him to me?" <sup>15</sup> Do I

lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

**John 9:1-13 (NRSV)**

*A Man Born Blind  
Receives Sight*

<sup>1</sup> As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." <sup>6</sup> When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, <sup>7</sup> saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. <sup>8</sup> The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar

began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?”

<sup>9</sup> Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” <sup>10</sup> But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”

<sup>11</sup> He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” <sup>12</sup> They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

*The Pharisees Investigate the Healing*

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

**Psalm 112:4-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.  
<sup>6</sup> For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.  
<sup>7</sup> They are not afraid of evil tidings;

their hearts are firm, secure in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.  
<sup>9</sup> They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor.  
<sup>10</sup> The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

**Proverbs 24:13–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> My child, eat honey, for it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste.  
<sup>14</sup> Know that wisdom is such to your soul; if you find it, you will find a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

# October

## 2



### 1 Samuel 22:1-23 (NRSV)

#### *David and His Followers at Adullam*

<sup>1</sup> David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; when his brothers and all his father's house heard of it, they went down there to him. <sup>2</sup> Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Those who were with him numbered about four hundred.

<sup>3</sup> David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. He said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come to you, until I know what God will do for me." <sup>4</sup> He left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. <sup>5</sup> Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not remain in the stronghold; leave, and go into the land of Judah." So David left, and went into the forest of Hereth.

#### *Saul Slaughters the Priests at Nob*

<sup>6</sup> Saul heard that David and those who were with him had been located. Saul was sitting at Gibeah, under the tamarisk tree on the height, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing around him. <sup>7</sup> Saul said to his servants who stood around him, "Hear now, you Benjaminites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds?" <sup>8</sup> Is that why all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a league with the son of Jesse, none of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as he is doing today." <sup>9</sup> Doeg the Edomite, who was in charge of Saul's servants, answered, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech son of Ahitub; <sup>10</sup> he inquired of the LORD for him, gave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."



<sup>11</sup> The king sent for the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and for all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob; and all of them came to the king. <sup>12</sup> Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." He answered, "Here I am, my lord." <sup>13</sup> Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, by giving him bread and a sword, and by inquiring of God for him, so that he has risen against me, to lie in wait, as he is doing today?"

<sup>14</sup> Then Ahimelech answered the king, "Who among all your servants is so faithful as David? He is the king's son-in-law, and is quick to do your bidding, and is honored in your house. <sup>15</sup> Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? By no means! Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to any member of my father's house; for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little." <sup>16</sup> The king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house." <sup>17</sup> The king said to the guard who stood

around him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David; they knew that he fled, and did not disclose it to me." But the servants of the king would not raise their hand to attack the priests of the LORD. <sup>18</sup> Then the king said to Doeg, "You, Doeg, turn and attack the priests." Doeg the Edomite turned and attacked the priests; on that day he killed eighty-five who wore the linen ephod. <sup>19</sup> Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; men and women, children and infants, oxen, donkeys, and sheep, he put to the sword.

<sup>20</sup> But one of the sons of Ahimelech son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. <sup>21</sup> Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD.

<sup>22</sup> David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I am responsible for the lives of all your father's house. <sup>23</sup> Stay with me, and do not be afraid; for the one who seeks my life seeks your life; you will be safe with me."

**John 9:14-41 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see."

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. <sup>17</sup> So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight <sup>19</sup> and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" <sup>20</sup> His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; <sup>21</sup> but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who

opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

<sup>24</sup> So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." <sup>25</sup> He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." <sup>26</sup> They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" <sup>27</sup> He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" <sup>28</sup> Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup> We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." <sup>30</sup> The

man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

<sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.

<sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." <sup>34</sup> They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

### *Spiritual Blindness*

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

<sup>36</sup> He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." <sup>38</sup> He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do

see may become blind."

<sup>40</sup> Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

### **Psalm 113:1-9** (NRSV)

*God the Helper of the Needy*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

Praise, O servants of the LORD;  
praise the name of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed be the name of the LORD  
from this time on and forevermore.

<sup>3</sup> From the rising of the sun  
to its setting  
the name of the LORD is  
to be praised.

<sup>4</sup> The LORD is high above all nations,  
and his glory above the heavens.

<sup>5</sup> Who is like the LORD our God,  
who is seated on high,

<sup>6</sup> who looks far down  
on the heavens and the earth?



7 He raises the poor from  
the dust,  
and lifts the needy from  
the ash heap,  
8 to make them sit with  
princes,  
with the princes of his  
people.  
9 He gives the barren  
woman a home,  
making her the joyous  
mother of children.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 24:15–16** (NRSV)

15 Do not lie in wait like an  
outlaw against the  
home of the righteous;  
do no violence to the  
place where the  
righteous live;  
16 for though they fall seven  
times, they will rise  
again; but the wicked  
are overthrown by  
calamity.

**October**  
**3**



**1 Samuel 23:1-29** (NRSV)

*David Saves the City of Keilah*

<sup>1</sup> Now they told David, “The Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and are robbing the threshing floors.” <sup>2</sup> David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” The LORD said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah.” <sup>3</sup> But David’s men said to him, “Look, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” <sup>4</sup> Then David inquired of the LORD again. The LORD answered him, “Yes, go down to Keilah; for I will give the Philistines into your hand.” <sup>5</sup> So David and his men went to Keilah, fought with the Philistines, brought away their livestock, and dealt them a heavy defeat. Thus David rescued the inhabitants of Keilah.

<sup>6</sup> When Abiathar son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, he came down with an ephod in his hand. <sup>7</sup> Now it

was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, "God has given him into my hand; for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars."<sup>8</sup> Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.<sup>9</sup> When David learned that Saul was plotting evil against him, he said to the priest Abiathar, "Bring the ephod here."<sup>10</sup> David said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, your servant has heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account."<sup>11</sup> And now, will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O LORD, the God of Israel, I beseech you, tell your servant." The LORD said, "He will come down."<sup>12</sup> Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" The LORD said, "They will surrender you."<sup>13</sup> Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, set out and left Keilah; they wandered wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave

up the expedition.<sup>14</sup> David remained in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country of the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but the LORD did not give him into his hand.

*David Eludes Saul in the Wilderness*

<sup>15</sup> David was in the Wilderness of Ziph at Horesh when he learned that Saul had come out to seek his life.

<sup>16</sup> Saul's son Jonathan set out and came to David at Horesh; there he strengthened his hand through the LORD.<sup>17</sup> He said to him, "Do not be afraid; for the hand of my father Saul shall not find you; you shall be king over Israel, and I shall be second to you; my father Saul also knows that this is so."

<sup>18</sup> Then the two of them made a covenant before the LORD; David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

<sup>19</sup> Then some Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, "David is hiding among us in the strongholds of Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon."<sup>20</sup> Now, O king, whenever you wish to

come down, do so; and our part will be to surrender him into the king's hand." <sup>21</sup> Saul said, "May you be blessed by the LORD for showing me compassion! <sup>22</sup> Go and make sure once more; find out exactly where he is, and who has seen him there; for I am told that he is very cunning. <sup>23</sup> Look around and learn all the hiding places where he lurks, and come back to me with sure information. Then I will go with you; and if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah." <sup>24</sup> So they set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul.

David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. <sup>25</sup> Saul and his men went to search for him. When David was told, he went down to the rock and stayed in the wilderness of Maon. When Saul heard that, he pursued David into the wilderness of Maon. <sup>26</sup> Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, while Saul and

his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them. <sup>27</sup> Then a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come; for the Philistines have made a raid on the land." <sup>28</sup> So Saul stopped pursuing David, and went against the Philistines; therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape. <sup>29</sup> David then went up from there, and lived in the strongholds of En-gedi.

#### **John 10:1-10 (NRSV)**

##### *Jesus the Good Shepherd*

<sup>1</sup> "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers."

<sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup> So again Jesus said to them, “**Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.** <sup>8</sup> **All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them.**

<sup>9</sup> **I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.** <sup>10</sup> **The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.**

**Psalms 114:1-8 (NRSV)**

*God’s Wonders at the Exodus  
(Cp Ex 14:1–31)*

<sup>1</sup> When Israel went out from  
Egypt,  
the house of Jacob from  
a people of strange  
language,  
<sup>2</sup> Judah became God’s  
sanctuary,  
Israel his dominion.  
<sup>3</sup> The sea looked and fled;  
Jordan turned back.  
<sup>4</sup> The mountains skipped like  
rams,  
the hills like lambs.

<sup>5</sup> Why is it, O sea, that you  
flee?

O Jordan, that you turn  
back?

<sup>6</sup> O mountains, that you skip  
like rams?

O hills, like lambs?

<sup>7</sup> Tremble, O earth, at the  
presence of the LORD,  
at the presence of the  
God of Jacob,

<sup>8</sup> who turns the rock into a  
pool of water,  
the flint into a spring of  
water.

**Proverbs 24:17–20 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> Do not rejoice when your  
enemies fall,  
and do not let your heart  
be glad when they  
stumble,

<sup>18</sup> or else the LORD will see it  
and be displeased,  
and turn away his anger  
from them.

<sup>19</sup> Do not fret because of  
evildoers.

<sup>20</sup> Do not envy the wicked;  
for the evil have no future;  
the lamp of the wicked  
will go out.

# October

## 4



### 1 Samuel 24:1-22 (NRSV)

#### *David Spares Saul's Life*

<sup>1</sup> When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En-gedi." <sup>2</sup> Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to look for David and his men in the direction of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. <sup>3</sup> He came to the sheepfolds beside the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave.

<sup>4</sup> The men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David went and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's cloak.

<sup>5</sup> Afterward David was stricken to the heart because he had cut off a corner of Saul's cloak.

<sup>6</sup> He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's

anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is the LORD's anointed." <sup>7</sup> So David scolded his men severely and did not permit them to attack Saul. Then Saul got up and left the cave, and went on his way.

<sup>8</sup> Afterwards David also rose up and went out of the cave and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance.

<sup>9</sup> David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of those who say, 'David seeks to do you harm'?" <sup>10</sup> This very day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you into my hand in the cave; and some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not raise my hand against my lord; for he is the LORD's anointed.' <sup>11</sup> See, my father, see the corner of your cloak in my hand; for by the fact that I cut off the corner of your cloak, and did not kill you, you may know for certain that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you are hunting me to take my life. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD judge



between me and you! May the LORD avenge me on you; but my hand shall not be against you. <sup>13</sup> As the ancient proverb says, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness'; but my hand shall not be against you. <sup>14</sup> Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A single flea? <sup>15</sup> May the LORD therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you. May he see to it, and plead my cause, and vindicate me against you."

<sup>16</sup> When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Saul lifted up his voice and wept. <sup>17</sup> He said to David, "You are more righteous than I; for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. <sup>18</sup> Today you have explained how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. <sup>19</sup> For who has ever found an enemy, and sent the enemy safely away? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. <sup>20</sup> Now I know

that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. <sup>21</sup> Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not wipe out my name from my father's house." <sup>22</sup> So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

### **John 10:11-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will

listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

<sup>19</sup> Again the Jews were divided because of these words. <sup>20</sup> Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?” <sup>21</sup> Others were saying, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

**Psalms 115:1-10 (NRSV)**

*The Impotence of Idols and the Greatness of God*

<sup>1</sup> Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory,  
for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness.  
<sup>2</sup> Why should the nations say,  
“Where is their God?”

<sup>3</sup> Our God is in the heavens;  
he does whatever he pleases.  
<sup>4</sup> Their idols are silver and gold,  
the work of human hands.  
<sup>5</sup> They have mouths, but do not speak;  
eyes, but do not see.  
<sup>6</sup> They have ears, but do not hear;  
noses, but do not smell.  
<sup>7</sup> They have hands, but do not feel;  
feet, but do not walk;  
they make no sound in their throats.  
<sup>8</sup> Those who make them are like them;  
so are all who trust in them.  
<sup>9</sup> O Israel, trust in the LORD!  
He is their help and their shield.  
<sup>10</sup> O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD!  
He is their help and their shield.

**Proverbs 24:21–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> My child, fear the LORD and the king,  
and do not disobey either of them;

<sup>22</sup> for disaster comes from them suddenly,  
and who knows the ruin that both can bring?

## October 5



### 1 Samuel 25:1-44 (NRSV)

#### *Death of Samuel*

<sup>1</sup> Now Samuel died; and all Israel assembled and mourned for him. They buried him at his home in Ramah.

Then David got up and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

#### *David and the Wife of Nabal*

<sup>2</sup> There was a man in Maon, whose property was in Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. <sup>3</sup> Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was clever and beautiful, but the man was surly and mean;

he was a Calebite. <sup>4</sup> David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. <sup>5</sup> So David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. <sup>6</sup> Thus you shall salute him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.' <sup>7</sup> I hear that you have shearers; now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing, all the time they were in Carmel. <sup>8</sup> Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your sight; for we have come on a feast day. Please give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David.' "

<sup>9</sup> When David's young men came, they said all this to Nabal in the name of David; and then they waited. <sup>10</sup> But Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who are breaking away from their masters. <sup>11</sup> Shall I take my

bread and my water and the meat that I have butchered for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?" <sup>12</sup> So David's young men turned away, and came back and told him all this. <sup>13</sup> David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword!" And every one of them strapped on his sword; David also strapped on his sword; and about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage.

<sup>14</sup> But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he shouted insults at them. <sup>15</sup> Yet the men were very good to us, and we suffered no harm, and we never missed anything when we were in the fields, as long as we were with them; <sup>16</sup> they were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. <sup>17</sup> Now therefore know this and consider what you should do; for evil has been decided against our master and against all his house; he is

so ill-natured that no one can speak to him."

<sup>18</sup> Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs. She loaded them on donkeys <sup>19</sup> and said to her young men, "Go on ahead of me; I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

<sup>20</sup> As she rode on the donkey and came down under cover of the mountain, David and his men came down toward her; and she met them. <sup>21</sup> Now David had said, "Surely it was in vain that I protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him; but he has returned me evil for good.

<sup>22</sup> God do so to David and more also, if by morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him."

<sup>23</sup> When Abigail saw David, she hurried and alighted from the donkey, and fell before David on her face, bowing to the ground. <sup>24</sup> She fell at his

feet and said, "Upon me alone, my lord, be the guilt; please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant. <sup>25</sup> My lord, do not take seriously this ill-natured fellow, Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him; but I, your servant, did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent.

<sup>26</sup> "Now then, my lord, as the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, since the LORD has restrained you from bloodguilt and from taking vengeance with your own hand, now let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord be like Nabal.

<sup>27</sup> And now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who follow my lord. <sup>28</sup> Please forgive the trespass of your servant; for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD; and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. <sup>29</sup> If anyone should rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord

shall be bound in the bundle of the living under the care of the LORD your God; but the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling. <sup>30</sup> When the LORD has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you prince over Israel, <sup>31</sup> my lord shall have no cause of grief, or pangs of conscience, for having shed blood without cause or for having saved himself. And when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."

<sup>32</sup> David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today! <sup>33</sup> Blessed be your good sense, and blessed be you, who have kept me today from bloodguilt and from avenging myself by my own hand! <sup>34</sup> For as surely as the LORD the God of Israel lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there would not have been left to Nabal so much as one male."

<sup>35</sup> Then David received from

her hand what she had brought him; he said to her, "Go up to your house in peace; see, I have heeded your voice, and I have granted your petition."

<sup>36</sup> Abigail came to Nabal; he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; so she told him nothing at all until the morning light.

<sup>37</sup> In the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him; he became like a stone.

<sup>38</sup> About ten days later the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.

<sup>39</sup> When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD who has judged the case of Nabal's insult to me, and has kept back his servant from evil; the LORD has returned the evildoing of Nabal upon his own head." Then David sent and wooed Abigail, to make her his wife. <sup>40</sup> When David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they said to her, "David has sent us to you to

take you to him as his wife."

<sup>41</sup> She rose and bowed down, with her face to the ground, and said, "Your servant is a slave to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." <sup>42</sup> Abigail got up hurriedly and rode away on a donkey; her five maids attended her. She went after the messengers of David and became his wife.

<sup>43</sup> David also married Ahinoam of Jezreel; both of them became his wives. <sup>44</sup> Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish, who was from Gallim.

### **John 10:22-29 (NRSV)**


*Jesus Is Rejected by the Jews*

<sup>22</sup> At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe.

The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me;

<sup>26</sup> but you do not believe,



because you do not belong to  
my sheep.<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear  
my voice. I know them, and  
they follow me.<sup>28</sup> I give them  
eternal life, and they will  
never perish. No one will  
snatch them out of my hand.  
<sup>29</sup> What my Father has given  
me is greater than all else, and  
no one can snatch it out of the  
Father's hand.

**Psalms 115:11-18 (NRSV)**

- <sup>11</sup> You who fear the LORD,  
trust in the LORD!  
He is their help and their  
shield.
- <sup>12</sup> The LORD has been mindful  
of us; he will bless us;  
he will bless the house of  
Israel;  
he will bless the house of  
Aaron;
- <sup>13</sup> he will bless those who  
fear the LORD,  
both small and great.
- <sup>14</sup> May the LORD give you  
increase,  
both you and your  
children.
- <sup>15</sup> May you be blessed by the  
LORD,  
who made heaven and  
earth.

- <sup>16</sup> The heavens are the LORD's  
heavens,  
but the earth he has  
given to human beings.
- <sup>17</sup> The dead do not praise the  
LORD,  
nor do any that go down  
into silence.
- <sup>18</sup> But we will bless the LORD  
from this time on and  
forevermore.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 24:23-25 (NRSV)**

*Further Sayings of the Wise*

- <sup>23</sup> These also are sayings of  
the wise:  
Partiality in judging is not  
good.
- <sup>24</sup> Whoever says to the  
wicked, "You are  
innocent,"  
will be cursed by  
peoples, abhorred by  
nations;
- <sup>25</sup> but those who rebuke the  
wicked will have  
delight,  
and a good blessing will  
come upon them.

# October

## 6



### 1 Samuel 26:1-25 (NRSV)

#### *David Spares Saul's Life a Second Time*

<sup>1</sup> Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "David is in hiding on the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite Jeshimon." <sup>2</sup> So Saul rose and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, with three thousand chosen men of Israel, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. <sup>3</sup> Saul encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite Jeshimon beside the road. But David remained in the wilderness. When he learned that Saul had come after him into the wilderness, <sup>4</sup> David sent out spies, and learned that Saul had indeed arrived. <sup>5</sup> Then David set out and came to the place where Saul had encamped; and David saw the place where Saul lay, with Abner son of Ner, the commander of his army. Saul was lying within the encampment, while the army was encamped around him.

<sup>6</sup> Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, "Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?" Abishai said, "I will go down with you." <sup>7</sup> So David and Abishai went to the army by night; there Saul lay sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the army lay around him. <sup>8</sup> Abishai said to David, "God has given your enemy into your hand today; now therefore let me pin him to the ground with one stroke of the spear; I will not strike him twice." <sup>9</sup> But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who can raise his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?" <sup>10</sup> David said, "As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him down; or his day will come to die; or he will go down into battle and perish. <sup>11</sup> The LORD forbid that I should raise my hand against the LORD's anointed; but now take the spear that is at his head, and the water jar, and let us go." <sup>12</sup> So David took the spear that was at Saul's head



and the water jar, and they went away. No one saw it, or knew it, nor did anyone awake; for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen upon them.

<sup>13</sup> Then David went over to the other side, and stood on top of a hill far away, with a great distance between them.

<sup>14</sup> David called to the army and to Abner son of Ner, saying, "Abner! Will you not answer?" Then Abner replied, "Who are you that calls to the king?"

<sup>15</sup> David said to Abner, "Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. <sup>16</sup> This thing that you have done is not good. As the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the LORD's anointed. See now, where is the king's spear, or the water jar that was at his head?"

<sup>17</sup> Saul recognized David's voice, and said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" David said, "It is my voice, my lord, O

king." <sup>18</sup> And he added, "Why does my lord pursue his servant? For what have I done? What guilt is on my hands? <sup>19</sup> Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it is the LORD who has stirred you up against me, may he accept an offering; but if it is mortals, may they be cursed before the LORD, for they have driven me out today from my share in the heritage of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' <sup>20</sup> Now therefore, do not let my blood fall to the ground, away from the presence of the LORD; for the king of Israel has come out to seek a single flea, like one who hunts a partridge in the mountains."

<sup>21</sup> Then Saul said, "I have done wrong; come back, my son David, for I will never harm you again, because my life was precious in your sight today; I have been a fool, and have made a great mistake."

<sup>22</sup> David replied, "Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and get it. <sup>23</sup> The LORD rewards everyone for his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the

LORD gave you into my hand today, but I would not raise my hand against the LORD's anointed.<sup>24</sup> As your life was precious today in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the LORD, and may he rescue me from all tribulation."<sup>25</sup> Then Saul said to David, "Blessed be you, my son David! You will do many things and will succeed in them." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

**John 10:30-42** (NRSV)

<sup>30</sup> **The Father and I are one."**

<sup>31</sup> The Jews took up stones again to stone him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus replied, "**I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these are you going to stone me?"**<sup>33</sup> The Jews answered, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, though only a human being, are making yourself God."

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, "**Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'?**<sup>35</sup> **If those to whom the word of God came were called 'gods'—and the scripture cannot be annulled—**

<sup>36</sup> **can you say that the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world is blaspheming because I said, 'I am God's Son'?**<sup>37</sup> **If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me.**<sup>38</sup> **But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."**<sup>39</sup> Then they tried to arrest him again, but he escaped from their hands.

<sup>40</sup> He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there. <sup>41</sup> Many came to him, and they were saying, "John performed no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true."<sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.

**Psalm 116:1-5** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for Recovery  
from Illness*

<sup>1</sup> I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my supplications.

<sup>2</sup> Because he inclined his ear  
to me,  
therefore I will call on  
him as long as I live.  
<sup>3</sup> The snares of death  
encompassed me;  
the pangs of Sheol laid  
hold on me;  
I suffered distress and  
anguish.  
<sup>4</sup> Then I called on the name  
of the LORD:  
“O LORD, I pray, save my  
life!”  
<sup>5</sup> Gracious is the LORD, and  
righteous;  
our God is merciful.

**Proverbs 24:26 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> One who gives an honest  
answer  
gives a kiss on the lips.

**October**  
**7**



**1 Samuel 27:1-28:25 (NRSV)**

*David Serves  
King Achish of Gath*

<sup>1</sup> David said in his heart, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul; there is nothing better for me than to escape to the land of the Philistines; then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.” <sup>2</sup> So David set out and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to King Achish son of Maoch of Gath. <sup>3</sup> David stayed with Achish at Gath, he and his troops, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal’s widow. <sup>4</sup> When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought for him.

<sup>5</sup> Then David said to Achish, “If I have found favor in your sight, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, so that I may live there; for why should your servant live in the royal city with you?” <sup>6</sup> So that day Achish gave him Ziklag; therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. <sup>7</sup> The length of time that David lived in the

country of the Philistines was one year and four months.

<sup>8</sup> Now David and his men went up and made raids on the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for these were the landed settlements from Telam on the way to Shur and on to the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> David struck the land, leaving neither man nor woman alive, but took away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the clothing, and came back to Achish. <sup>10</sup> When Achish asked, "Against whom have you made a raid today?" David would say, "Against the Negeb of Judah," or "Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites," or, "Against the Negeb of the Kenites." <sup>11</sup> David left neither man nor woman alive to be brought back to Gath, thinking, "They might tell about us, and say, 'David has done so and so.'" Such was his practice all the time he lived in the country of the Philistines. <sup>12</sup> Achish trusted David, thinking, "He has made himself utterly abhorrent to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant."

**28** In those days the Philistines gathered their forces for war, to fight against Israel. Achish said to David, "You know, of course, that you and your men are to go out with me in the army." <sup>2</sup> David said to Achish, "Very well, then you shall know what your servant can do." Achish said to David, "Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life."

*Saul Consults a Medium*  
(Cp Deut 18:9–14)

<sup>3</sup> Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. Saul had expelled the mediums and the wizards from the land. <sup>4</sup> The Philistines assembled, and came and encamped at Shunem. Saul gathered all Israel, and they encamped at Gilboa. <sup>5</sup> When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. <sup>6</sup> When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, not by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. <sup>7</sup> Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, so that I may go to

her and inquire of her." His servants said to him, "There is a medium at Endor."

<sup>8</sup> So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes and went there, he and two men with him. They came to the woman by night. And he said, "Consult a spirit for me, and bring up for me the one whom I name to you." <sup>9</sup> The woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the wizards from the land. Why then are you laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?" <sup>10</sup> But Saul swore to her by the LORD, "As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." <sup>11</sup> Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" He answered, "Bring up Samuel for me." <sup>12</sup> When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!" <sup>13</sup> The king said to her, "Have no fear; what do you see?" The woman said to Saul, "I see a divine being coming up out of the ground." <sup>14</sup> He said to her, "What is his

appearance?" She said, "An old man is coming up; he is wrapped in a robe." So Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance.

<sup>15</sup> Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" Saul answered, "I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams; so I have summoned you to tell me what I should do."

<sup>16</sup> Samuel said, "Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has turned from you and become your enemy?" <sup>17</sup> The LORD has done to you just as he spoke by me; for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand, and given it to your neighbor, David. <sup>18</sup> Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD, and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you today.

<sup>19</sup> Moreover the LORD will give Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines; and tomorrow you and your sons

shall be with me; the LORD will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.”

<sup>20</sup> Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night. <sup>21</sup> The woman came to Saul, and when she saw that he was terrified, she said to him, “Your servant has listened to you; I have taken my life in my hand, and have listened to what you have said to me. <sup>22</sup> Now therefore, you also listen to your servant; let me set a morsel of bread before you. Eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way.” <sup>23</sup> He refused, and said, “I will not eat.” But his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he listened to their words. So he got up from the ground and sat on the bed. <sup>24</sup> Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house. She quickly slaughtered it, and she took flour, kneaded it, and baked unleavened cakes. <sup>25</sup> She put them before Saul and his servants, and they

ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

### **John 11:1-29 (NRSV)**

#### *The Death of Lazarus*

<sup>1</sup> Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

<sup>2</sup> Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” <sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard it, he said, “**This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.**” <sup>5</sup> Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup> after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

<sup>7</sup> Then after this he said to the disciples, “**Let us go to Judea again.**” <sup>8</sup> The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?” <sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, “**Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk**

during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.”

<sup>11</sup> After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” <sup>12</sup> The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.” <sup>13</sup> Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. <sup>14</sup> Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup> For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

<sup>16</sup> Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

### *Jesus the Resurrection and the Life*

<sup>17</sup> When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

<sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, <sup>19</sup> and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their

brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

<sup>21</sup> Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

<sup>22</sup> But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” <sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” <sup>24</sup> Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.

Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, <sup>26</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

Do you believe this?” <sup>27</sup> She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

### *Jesus Weeps*

<sup>28</sup> When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” <sup>29</sup> And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.

**Psalms 116:6-14 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> The LORD protects the  
simple;  
when I was brought low,  
he saved me.

<sup>7</sup> Return, O my soul, to your  
rest,  
for the LORD has dealt  
bountifully with you.

<sup>8</sup> For you have delivered my  
soul from death,  
my eyes from tears,  
my feet from stumbling.

<sup>9</sup> I walk before the LORD  
in the land of the living.

<sup>10</sup> I kept my faith, even when  
I said,  
“I am greatly afflicted”;  
<sup>11</sup> I said in my consternation,  
“Everyone is a liar.”

<sup>12</sup> What shall I return to the  
LORD  
for all his bounty to me?

<sup>13</sup> I will lift up the cup of  
salvation  
and call on the name of  
the LORD,

<sup>14</sup> I will pay my vows to the  
LORD  
in the presence of all his  
people.

**Proverbs 24:27 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> Prepare your work outside,

get everything ready for  
you in the field;  
and after that build your  
house.

**October  
8**



**1 Samuel 29:1-30:20 (NRSV)**

*The Philistines Reject David*

<sup>1</sup> Now the Philistines gathered all their forces at Aphek, while the Israelites were encamped by the fountain that is in Jezreel. <sup>2</sup> As the lords of the Philistines were passing on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were passing on in the rear with Achish, <sup>3</sup> the commanders of the Philistines said, “What are these Hebrews doing here?” Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, “Is this not David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me now for days and years? Since he deserted to me I have found no fault in him to this day.” <sup>4</sup> But the



commanders of the Philistines were angry with him; and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Send the man back, so that he may return to the place that you have assigned to him; he shall not go down with us to battle, or else he may become an adversary to us in the battle. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here?"<sup>5</sup> Is this not David, of whom they sing to one another in dances, 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?"

<sup>6</sup> Then Achish called David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you have been honest, and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign; for I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me until today. Nevertheless the lords do not approve of you."<sup>7</sup> So go back now; and go peaceably; do nothing to displease the lords of the Philistines."<sup>8</sup> David said to Achish, "But what have I

done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your service until now, that I should not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"<sup>9</sup> Achish replied to David, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.'<sup>10</sup> Now then rise early in the morning, you and the servants of your lord who came with you, and go to the place that I appointed for you. As for the evil report, do not take it to heart, for you have done well before me. Start early in the morning, and leave as soon as you have light."<sup>11</sup> So David set out with his men early in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

*David Avenges the  
Destruction of Ziklag*

**30** Now when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negeb and on Ziklag. They had attacked

Ziklag, burned it down, <sup>2</sup> and taken captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great; they killed none of them, but carried them off, and went their way. <sup>3</sup> When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned down, and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. <sup>4</sup> Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept, until they had no more strength to weep. <sup>5</sup> David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. <sup>6</sup> David was in great danger; for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in spirit for their sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

<sup>7</sup> David said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. <sup>8</sup> David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?" He answered him, "Pursue; for you shall surely overtake and

shall surely rescue." <sup>9</sup> So David set out, he and the six hundred men who were with him. They came to the Wadi Besor, where those stayed who were left behind. <sup>10</sup> But David went on with the pursuit, he and four hundred men; two hundred stayed behind, too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor.

<sup>11</sup> In the open country they found an Egyptian, and brought him to David. They gave him bread and he ate; they gave him water to drink; <sup>12</sup> they also gave him a piece of fig cake and two clusters of raisins. When he had eaten, his spirit revived; for he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights. <sup>13</sup> Then David said to him, "To whom do you belong? Where are you from?" He said, "I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite. My master left me behind because I fell sick three days ago. <sup>14</sup> We had made a raid on the Negeb of the Cherethites and on that which belongs to Judah and on the Negeb of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag down." <sup>15</sup> David

said to him, “Will you take me down to this raiding party?” He said, “Swear to me by God that you will not kill me, or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to them.”

<sup>16</sup> When he had taken him down, they were spread out all over the ground, eating and drinking and dancing, because of the great amount of spoil they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. <sup>17</sup> David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not one of them escaped, except four hundred young men, who mounted camels and fled. <sup>18</sup> David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken; and David rescued his two wives. <sup>19</sup> Nothing was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that had been taken; David brought back everything.

<sup>20</sup> David also captured all the flocks and herds, which were driven ahead of the other cattle; people said, “This is David’s spoil.”

**John 11:30-54** (NRSV)

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup> The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

<sup>32</sup> When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” <sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. <sup>34</sup> He said, “**Where have you laid him?**” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” <sup>35</sup> Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup> So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” <sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

*Jesus Raises Lazarus to Life*

<sup>38</sup> Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was

lying against it. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, **“Take away the stone.”** Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” <sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, **“Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”** <sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, **“Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup> I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”** <sup>43</sup> When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, **“Lazarus, come out!”** <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, **“Unbind him, and let him go.”**

### *The Plot to Kill Jesus*

*(Mt 26:1–5; Mk 14:1–2; Lk 22:1–2)*

<sup>45</sup> Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. <sup>46</sup> But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. <sup>47</sup> So the chief

priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, “What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. <sup>48</sup> If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation.” <sup>49</sup> But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all! <sup>50</sup> You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.” <sup>51</sup> He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, <sup>52</sup> and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God. <sup>53</sup> So from that day on they planned to put him to death.

<sup>54</sup> Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.

**Psalm 116:15-117:2 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Precious in the sight of the

LORD

is the death of his  
faithful ones.

<sup>16</sup> O LORD, I am your servant;  
I am your servant, the  
child of your serving  
girl.

You have loosed my  
bonds.

<sup>17</sup> I will offer to you a  
thanksgiving sacrifice  
and call on the name of  
the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> I will pay my vows to the  
LORD  
in the presence of all his  
people,

<sup>19</sup> in the courts of the house  
of the LORD,  
in your midst, O  
Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

*Universal Call to Worship*

**117** Praise the LORD, all you  
nations!

Extol him, all you  
peoples!

<sup>2</sup> For great is his steadfast  
love toward us,  
and the faithfulness of  
the LORD endures  
forever.

Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 24:28–29 (NRSV)**

<sup>28</sup> Do not be a witness  
against your neighbor  
without cause,  
and do not deceive with  
your lips.

<sup>29</sup> Do not say, "I will do to  
others as they have  
done to me;  
I will pay them back for  
what they have done."

**October  
9**



**1 Samuel 30:21-31:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> Then David came to the  
two hundred men who had  
been too exhausted to follow  
David, and who had been left  
at the Wadi Besor. They went  
out to meet David and to meet  
the people who were with  
him. When David drew near to  
the people he saluted them.

<sup>22</sup> Then all the corrupt and  
worthless fellows among the  
men who had gone with David

said, "Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except that each man may take his wife and children, and leave." <sup>23</sup> But David said, "You shall not do so, my brothers, with what the LORD has given us; he has preserved us and handed over to us the raiding party that attacked us. <sup>24</sup> Who would listen to you in this matter? For the share of the one who goes down into the battle shall be the same as the share of the one who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike." <sup>25</sup> From that day forward he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel; it continues to the present day.

<sup>26</sup> When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the spoil to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD"; <sup>27</sup> it was for those in Bethel, in Ramoth of the Negeb, in Jattir, <sup>28</sup> in Aroer, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa, <sup>29</sup> in Racal, in the towns of the Jerahmeelites, in the towns of the Kenites, <sup>30</sup> in Hormah, in Bor-ashan, in

Athach, <sup>31</sup> in Hebron, all the places where David and his men had roamed.

*The Death of Saul and His Sons*  
(1 Chr 10:1–14)

**31** Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and many fell on Mount Gilboa. <sup>2</sup> The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchishua, the sons of Saul. <sup>3</sup> The battle pressed hard upon Saul; the archers found him, and he was badly wounded by them. <sup>4</sup> Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it, so that these uncircumcised may not come and thrust me through, and make sport of me." But his armor-bearer was unwilling; for he was terrified. So Saul took his own sword and fell upon it. <sup>5</sup> When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him. <sup>6</sup> So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together on the same

day. <sup>7</sup> When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley and those beyond the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook their towns and fled; and the Philistines came and occupied them.

<sup>8</sup> The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. <sup>9</sup> They cut off his head, stripped off his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to carry the good news to the houses of their idols and to the people. <sup>10</sup> They put his armor in the temple of Astarte; and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. <sup>11</sup> But when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, <sup>12</sup> all the valiant men set out, traveled all night long, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan. They came to Jabesh and burned them there. <sup>13</sup> Then they took their bones and buried them under

the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

**John 11:55-12:8** (NRSV)

<sup>55</sup> Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. <sup>56</sup> They were looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?" <sup>57</sup> Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

*Mary Anoints Jesus*  
(Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9)

**12** Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. <sup>3</sup> Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The

house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

<sup>4</sup> But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said,

<sup>5</sup> “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?” <sup>6</sup> (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) <sup>7</sup> Jesus said, **“Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup> You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”**

**Psalms 118:1-7 (NRSV)**

*A Song of Victory*

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good;

his steadfast love  
endures forever!

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel say,

“His steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>3</sup> Let the house of Aaron say,

“His steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>4</sup> Let those who fear the  
LORD say,

“His steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>5</sup> Out of my distress I called  
on the LORD;

the LORD answered me  
and set me in a broad  
place.

<sup>6</sup> With the LORD on my side I  
do not fear.

What can mortals do to  
me?

<sup>7</sup> The LORD is on my side to  
help me;

I shall look in triumph on  
those who hate me.

**Proverbs 24:30–34 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> I passed by the field of one  
who was lazy,  
by the vineyard of a  
stupid person;

<sup>31</sup> and see, it was all  
overgrown with thorns;  
the ground was covered  
with nettles,  
and its stone wall was  
broken down.

<sup>32</sup> Then I saw and considered  
it;

I looked and received  
instruction.

<sup>33</sup> A little sleep, a little  
slumber,  
a little folding of the  
hands to rest,



<sup>34</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want, like an armed warrior.

## October 10



### 2 Samuel 1:1-16 (NRSV)

#### *David Mourns for Saul and Jonathan*

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. <sup>2</sup> On the third day, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. When he came to David, he fell to the ground and did obeisance. <sup>3</sup> David said to him, "Where have you come from?" He said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." <sup>4</sup> David said to him, "How did things go? Tell me!" He answered, "The army fled from the battle, but also many of the army fell and died; and Saul and his son Jonathan also

died." <sup>5</sup> Then David asked the young man who was reporting to him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan died?" <sup>6</sup> The young man reporting to him said, "I happened to be on Mount Gilboa; and there was Saul leaning on his spear, while the chariots and the horsemen drew close to him. <sup>7</sup> When he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. I answered, 'Here sir.' <sup>8</sup> And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' <sup>9</sup> He said to me, 'Come, stand over me and kill me; for convulsions have seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' <sup>10</sup> So I stood over him, and killed him, for I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

<sup>11</sup> Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them; and all the men who were with him did the same. <sup>12</sup> They mourned and wept, and fasted until evening for Saul and for his son Jonathan, and for the

army of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

<sup>13</sup> David said to the young man who had reported to him, "Where do you come from?" He answered, "I am the son of a resident alien, an Amalekite." <sup>14</sup> David said to him, "Were you not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?" <sup>15</sup> Then David called one of the young men and said, "Come here and strike him down." So he struck him down and he died.

<sup>16</sup> David said to him, "Your blood be on your head; for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.' "

**John 12:9-19 (NRSV)**

*The Plot to Kill Lazarus*

<sup>9</sup> When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>10</sup> So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, <sup>11</sup> since it was on account of him that many of the Jews

were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

*Jesus' Triumphal Entry  
into Jerusalem*

(Mt 21:1-11; Mk 11:1-11;  
Lk 19:28-40)

<sup>12</sup> The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who  
comes in the name of  
the Lord—  
the King of Israel!"

<sup>14</sup> Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

<sup>15</sup> "Do not be afraid,  
daughter of Zion.  
Look, your king is coming,  
sitting on a donkey's  
colt!"

<sup>16</sup> His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. <sup>17</sup> So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised

him from the dead continued to testify.<sup>18</sup> It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.<sup>19</sup> The Pharisees then said to one another, “You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!”

**Psalms 118:8-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> It is better to take refuge  
in the LORD  
than to put confidence in  
mortals.  
<sup>9</sup> It is better to take refuge  
in the LORD  
than to put confidence in  
princes.  
<sup>10</sup> All nations surrounded me;  
in the name of the LORD I  
cut them off!  
<sup>11</sup> They surrounded me,  
surrounded me on  
every side;  
in the name of the LORD I  
cut them off!  
<sup>12</sup> They surrounded me like  
bees;  
they blazed like a fire of  
thorns;  
in the name of the LORD I  
cut them off!  
<sup>13</sup> I was pushed hard, so that  
I was falling,

but the LORD helped me.

<sup>14</sup> The LORD is my strength  
and my might;  
he has become my  
salvation.  
<sup>15</sup> There are glad songs of  
victory in the tents of  
the righteous:  
“The right hand of the LORD  
does valiantly;  
<sup>16</sup> the right hand of the  
LORD is exalted;  
the right hand of the  
LORD does valiantly.”  
<sup>17</sup> I shall not die, but I shall  
live,  
and recount the deeds of  
the LORD.  
<sup>18</sup> The LORD has punished me  
severely,  
but he did not give me  
over to death.

**Proverbs 25:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Further Wise Sayings of  
Solomon*

<sup>1</sup> These are other proverbs of  
Solomon that the officials of  
King Hezekiah of Judah copied.  
<sup>2</sup> It is the glory of God to  
conceal things,  
but the glory of kings is  
to search things out.

<sup>3</sup> Like the heavens for  
 height, like the earth  
 for depth,  
 so the mind of kings is  
 unsearchable.  
<sup>4</sup> Take away the dross from  
 the silver,  
 and the smith has  
 material for a vessel;  
<sup>5</sup> take away the wicked from  
 the presence of the  
 king,  
 and his throne will be  
 established in  
 righteousness.

## October 11



### 2 Samuel 1:17-2:11 (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> David intoned this  
 lamentation over Saul and his  
 son Jonathan. <sup>18</sup> (He ordered  
 that The Song of the Bow be  
 taught to the people of Judah;  
 it is written in the Book of  
 Jashar.) He said:

<sup>19</sup> Your glory, O Israel, lies  
 slain upon your high  
 places!

How the mighty have  
 fallen!  
<sup>20</sup> Tell it not in Gath,  
 proclaim it not in the  
 streets of Ashkelon;  
 or the daughters of the  
 Philistines will rejoice,  
 the daughters of the  
 uncircumcised will  
 exult.  
<sup>21</sup> You mountains of Gilboa,  
 let there be no dew or  
 rain upon you,  
 nor bounteous fields!  
 For there the shield of the  
 mighty was defiled,  
 the shield of Saul,  
 anointed with oil no  
 more.  
<sup>22</sup> From the blood of the  
 slain,  
 from the fat of the  
 mighty,  
 the bow of Jonathan did  
 not turn back,  
 nor the sword of Saul  
 return empty.  
<sup>23</sup> Saul and Jonathan,  
 beloved and lovely!  
 In life and in death they  
 were not divided;  
 they were swifter than  
 eagles,  
 they were stronger than  
 lions.

<sup>24</sup> O daughters of Israel,  
weep over Saul,  
who clothed you with  
crimson, in luxury,  
who put ornaments of  
gold on your apparel.

<sup>25</sup> How the mighty have  
fallen  
in the midst of the  
battle!

Jonathan lies slain upon  
your high places.

<sup>26</sup> I am distressed for you,  
my brother Jonathan;  
greatly beloved were you  
to me;  
your love to me was  
wonderful,  
passing the love of  
women.

<sup>27</sup> How the mighty have  
fallen,  
and the weapons of war  
perished!

### *David Anointed King of Judah*

**2** After this David inquired of  
the LORD, "Shall I go up into  
any of the cities of Judah?"  
The LORD said to him, "Go up."  
David said, "To which shall I go  
up?" He said, "To Hebron."

<sup>2</sup> So David went up there,  
along with his two wives,  
Ahinoam of Jezreel, and

Abigail the widow of Nabal of  
Carmel. <sup>3</sup> David brought up the  
men who were with him,  
every one with his household;  
and they settled in the towns  
of Hebron. <sup>4</sup> Then the people  
of Judah came, and there they  
anointed David king over the  
house of Judah.

When they told David, "It  
was the people of Jabesh-  
gilead who buried Saul,"

<sup>5</sup> David sent messengers to the  
people of Jabesh-gilead, and  
said to them, "May you be  
blessed by the LORD, because  
you showed this loyalty to Saul  
your lord, and buried him!

<sup>6</sup> Now may the LORD show  
steadfast love and faithfulness  
to you! And I too will reward  
you because you have done  
this thing. <sup>7</sup> Therefore let your  
hands be strong, and be  
valiant; for Saul your lord is  
dead, and the house of Judah  
has anointed me king over  
them."

### *Ishbaal King of Israel*

<sup>8</sup> But Abner son of Ner,  
commander of Saul's army,  
had taken Ishbaal son of Saul,  
and brought him over to  
Mahanaim. <sup>9</sup> He made him

king over Gilead, the Ashurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and over all Israel.

<sup>10</sup> Ishbaal, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. <sup>11</sup> The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

### **John 12:20-36** (NRSV)

*Some Greeks Wish to See Jesus*

<sup>20</sup> Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks.

<sup>21</sup> They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." <sup>22</sup> Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup> Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup> Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal

life. <sup>26</sup> Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

*Jesus Speaks about His Death*

<sup>27</sup> "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

<sup>29</sup> The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

<sup>30</sup> Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

<sup>33</sup> He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

<sup>34</sup> The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted

up? Who is this Son of Man?"

<sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. <sup>36</sup> While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light."

**Psalms 118:19-26 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.  
<sup>20</sup> This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous shall enter through it.  
<sup>21</sup> I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.  
<sup>22</sup> The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.  
<sup>23</sup> This is the LORD's doing;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.

<sup>24</sup> This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
<sup>25</sup> Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!  
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!  
<sup>26</sup> Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD.  
We bless you from the house of the LORD.

**Proverbs 25:6-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence  
or stand in the place of the great;  
<sup>7</sup> for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"  
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.  
<sup>8</sup> What your eyes have seen do not hastily bring into court;  
for what will you do in the end,  
when your neighbor puts you to shame?

# October 12



## 2 Samuel 2:12-3:5 (NRSV)

### *The Battle of Gibeon*

<sup>12</sup> Abner son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbaal son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. <sup>13</sup> Joab son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. One group sat on one side of the pool, while the other sat on the other side of the pool. <sup>14</sup> Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men come forward and have a contest before us." Joab said, "Let them come forward." <sup>15</sup> So they came forward and were counted as they passed by, twelve for Benjamin and Ishbaal son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. <sup>16</sup> Each grasped his opponent by the head, and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is at Gibeon. <sup>17</sup> The battle was very fierce that day; and Abner and the men of

Israel were beaten by the servants of David.

<sup>18</sup> The three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Now Asahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle. <sup>19</sup> Asahel pursued Abner, turning neither to the right nor to the left as he followed him. <sup>20</sup> Then Abner looked back and said, "Is it you, Asahel?" He answered, "Yes, it is." <sup>21</sup> Abner said to him, "Turn to your right or to your left, and seize one of the young men, and take his spoil." But Asahel would not turn away from following him. <sup>22</sup> Abner said again to Asahel, "Turn away from following me; why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I show my face to your brother Joab?" <sup>23</sup> But he refused to turn away. So Abner struck him in the stomach with the butt of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back. He fell there, and died where he lay. And all those who came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, stood still.

<sup>24</sup> But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. As the sun was going down they came to the



hill of Ammah, which lies before Giah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon. <sup>25</sup> The Benjaminites rallied around Abner and formed a single band; they took their stand on the top of a hill. <sup>26</sup> Then Abner called to Joab, "Is the sword to keep devouring forever? Do you not know that the end will be bitter? How long will it be before you order your people to turn from the pursuit of their kinsmen?" <sup>27</sup> Joab said, "As God lives, if you had not spoken, the people would have continued to pursue their kinsmen, not stopping until morning." <sup>28</sup> Joab sounded the trumpet and all the people stopped; they no longer pursued Israel or engaged in battle any further.

<sup>29</sup> Abner and his men traveled all that night through the Arabah; they crossed the Jordan, and, marching the whole forenoon, they came to Mahanaim. <sup>30</sup> Joab returned from the pursuit of Abner; and when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men besides Asahel.

<sup>31</sup> But the servants of David

had killed of Benjamin three hundred sixty of Abner's men.

<sup>32</sup> They took up Asahel and buried him in the tomb of his father, which was at Bethlehem. Joab and his men marched all night, and the day broke upon them at Hebron.

### *Abner Defects to David*

**3** There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

<sup>2</sup> Sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel; <sup>3</sup> his second, Chileab, of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; the third, Absalom son of Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; <sup>4</sup> the fourth, Adonijah son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah son of Abital; <sup>5</sup> and the sixth, Ithream, of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

### **John 12:37-50 (NRSV)**

#### *The Unbelief of the People*

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them. <sup>37</sup> Although he had

performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him.<sup>38</sup> This was to fulfill the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

“Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

<sup>39</sup> And so they could not believe, because Isaiah also said,

<sup>40</sup> “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not look with their eyes, and understand with their heart and turn—and I would heal them.”

<sup>41</sup> Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;<sup>43</sup> for they loved human glory more than the glory that comes from God.

*Summary of Jesus' Teaching*

<sup>44</sup> Then Jesus cried aloud:

“Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me.<sup>45</sup> And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.<sup>46</sup> I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness.<sup>47</sup> I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.<sup>48</sup> The one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge; on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge,<sup>49</sup> for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak.<sup>50</sup> And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me.”

**Psalm 118:27-29 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> The LORD is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.

<sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will  
give thanks to you;  
you are my God, I will  
extol you.

<sup>29</sup> **O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.**

**Proverbs 25:9–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Argue your case with your  
neighbor directly,  
and do not disclose  
another's secret;  
<sup>10</sup> or else someone who  
hears you will bring  
shame upon you,  
and your ill repute will  
have no end.

**October  
13**



**2 Samuel 1:6-39 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> While there was war  
between the house of Saul  
and the house of David, Abner  
was making himself strong in  
the house of Saul. <sup>7</sup> Now Saul  
had a concubine whose name

was Rizpah daughter of Aiah.  
And Ishbaal said to Abner,  
“Why have you gone in to my  
father’s concubine?” <sup>8</sup> The  
words of Ishbaal made Abner  
very angry; he said, “Am I a  
dog’s head for Judah? Today I  
keep showing loyalty to the  
house of your father Saul, to  
his brothers, and to his  
friends, and have not given  
you into the hand of David;  
and yet you charge me now  
with a crime concerning this  
woman. <sup>9</sup> So may God do to  
Abner and so may he add to it!  
For just what the LORD has  
sworn to David, that will I  
accomplish for him, <sup>10</sup> to  
transfer the kingdom from the  
house of Saul, and set up the  
throne of David over Israel and  
over Judah, from Dan to Beer-  
sheba.” <sup>11</sup> And Ishbaal could  
not answer Abner another  
word, because he feared him.

<sup>12</sup> Abner sent messengers  
to David at Hebron, saying,  
“To whom does the land  
belong? Make your covenant  
with me, and I will give you my  
support to bring all Israel over  
to you.” <sup>13</sup> He said, “Good; I  
will make a covenant with you.  
But one thing I require of you:

you shall never appear in my presence unless you bring Saul's daughter Michal when you come to see me." <sup>14</sup> Then David sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbaal, saying, "Give me my wife Michal, to whom I became engaged at the price of one hundred foreskins of the Philistines."

<sup>15</sup> Ishbaal sent and took her from her husband Paltiel the son of Laish. <sup>16</sup> But her husband went with her, weeping as he walked behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Go back home!" So he went back.

<sup>17</sup> Abner sent word to the elders of Israel, saying, "For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you. <sup>18</sup> Now then bring it about; for the LORD has promised David: Through my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from all their enemies." <sup>19</sup> Abner also spoke directly to the Benjaminites; then Abner went to tell David at Hebron all that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin were ready to do.

<sup>20</sup> When Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron, David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. <sup>21</sup> Abner said to David, "Let me go and rally all Israel to my lord the king, in order that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may reign over all that your heart desires." So David dismissed Abner, and he went away in peace.

#### *Abner Is Killed by Joab*

<sup>22</sup> Just then the servants of David arrived with Joab from a raid, bringing much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David at Hebron, for David had dismissed him, and he had gone away in peace. <sup>23</sup> When Joab and all the army that was with him came, it was told Joab, "Abner son of Ner came to the king, and he has dismissed him, and he has gone away in peace." <sup>24</sup> Then Joab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Abner came to you; why did you dismiss him, so that he got away?" <sup>25</sup> You know that Abner son of Ner came to deceive you, and to learn your comings

and goings and to learn all that you are doing.”

<sup>26</sup>When Joab came out from David’s presence, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah; but David did not know about it. <sup>27</sup>When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gateway to speak with him privately, and there he stabbed him in the stomach. So he died for shedding the blood of Asahel, Joab’s brother. <sup>28</sup>Afterward, when David heard of it, he said, “I and my kingdom are forever guiltless before the LORD for the blood of Abner son of Ner. <sup>29</sup>May the guilt fall on the head of Joab, and on all his father’s house; and may the house of Joab never be without one who has a discharge, or who is leprous, or who holds a spindle, or who falls by the sword, or who lacks food!” <sup>30</sup>So Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon.

<sup>31</sup>Then David said to Joab and to all the people who

were with him, “Tear your clothes, and put on sackcloth, and mourn over Abner.” And King David followed the bier.

<sup>32</sup>They buried Abner at Hebron. The king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept. <sup>33</sup>The king lamented for Abner, saying,

“Should Abner die as a fool dies?

<sup>34</sup>Your hands were not bound,  
your feet were not fettered;  
as one falls before the wicked  
you have fallen.”

And all the people wept over him again. <sup>35</sup>Then all the people came to persuade David to eat something while it was still day; but David swore, saying, “So may God do to me, and more, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down!” <sup>36</sup>All the people took notice of it, and it pleased them; just as everything the king did pleased all the people. <sup>37</sup>So all the people and all Israel understood that day that the king had no part in the killing

of Abner son of Ner. <sup>38</sup> And the king said to his servants, “Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? <sup>39</sup> Today I am powerless, even though anointed king; these men, the sons of Zeruah, are too violent for me. The LORD pay back the one who does wickedly in accordance with his wickedness!”

**John 13:1-20 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Washes  
the Disciples’ Feet*

<sup>1</sup> Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup> The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper <sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin

and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, **“You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”** <sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, **“Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.”** <sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, **“One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.”** <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, **“Not all of you are clean.”**

<sup>12</sup> After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, **“Do you know what I have done to you?**

<sup>13</sup> **You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am.** <sup>14</sup> **So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also**

ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. <sup>18</sup> I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, 'The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' <sup>19</sup> I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he. <sup>20</sup> Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me."

**Psalm 119:1-8 (NRSV)**

*The Glories of God's Law*

<sup>1</sup> Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.  
<sup>2</sup> Happy are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole heart,

<sup>3</sup> who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways.  
<sup>4</sup> You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.  
<sup>5</sup> O that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!  
<sup>6</sup> Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.  
<sup>7</sup> I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous ordinances.  
<sup>8</sup> I will observe your statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

**Proverbs 25:11-14 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.  
<sup>12</sup> Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise rebuke to a listening ear.  
<sup>13</sup> Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest are faithful messengers to those who send them;

they refresh the spirit of  
their masters.

<sup>14</sup> Like clouds and wind  
without rain  
is one who boasts of a  
gift never given.

## October 14



### 2 Samuel 4:1-5:12 (NRSV)

#### *Ishbaal Assassinated*

<sup>1</sup> When Saul's son Ishbaal heard that Abner had died at Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed.

<sup>2</sup> Saul's son had two captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab. They were sons of Rimmon a Benjaminite from Beeroth—for Beeroth is considered to belong to Benjamin. <sup>3</sup> (Now the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim and are there as resident aliens to this day).

<sup>4</sup> Saul's son Jonathan had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old

when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled; and, in her haste to flee, it happened that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

<sup>5</sup> Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out, and about the heat of the day they came to the house of Ishbaal, while he was taking his noonday rest.

<sup>6</sup> They came inside the house as though to take wheat, and they struck him in the stomach; then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.

<sup>7</sup> Now they had come into the house while he was lying on his couch in his bedchamber; they attacked him, killed him, and beheaded him. Then they took his head and traveled by way of the Arabah all night long. <sup>8</sup> They brought the head of Ishbaal to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Here is the head of Ishbaal, son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; the LORD has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring."

<sup>9</sup> David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the



sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, “As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life out of every adversity,<sup>10</sup> when the one who told me, ‘See, Saul is dead,’ thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag—this was the reward I gave him for his news.<sup>11</sup> How much more then, when wicked men have killed a righteous man on his bed in his own house! And now shall I not require his blood at your hand, and destroy you from the earth?”<sup>12</sup> So David commanded the young men, and they killed them; they cut off their hands and feet, and hung their bodies beside the pool at Hebron. But the head of Ishbaal they took and buried in the tomb of Abner at Hebron.

*David Anointed  
King of All Israel  
(1 Chr 11:1–3)*

**5** Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, “Look, we are your bone and flesh.<sup>2</sup> For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and

brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.”<sup>3</sup> So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.<sup>4</sup> David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.<sup>5</sup> At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

*Jerusalem Made Capital  
of the United Kingdom  
(1 Chr 11:4–9; 14:1–7)*

<sup>6</sup> The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, “You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back”—thinking, “David cannot come in here.”<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David.<sup>8</sup> David had said on that day, “Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up

the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates.” Therefore it is said, “The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.”<sup>9</sup> David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inward.<sup>10</sup> And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

<sup>11</sup> King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar trees, and carpenters and masons who built David a house.<sup>12</sup> David then perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

### **John 13:21-30** (NRSV)

*Jesus Foretells His Betrayal*

*(Mt 26:21–25; Mk 14:18–19;*

*Lk 22:21–23)*

<sup>21</sup> After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, “**Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.**”<sup>22</sup> The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking.<sup>23</sup> One of his disciples—the one

whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him;<sup>24</sup> Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.<sup>25</sup> So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?”<sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, “**It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.**” So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot.<sup>27</sup> After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “**Do quickly what you are going to do.**”<sup>28</sup> Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him.<sup>29</sup> Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the festival”; or, that he should give something to the poor.<sup>30</sup> So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

### **Psalm 119:9-16** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> **How can young people keep their way pure?  
By guarding it according to your word.**



10 With my whole heart I  
seek you;  
do not let me stray from  
your commandments.  
11 I treasure your word in my  
heart,  
so that I may not sin  
against you.  
12 Blessed are you, O LORD;  
teach me your statutes.  
13 With my lips I declare  
all the ordinances of  
your mouth.  
14 I delight in the way of your  
decrees  
as much as in all riches.  
15 I will meditate on your  
precepts,  
and fix my eyes on your  
ways.  
16 I will delight in your  
statutes;  
I will not forget your  
word.

**Proverbs 25:15 (NRSV)**

15 With patience a ruler may  
be persuaded,  
and a soft tongue can  
break bones.

**October  
15**



**2 Samuel 5:13-6:23 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> In Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives; and more sons and daughters were born to David. <sup>14</sup> These are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, <sup>15</sup> Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, <sup>16</sup> Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

*Philistine Attack Repulsed*  
(1 Chr 14:8–17)

<sup>17</sup> When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold. <sup>18</sup> Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the valley of Rephaim. <sup>19</sup> David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?” The LORD said to David, “Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines

into your hand.”<sup>20</sup> So David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. He said, “The LORD has burst forth against my enemies before me, like a bursting flood.” Therefore that place is called Baal-perazim.<sup>21</sup> The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

<sup>22</sup> Once again the Philistines came up, and were spread out in the valley of Rephaim.<sup>23</sup> When David inquired of the LORD, he said, “You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come upon them opposite the balsam trees.”<sup>24</sup> When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then be on the alert; for then the LORD has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.”<sup>25</sup> David did just as the LORD had commanded him; and he struck down the Philistines from Geba all the way to Gezer.

*David Brings the  
Ark to Jerusalem  
(1 Chr 13:1–14; 15:25–16:3)*

**6** David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.<sup>2</sup> David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim.<sup>3</sup> They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart<sup>4</sup> with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark.<sup>5</sup> David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

<sup>6</sup> When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it.<sup>7</sup> The anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God.<sup>8</sup> David was angry because the LORD had

burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day.

<sup>9</sup> David was afraid of the LORD that day; he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come into my care?" <sup>10</sup> So David was unwilling to take the ark of the LORD into his care in the city of David; instead David took it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. <sup>11</sup> The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

<sup>12</sup> It was told King David, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; <sup>13</sup> and when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. <sup>14</sup> David danced before the LORD with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. <sup>15</sup> So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting,

and with the sound of the trumpet.

<sup>16</sup> As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

<sup>17</sup> They brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the LORD. <sup>18</sup> When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts, <sup>19</sup> and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

<sup>20</sup> David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering

himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!"

<sup>21</sup> David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD, that I have danced before the LORD. <sup>22</sup> I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." <sup>23</sup> And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

### **John 13:31-38** (NRSV)

#### *The New Commandment*

<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup> If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup> Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you

cannot come.' <sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

#### *Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial*

<sup>36</sup> Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward." <sup>37</sup> Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." <sup>38</sup> Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times."

### **Psalms 119:17-24** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Deal bountifully with your servant,  
so that I may live and observe your word.  
<sup>18</sup> Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

- 19 I live as an alien in the  
land;  
do not hide your  
commandments from  
me.
- 20 My soul is consumed with  
longing  
for your ordinances at all  
times.
- 21 You rebuke the insolent,  
accursed ones,  
who wander from your  
commandments;
- 22 take away from me their  
scorn and contempt,  
for I have kept your  
decrees.
- 23 Even though princes sit  
plotting against me,  
your servant will  
meditate on your  
statutes.
- 24 Your decrees are my  
delight,  
they are my counselors.

**Proverbs 25:16** (NRSV)

- 16 If you have found honey,  
eat only enough for  
you, or else, having too  
much, you will vomit it.

**October**  
**16**



**2 Samuel 7:1-29** (NRSV)

*God's Covenant with David*  
(1 Chr 17:1-15)

- 1 Now when the king was  
settled in his house, and the  
LORD had given him rest from  
all his enemies around him,  
2 the king said to the prophet  
Nathan, "See now, I am living  
in a house of cedar, but the  
ark of God stays in a tent."  
3 Nathan said to the king, "Go,  
do all that you have in mind;  
for the LORD is with you."  
4 But that same night the  
word of the LORD came to  
Nathan: 5 Go and tell my  
servant David: Thus says the  
LORD: Are you the one to build  
me a house to live in? 6 I have  
not lived in a house since the  
day I brought up the people of  
Israel from Egypt to this day,  
but I have been moving about  
in a tent and a tabernacle.  
7 Wherever I have moved  
about among all the people of  
Israel, did I ever speak a word  
with any of the tribal leaders  
of Israel, whom I commanded  
to shepherd my people Israel,

saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”

<sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>12</sup> When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He shall build a house for my name, and I will

establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. <sup>15</sup> But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever. <sup>17</sup> In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

*David's Prayer*  
(1 Chr 17:16–27)

<sup>18</sup> Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, “Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? <sup>19</sup> And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD; you have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come. May this be instruction for the people, O Lord GOD! <sup>20</sup> And what more can David say to you? For you



know your servant, O Lord GOD! <sup>21</sup> Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness, so that your servant may know it.

<sup>22</sup> Therefore you are great, O LORD God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. <sup>23</sup> Who is like your people, like Israel? Is there another nation on earth whose God went to redeem it as a people, and to make a name for himself, doing great and awesome things for them, by driving out before his people nations and their gods?

<sup>24</sup> And you established your people Israel for yourself to be your people forever; and you, O LORD, became their God.

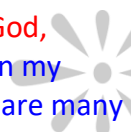
<sup>25</sup> And now, O LORD God, as for the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, confirm it forever; do as you have promised. <sup>26</sup> Thus your name will be magnified forever in the saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over Israel'; and the house of your servant David will be

established before you. <sup>27</sup> For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house'; therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. <sup>28</sup> And now, O LORD God, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; <sup>29</sup> now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you; for you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

#### **John 14:1-14 (NRSV)**

*Jesus the Way to the Father*

<sup>1</sup> "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And you know



the way to the place where I am going.”<sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”<sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”<sup>7</sup> If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?

<sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.<sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.<sup>12</sup> Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that

I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.<sup>13</sup> I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.<sup>14</sup> If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

**Psalms 119:25-32 (NRSV)**

- <sup>25</sup> My soul clings to the dust;  
revive me according to  
your word.
- <sup>26</sup> When I told of my ways,  
you answered me;  
teach me your statutes.
- <sup>27</sup> Make me understand the  
way of your precepts,  
and I will meditate on  
your wondrous works.
- <sup>28</sup> My soul melts away for  
sorrow;  
strengthen me according  
to your word.
- <sup>29</sup> Put false ways far from  
me;  
and graciously teach me  
your law.
- <sup>30</sup> I have chosen the way of  
faithfulness;  
I set your ordinances  
before me.
- <sup>31</sup> I cling to your decrees, O  
LORD;

let me not be put to shame.

<sup>32</sup> I run the way of your commandments, for you enlarge my understanding.

**Proverbs 25:17** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house, otherwise the neighbor will become weary of you and hate you.

**October  
17**



**2 Samuel 8:1-18** (NRSV)

*David's Wars*  
(1 Chr 18:1-13)

<sup>1</sup> Some time afterward, David attacked the Philistines and subdued them; David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

<sup>2</sup> He also defeated the Moabites and, making them lie down on the ground, measured them off with a cord; he measured two

lengths of cord for those who were to be put to death, and one length for those who were to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.

<sup>3</sup> David also struck down King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah, as he went to restore his monument at the river Euphrates. <sup>4</sup> David took from him one thousand seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but left enough for a hundred chariots. <sup>5</sup> When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand men of the Arameans. <sup>6</sup> Then David put garrisons among the Arameans of Damascus; and the Arameans became servants to David and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. <sup>7</sup> David took the gold shields that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> From Betah and from Berothai, towns of Hadadezer,

King David took a great amount of bronze.

<sup>9</sup> When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, <sup>10</sup> Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to greet him and to congratulate him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him. Now Hadadezer had often been at war with Toi. Joram brought with him articles of silver, gold, and bronze; <sup>11</sup> these also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, <sup>12</sup> from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah.

<sup>13</sup> David won a name for himself. When he returned, he killed eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. <sup>14</sup> He put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

### *David's Officers*

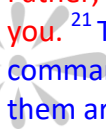
*(1 Chr 18:14–17)*

<sup>15</sup> So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and equity to all his people. <sup>16</sup> Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; <sup>17</sup> Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Seraiah was secretary; <sup>18</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were priests.

### **John 14:15-26 (NRSV)**

*The Promise of the Holy Spirit*

<sup>15</sup> "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. <sup>18</sup> "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you



also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.” <sup>22</sup> Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. <sup>24</sup> Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

<sup>25</sup> “I have said these things to you while I am still with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

**Psalms 119:33-40 (NRSV)**

<sup>33</sup> Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,

and I will observe it to the end.

<sup>34</sup> Give me understanding, that I may keep your law

and observe it with my whole heart.

<sup>35</sup> Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

<sup>36</sup> Turn my heart to your decrees, and not to selfish gain.

<sup>37</sup> Turn my eyes from looking at vanities; give me life in your ways.

<sup>38</sup> Confirm to your servant your promise, which is for those who fear you.

<sup>39</sup> Turn away the disgrace that I dread, for your ordinances are good.

<sup>40</sup> See, I have longed for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life.

**Proverbs 25:18–19 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> Like a war club, a sword, or a sharp arrow is one who bears false witness against a neighbor.

<sup>19</sup> Like a bad tooth or a lame foot  
is trust in a faithless person in time of trouble.

## October 18



### 2 Samuel 9:1-10:19 (NRSV)

#### *David's Kindness to Mephibosheth*

<sup>1</sup> David asked, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

<sup>2</sup> Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and he was summoned to David. The king said to him, "Are you Ziba?"

And he said, "At your service!"

<sup>3</sup> The king said, "Is there anyone remaining of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?"

Ziba said to the king, "There remains a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet." <sup>4</sup> The king said to him, "Where is

he?" Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar."

<sup>5</sup> Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. <sup>6</sup> Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul came to David, and fell on his face and did obeisance. David said, "Mephibosheth!" He answered, "I am your servant." <sup>7</sup> David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan; I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you yourself shall eat at my table always." <sup>8</sup> He did obeisance and said, "What is your servant, that you should look upon a dead dog such as I?"

<sup>9</sup> Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson. <sup>10</sup> You and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him, and shall bring in the produce, so that your master's grandson may have food to eat; but your master's

grandson Mephibosheth shall always eat at my table.” Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.<sup>11</sup> Then Ziba said to the king, “According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so your servant will do.”

Mephibosheth ate at David’s table, like one of the king’s sons.<sup>12</sup> Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba’s house became Mephibosheth’s servants.<sup>13</sup> Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he always ate at the king’s table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

*The Ammonites and Arameans  
Are Defeated  
(1 Chr 19:1–19)*

**10** Some time afterward, the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun succeeded him.<sup>2</sup> David said, “I will deal loyally with Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father dealt loyally with me.” So David sent envoys to console him concerning his father. When David’s envoys came into the land of the Ammonites,<sup>3</sup> the princes of the Ammonites said

to their lord Hanun, “Do you really think that David is honoring your father just because he has sent messengers with condolences to you? Has not David sent his envoys to you to search the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it?”<sup>4</sup> So Hanun seized David’s envoys, shaved off half the beard of each, cut off their garments in the middle at their hips, and sent them away.<sup>5</sup> When David was told, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. The king said, “Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return.”

<sup>6</sup> When the Ammonites saw that they had become odious to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, twenty thousand foot soldiers, as well as the king of Maacah, one thousand men, and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men.<sup>7</sup> When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army with the warriors.<sup>8</sup> The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the

entrance of the gate; but the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maacah, were by themselves in the open country.

<sup>9</sup> When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Arameans; <sup>10</sup> the rest of his men he put in the charge of his brother Abishai, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. <sup>11</sup> He said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. <sup>12</sup> Be strong, and let us be courageous for the sake of our people, and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems good to him."

<sup>13</sup> So Joab and the people who were with him moved forward into battle against the Arameans; and they fled before him. <sup>14</sup> When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, and entered the city. Then Joab

returned from fighting against the Ammonites, and came to Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> But when the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together.

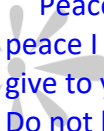
<sup>16</sup> Hadadezer sent and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the Euphrates; and they came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their head. <sup>17</sup> When it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam.

The Arameans arrayed themselves against David and fought with him. <sup>18</sup> The Arameans fled before Israel; and David killed of the Arameans seven hundred chariot teams, and forty thousand horsemen, and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there. <sup>19</sup> When all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel, and became subject to them. So the Arameans were afraid



to help the Ammonites any more.

**John 14:27-31** (NRSV)



<sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. <sup>28</sup> You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. <sup>29</sup> And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe. <sup>30</sup> I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; <sup>31</sup> but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us be on our way.

**Psalms 119:41-48** (NRSV)

<sup>41</sup> Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise.

<sup>42</sup> Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me, for I trust in your word. <sup>43</sup> Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your ordinances. <sup>44</sup> I will keep your law continually, forever and ever. <sup>45</sup> I shall walk at liberty, for I have sought your precepts. <sup>46</sup> I will also speak of your decrees before kings, and shall not be put to shame; <sup>47</sup> I find my delight in your commandments, because I love them. <sup>48</sup> I revere your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.

**Proverbs 25:18-19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Like a war club, a sword, or a sharp arrow is one who bears false witness against a neighbor.

<sup>19</sup> Like a bad tooth or a lame foot  
is trust in a faithless person in time of trouble.

## October 19



### 2 Samuel 11:1-27 (NRSV)

#### *David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba*

<sup>1</sup> In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. <sup>3</sup> David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This

is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite." <sup>4</sup> So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. <sup>5</sup> The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

<sup>6</sup> So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup> When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. <sup>8</sup> Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. <sup>9</sup> But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. <sup>10</sup> When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?"

<sup>11</sup> Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah remain in

booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing.”<sup>12</sup> Then David said to Uriah, “Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day,<sup>13</sup> David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

*David Has Uriah Killed*

<sup>14</sup> In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.<sup>15</sup> In the letter he wrote, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.”<sup>16</sup> As Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant warriors.<sup>17</sup> The men of the city came

out and fought with Joab; and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite was killed as well.<sup>18</sup> Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting;<sup>19</sup> and he instructed the messenger, “When you have finished telling the king all the news about the fighting,<sup>20</sup> then, if the king’s anger rises, and if he says to you, ‘Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?’<sup>21</sup> Who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbaal? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?’ then you shall say, ‘Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead too.’ ”

<sup>22</sup> So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell.<sup>23</sup> The messenger said to David, “The men gained an advantage over us, and came out against us in the field; but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate.<sup>24</sup> Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall; some

of the king's servants are dead; and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

<sup>25</sup> David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab, 'Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another; press your attack on the city, and overthrow it.' And encourage him."

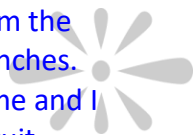
<sup>26</sup> When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. <sup>27</sup> When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son.

### **John 15:1-17 (NRSV)**

#### *Jesus the True Vine*

**15** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup> He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless

you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I



command you. <sup>15</sup> I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

<sup>16</sup> You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup> I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

**Psalms 119:49-58 (NRSV)**

<sup>49</sup> Remember your word to your servant,  
in which you have made me hope.

<sup>50</sup> This is my comfort in my distress,  
that your promise gives me life.

<sup>51</sup> The arrogant utterly deride me,  
but I do not turn away from your law.

<sup>52</sup> When I think of your ordinances from of old,  
I take comfort, O LORD.

<sup>53</sup> Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked,  
those who forsake your law.

<sup>54</sup> Your statutes have been my songs  
wherever I make my home.

<sup>55</sup> I remember your name in the night, O LORD,  
and keep your law.

<sup>56</sup> This blessing has fallen to me,  
for I have kept your precepts.

<sup>57</sup> The LORD is my portion;  
I promise to keep your words.

<sup>58</sup> I implore your favor with all my heart;  
be gracious to me according to your promise.

**Proverbs 25:23-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> The north wind produces rain,  
and a backbiting tongue,  
angry looks.

<sup>24</sup> It is better to live in a corner of the housetop  
than in a house shared  
with a contentious wife.

# October 20



## 2 Samuel 12:1-14 (NRSV)

### *Nathan Condemns David*

But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD,<sup>1</sup> and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, “There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor.<sup>2</sup> The rich man had very many flocks and herds;<sup>3</sup> but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him.<sup>4</sup> Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man’s lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him.”<sup>5</sup> Then David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, “As the LORD

lives, the man who has done this deserves to die;<sup>6</sup> he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.”

<sup>7</sup> Nathan said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul;<sup>8</sup> I gave you your master’s house, and your master’s wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more.<sup>9</sup> Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.<sup>10</sup> Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.<sup>11</sup> Thus says the LORD: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and

give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. <sup>12</sup> For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.”

<sup>13</sup> David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan said to David, “Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die.

<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child that is born to you shall die.”

### **John 15:18-27 (NRSV)**

#### *The World's Hatred*

<sup>18</sup> “If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you, ‘Servants are not greater than their master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. <sup>21</sup> But they will do all these things to you on account

of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.

<sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.

<sup>23</sup> Whoever hates me hates my Father also. <sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not have sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. <sup>25</sup> It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, ‘They hated me without a cause.’

<sup>26</sup> “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. <sup>27</sup> You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

### **Psalms 119:59-64 (NRSV)**

<sup>59</sup> When I think of your ways, I turn my feet to your decrees;  
<sup>60</sup> I hurry and do not delay to keep your commandments.  
<sup>61</sup> Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law.

<sup>62</sup> At midnight I rise to praise  
you,  
because of your  
righteous ordinances.  
<sup>63</sup> I am a companion of all  
who fear you,  
of those who keep your  
precepts.  
<sup>64</sup> The earth, O LORD, is full of  
your steadfast love;  
teach me your statutes.

**Proverbs 25:25–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> Like cold water to a thirsty  
soul,  
so is good news from a  
far country.  
<sup>26</sup> Like a muddied spring or a  
polluted fountain  
are the righteous who  
give way before the  
wicked.  
<sup>27</sup> It is not good to eat much  
honey,  
or to seek honor on top  
of honor.

**October  
21**



**2 Samuel 12:15-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Then Nathan went to his  
house.

*Bathsheba's Child Dies*

The LORD struck the child  
that Uriah's wife bore to  
David, and it became very ill.  
<sup>16</sup> David therefore pleaded  
with God for the child; David  
fasted, and went in and lay all  
night on the ground. <sup>17</sup> The  
elders of his house stood  
beside him, urging him to rise  
from the ground; but he would  
not, nor did he eat food with  
them. <sup>18</sup> On the seventh day  
the child died. And the  
servants of David were afraid  
to tell him that the child was  
dead; for they said, "While the  
child was still alive, we spoke  
to him, and he did not listen to  
us; how then can we tell him  
the child is dead? He may do  
himself some harm." <sup>19</sup> But  
when David saw that his  
servants were whispering  
together, he perceived that  
the child was dead; and David  
said to his servants, "Is the  
child dead?" They said, "He is  
dead."

<sup>20</sup> Then David rose from  
the ground, washed, anointed  
himself, and changed his



clothes. He went into the house of the LORD, and worshiped; he then went to his own house; and when he asked, they set food before him and he ate. <sup>21</sup> Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while it was alive; but when the child died, you rose and ate food." <sup>22</sup> He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me, and the child may live.' <sup>23</sup> But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

#### *Solomon Is Born*

<sup>24</sup> Then David consoled his wife Bathsheba, and went to her, and lay with her; and she bore a son, and he named him Solomon. The LORD loved him, <sup>25</sup> and sent a message by the prophet Nathan; so he named him Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

#### *The Ammonites Crushed*

(1 Chr 20:1–3)

<sup>26</sup> Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and took the royal city. <sup>27</sup> Joab sent messengers to David, and said, "I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the water city. <sup>28</sup> Now, then, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; or I myself will take the city, and it will be called by my name." <sup>29</sup> So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, and fought against it and took it. <sup>30</sup> He took the crown of Milcom from his head; the weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought forth the spoil of the city, a very great amount. <sup>31</sup> He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, or sent them to the brickworks. Thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

**John 16:1-16** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> “I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. <sup>2</sup> They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God. <sup>3</sup> And they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. <sup>4</sup> But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

*The Work of the Spirit*

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. <sup>5</sup> But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ <sup>6</sup> But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin,

because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

<sup>12</sup> “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

*Sorrow Will Turn into Joy*

<sup>16</sup> “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me.”

**Psalm 119:65-72** (NRSV)

<sup>65</sup> You have dealt well with your servant,  
O LORD, according to your word.

66 Teach me good judgment  
and knowledge,  
for I believe in your  
commandments.  
67 Before I was humbled I  
went astray,  
but now I keep your  
word.  
68 You are good and do good;  
teach me your statutes.  
69 The arrogant smear me  
with lies,  
but with my whole heart  
I keep your precepts.  
70 Their hearts are fat and  
gross,  
but I delight in your law.  
71 It is good for me that I was  
humbled,  
so that I might learn your  
statutes.  
72 The law of your mouth is  
better to me  
than thousands of gold  
and silver pieces.

**Proverbs 25:28** (NRSV)

28 Like a city breached,  
without walls,  
is one who lacks self-  
control.

**October  
22**



**2 Samuel 13:1-22** (NRSV)

*Amnon and Tamar*

<sup>1</sup> Some time passed. David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar; and David's son Amnon fell in love with her. <sup>2</sup> Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. <sup>3</sup> But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah; and Jonadab was a very crafty man. <sup>4</sup> He said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." <sup>5</sup> Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed, and pretend to be ill; and when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, so that I may see it and eat it

from her hand.' " <sup>6</sup> So Amnon lay down, and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, so that I may eat from her hand."

<sup>7</sup> Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." <sup>8</sup> So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, where he was lying down. She took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes.

<sup>9</sup> Then she took the pan and set them out before him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, "Send out everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. <sup>10</sup> Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, so that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. <sup>11</sup> But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her, and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." <sup>12</sup> She answered him, "No, my brother, do not force

me; for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do anything so vile! <sup>13</sup> As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the scoundrels in Israel. Now therefore, I beg you, speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you." <sup>14</sup> But he would not listen to her; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her.

<sup>15</sup> Then Amnon was seized with a very great loathing for her; indeed, his loathing was even greater than the lust he had felt for her. Amnon said to her, "Get out!" <sup>16</sup> But she said to him, "No, my brother; for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me." But he would not listen to her. <sup>17</sup> He called the young man who served him and said, "Put this woman out of my presence, and bolt the door after her." <sup>18</sup> (Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves; for this is how the virgin daughters of the king were clothed in earlier times.) So his servant put her out, and bolted the door after her. <sup>19</sup> But Tamar put ashes on

her head, and tore the long robe that she was wearing; she put her hand on her head, and went away, crying aloud as she went.

<sup>20</sup> Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart." So Tamar remained, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house.

<sup>21</sup> When King David heard of all these things, he became very angry, but he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his firstborn. <sup>22</sup> But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad; for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had raped his sister Tamar.

### **John 16:17-33** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying to us, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and 'Because I am going to the Father'?" <sup>18</sup> They said, "What does he mean by this 'a

little while'? We do not know what he is talking about."

<sup>19</sup> Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'?"

<sup>20</sup> Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. <sup>21</sup> When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. <sup>22</sup> So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. <sup>23</sup> On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will



receive, so that your joy may be complete.

*Peace for the Disciples*

<sup>25</sup> "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father. <sup>26</sup> On that day you will ask in my name. I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; <sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. <sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

<sup>29</sup> His disciples said, "Yes, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure of speech! <sup>30</sup> Now we know that you know all things, and do not need to have anyone question you; by this we believe that you came from God." <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone

because the Father is with me. <sup>33</sup> I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!"

**Psalm 119:73-80 (NRSV)**

<sup>73</sup> Your hands have made and fashioned me;  
give me understanding  
that I may learn your  
commandments.  
<sup>74</sup> Those who fear you shall  
see me and rejoice,  
because I have hoped in  
your word.  
<sup>75</sup> I know, O LORD, that your  
judgments are right,  
and that in faithfulness  
you have humbled me.  
<sup>76</sup> Let your steadfast love  
become my comfort  
according to your  
promise to your  
servant.  
<sup>77</sup> Let your mercy come to  
me, that I may live;  
for your law is my  
delight.  
<sup>78</sup> Let the arrogant be put to  
shame,  
because they have  
subverted me with  
guile;

as for me, I will meditate  
on your precepts.

79 Let those who fear you  
turn to me,  
so that they may know  
your decrees.

80 May my heart be  
blameless in your  
statutes,  
so that I may not be put  
to shame.

### **Proverbs 26:1–2 (NRSV)**

1 Like snow in summer or  
rain in harvest,  
so honor is not fitting for  
a fool.

2 Like a sparrow in its  
flitting, like a swallow  
in its flying,  
an undeserved curse  
goes nowhere.

## **October 23**



### **2 Samuel 13:23-39 (NRSV)**

*Absalom Avenges the  
Violation of His Sister*

<sup>23</sup> After two full years  
Absalom had sheepshearers at  
Baal-hazor, which is near  
Ephraim, and Absalom invited  
all the king's sons. <sup>24</sup> Absalom  
came to the king, and said,  
"Your servant has  
sheepshearers; will the king  
and his servants please go  
with your servant?" <sup>25</sup> But the  
king said to Absalom, "No, my  
son, let us not all go, or else  
we will be burdensome to  
you." He pressed him, but he  
would not go but gave him his  
blessing. <sup>26</sup> Then Absalom said,  
"If not, please let my brother  
Amnon go with us." The king  
said to him, "Why should he  
go with you?" <sup>27</sup> But Absalom  
pressed him until he let  
Amnon and all the king's sons  
go with him. Absalom made a  
feast like a king's feast. <sup>28</sup> Then  
Absalom commanded his  
servants, "Watch when  
Amnon's heart is merry with  
wine, and when I say to you,  
'Strike Amnon,' then kill him.  
Do not be afraid; have I not  
myself commanded you? Be  
courageous and valiant." <sup>29</sup> So  
the servants of Absalom did to  
Amnon as Absalom had  
commanded. Then all the

king's sons rose, and each mounted his mule and fled.

<sup>30</sup> While they were on the way, the report came to David that Absalom had killed all the king's sons, and not one of them was left. <sup>31</sup> The king rose, tore his garments, and lay on the ground; and all his servants who were standing by tore their garments. <sup>32</sup> But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, said, "Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men the king's sons; Amnon alone is dead. This has been determined by Absalom from the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar. <sup>33</sup> Now therefore, do not let my lord the king take it to heart, as if all the king's sons were dead; for Amnon alone is dead."

<sup>34</sup> But Absalom fled. When the young man who kept watch looked up, he saw many people coming from the Horonaim road by the side of the mountain. <sup>35</sup> Jonadab said to the king, "See, the king's sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about." <sup>36</sup> As soon as he had finished speaking, the king's

sons arrived, and raised their voices and wept; and the king and all his servants also wept very bitterly.

<sup>37</sup> But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. David mourned for his son day after day. <sup>38</sup> Absalom, having fled to Geshur, stayed there three years. <sup>39</sup> And the heart of the king went out, yearning for Absalom; for he was now consoled over the death of Amnon.

#### **John 17:1-26 (NRSV)**

##### *Jesus Prays for His Disciples*

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup> since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory



that I had in your presence before the world existed.

<sup>6</sup> "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup> for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup> And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one

destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>15</sup> I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.

<sup>16</sup> They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

<sup>20</sup> "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I

have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one,<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.<sup>24</sup> Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

<sup>25</sup> “Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me.<sup>26</sup> I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

**Psalm 119:81-88** (NRSV)

<sup>81</sup> My soul languishes for your salvation;  
I hope in your word.  
<sup>82</sup> My eyes fail with watching for your promise;  
I ask, “When will you comfort me?”  
<sup>83</sup> For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,

yet I have not forgotten your statutes.

<sup>84</sup> How long must your servant endure?  
When will you judge those who persecute me?  
<sup>85</sup> The arrogant have dug pitfalls for me;  
they flout your law.  
<sup>86</sup> All your commandments are enduring;  
I am persecuted without cause; help me!  
<sup>87</sup> They have almost made an end of me on earth;  
but I have not forsaken your precepts.  
<sup>88</sup> In your steadfast love spare my life,  
so that I may keep the decrees of your mouth.

**Proverbs 26:3–5** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,  
and a rod for the back of fools.  
<sup>4</sup> Do not answer fools according to their folly,  
or you will be a fool yourself.  
<sup>5</sup> Answer fools according to their folly,

or they will be wise in their own eyes.

## October 24



### 2 Samuel 14:1-33 (NRSV)

#### *Absalom Returns to Jerusalem*

<sup>1</sup> Now Joab son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's mind was on Absalom. <sup>2</sup> Joab sent to Tekoa and brought from there a wise woman. He said to her, "Pretend to be a mourner; put on mourning garments, do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead. <sup>3</sup> Go to the king and speak to him as follows." And Joab put the words into her mouth.

<sup>4</sup> When the woman of Tekoa came to the king, she fell on her face to the ground and did obeisance, and said, "Help, O king!" <sup>5</sup> The king asked her, "What is your trouble?" She answered, "Alas, I am a widow; my

husband is dead. <sup>6</sup> Your servant had two sons, and they fought with one another in the field; there was no one to part them, and one struck the other and killed him.

<sup>7</sup> Now the whole family has risen against your servant. They say, 'Give up the man who struck his brother, so that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he murdered, even if we destroy the heir as well.' Thus they would quench my one remaining ember, and leave to my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth."

<sup>8</sup> Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you." <sup>9</sup> The woman of Tekoa said to the king, "On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and his throne be guiltless." <sup>10</sup> The king said, "If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again." <sup>11</sup> Then she said, "Please, may the king keep the LORD your God in mind, so that the avenger of blood may kill

no more, and my son not be destroyed.” He said, “As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground.”

<sup>12</sup> Then the woman said, “Please let your servant speak a word to my lord the king.” He said, “Speak.” <sup>13</sup> The woman said, “Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again.

<sup>14</sup> We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up. But God will not take away a life; he will devise plans so as not to keep an outcast banished forever from his presence. <sup>15</sup> Now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid; your servant thought, ‘I will speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. <sup>16</sup> For the king will hear, and deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would cut both me and my son off from the heritage of God.’

<sup>17</sup> Your servant thought, ‘The

word of my lord the king will set me at rest’; for my lord the king is like the angel of God, discerning good and evil. The LORD your God be with you!”

<sup>18</sup> Then the king answered the woman, “Do not withhold from me anything I ask you.” The woman said, “Let my lord the king speak.” <sup>19</sup> The king said, “Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?” The woman answered and said, “As surely as you live, my lord the king, one cannot turn right or left from anything that my lord the king has said. For it was your servant Joab who commanded me; it was he who put all these words into the mouth of your servant. <sup>20</sup> In order to change the course of affairs your servant Joab did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth.”

<sup>21</sup> Then the king said to Joab, “Very well, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Absalom.” <sup>22</sup> Joab prostrated himself with his face to the ground and did obeisance, and blessed the king; and Joab said, “Today your servant

knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his servant.”

<sup>23</sup> So Joab set off, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. <sup>24</sup> The king said, “Let him go to his own house; he is not to come into my presence.” So Absalom went to his own house, and did not come into the king’s presence.

### *David Forgives Absalom*

<sup>25</sup> Now in all Israel there was no one to be praised so much for his beauty as Absalom; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. <sup>26</sup> When he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king’s weight. <sup>27</sup> There were born to Absalom three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a beautiful woman.

<sup>28</sup> So Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without coming into the king’s presence. <sup>29</sup> Then Absalom

sent for Joab to send him to the king; but Joab would not come to him. He sent a second time, but Joab would not come. <sup>30</sup> Then he said to his servants, “Look, Joab’s field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire.” So Absalom’s servants set the field on fire. <sup>31</sup> Then Joab rose and went to Absalom at his house, and said to him, “Why have your servants set my field on fire?” <sup>32</sup> Absalom answered Joab, “Look, I sent word to you: Come here, that I may send you to the king with the question, ‘Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still.’ Now let me go into the king’s presence; if there is guilt in me, let him kill me!” <sup>33</sup> Then Joab went to the king and told him; and he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king and prostrated himself with his face to the ground before the king; and the king kissed Absalom.

**John 18:1-14** (NRSV)

*The Betrayal and  
Arrest of Jesus*

(Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52  
Lk 22:47-53)

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. <sup>2</sup> Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers

together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. <sup>4</sup> Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “**Whom are you looking for?**” <sup>5</sup> They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “**I am he.**” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus said to them, “**I am he,**” they stepped back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Again he asked them, “**Whom are you looking for?**” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

<sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, “**I told you**

**that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.**” <sup>9</sup> This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “**I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.**”

<sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. <sup>11</sup> Jesus said to Peter, “**Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?**”

*Jesus before the High Priest*

<sup>12</sup> So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. <sup>13</sup> First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

**Psalm 119:89-96** (NRSV)

<sup>89</sup> **The LORD exists forever;  
your word is firmly fixed  
in heaven.**

<sup>90</sup> **Your faithfulness endures  
to all generations;**



you have established the  
earth, and it stands  
fast.

91 By your appointment they  
stand today,  
for all things are your  
servants.

92 If your law had not been  
my delight,  
I would have perished in  
my misery.

93 I will never forget your  
precepts,  
for by them you have  
given me life.

94 I am yours; save me,  
for I have sought your  
precepts.

95 The wicked lie in wait to  
destroy me,  
but I consider your  
decrees.

96 I have seen a limit to all  
perfection,  
but your commandment  
is exceedingly broad.

### **Proverbs 26:6–8 (NRSV)**

6 It is like cutting off one's  
foot and drinking down  
violence,  
to send a message by a  
fool.

7 The legs of a disabled  
person hang limp;

so does a proverb in the  
mouth of a fool.

8 It is like binding a stone in  
a sling  
to give honor to a fool.

## **October 25**



### **2 Samuel 15:1-22 (NRSV)**

#### *Absalom Usurps the Throne*

1 After this Absalom got  
himself a chariot and horses,  
and fifty men to run ahead of  
him. 2 Absalom used to rise  
early and stand beside the  
road into the gate; and when  
anyone brought a suit before  
the king for judgment,  
Absalom would call out and  
say, "From what city are you?"  
When the person said, "Your  
servant is of such and such a  
tribe in Israel," 3 Absalom  
would say, "See, your claims  
are good and right; but there  
is no one deputed by the king  
to hear you." 4 Absalom said  
moreover, "If only I were  
judge in the land! Then all who

had a suit or cause might come to me, and I would give them justice.”<sup>5</sup> Whenever people came near to do obeisance to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of them, and kiss them.<sup>6</sup> Thus Absalom did to every Israelite who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

<sup>7</sup> At the end of four years Absalom said to the king, “Please let me go to Hebron and pay the vow that I have made to the LORD.”<sup>8</sup> For your servant made a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram: If the LORD will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will worship the LORD in Hebron.”

<sup>9</sup> The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he got up, and went to Hebron.<sup>10</sup> But Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then shout: Absalom has become king at Hebron!”<sup>11</sup> Two hundred men from Jerusalem went with Absalom; they were invited guests, and they went in their

innocence, knowing nothing of the matter.<sup>12</sup> While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, from his city Giloh. The conspiracy grew in strength, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

#### *David Flees from Jerusalem*

<sup>13</sup> A messenger came to David, saying, “The hearts of the Israelites have gone after Absalom.”<sup>14</sup> Then David said to all his officials who were with him at Jerusalem, “Get up! Let us flee, or there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Hurry, or he will soon overtake us, and bring disaster down upon us, and attack the city with the edge of the sword.”<sup>15</sup> The king’s officials said to the king, “Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king decides.”<sup>16</sup> So the king left, followed by all his household, except ten concubines whom he left behind to look after the house.<sup>17</sup> The king left, followed by all the people; and they stopped at the last house.

<sup>18</sup> All his officials passed by



him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.

<sup>19</sup> Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why are you also coming with us? Go back, and stay with the king; for you are a foreigner, and also an exile from your home.” <sup>20</sup> You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, while I go wherever I can? Go back, and take your kinsfolk with you; and may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you.” <sup>21</sup> But Ittai answered the king, “As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there also your servant will be.” <sup>22</sup> David said to Ittai, “Go then, march on.” So Ittai the Gittite marched on, with all his men and all the little ones who were with him.

### **John 18:15-24** (NRSV)

*Peter Denies Jesus*  
(Mt 26:69–75; Mk 14:66–72;  
Lk 22:54–62)

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since

that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, <sup>16</sup> but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. <sup>17</sup> The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” <sup>18</sup> Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

### *The High Priest Questions Jesus*

<sup>19</sup> Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered, “**I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret.**” <sup>21</sup> **Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they**

know what I said.”<sup>22</sup> When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, “Is that how you answer the high priest?”<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?”<sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

**Psalms 119:97-104 (NRSV)**

<sup>97</sup> Oh, how I love your law!  
It is my meditation all day long.

<sup>98</sup> Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,  
for it is always with me.

<sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers,  
for your decrees are my meditation.

<sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged,  
for I keep your precepts.

<sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from every evil way,  
in order to keep your word.

<sup>102</sup> I do not turn away from your ordinances,  
for you have taught me.

<sup>103</sup> How sweet are your words to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to my mouth!

<sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get understanding;  
therefore I hate every false way.

**Proverbs 26:9–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Like a thornbush brandished by the hand of a drunkard is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

<sup>10</sup> Like an archer who wounds everybody is one who hires a passing fool or drunkard.

<sup>11</sup> Like a dog that returns to its vomit is a fool who reverts to his folly.

<sup>12</sup> Do you see persons wise in their own eyes?  
There is more hope for fools than for them.

# October 26



## 2 Samuel 15:23-16:4 (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> The whole country wept aloud as all the people passed by; the king crossed the Wadi Kidron, and all the people moved on toward the wilderness.

<sup>24</sup> Abiathar came up, and Zadok also, with all the Levites, carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, until the people had all passed out of the city. <sup>25</sup> Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see both it and the place where it stays. <sup>26</sup> But if he says, 'I take no pleasure in you,' here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him."

<sup>27</sup> The king also said to the priest Zadok, "Look, go back to the city in peace, you and Abiathar, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar.

<sup>28</sup> See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word

comes from you to inform me." <sup>29</sup> So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

<sup>30</sup> But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, with his head covered and walking barefoot; and all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went. <sup>31</sup> David was told that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, "O LORD, I pray you, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

### *Hushai Becomes David's Spy*

<sup>32</sup> When David came to the summit, where God was worshiped, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and earth on his head. <sup>33</sup> David said to him, "If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. <sup>34</sup> But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so now I will be your servant,' then you will defeat

for me the counsel of Ahithophel.<sup>35</sup> The priests Zadok and Abiathar will be with you there. So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell it to the priests Zadok and Abiathar.<sup>36</sup> Their two sons are with them there, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan; and by them you shall report to me everything you hear."<sup>37</sup> So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

#### *David's Adversaries*

**16** When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, carrying two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred bunches of raisins, one hundred of summer fruits, and one skin of wine.<sup>2</sup> The king said to Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine is for those to drink who faint in the wilderness."<sup>3</sup> The king said,

"And where is your master's son?" Ziba said to the king, "He remains in Jerusalem; for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom.'"<sup>4</sup> Then the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." Ziba said, "I do obeisance; let me find favor in your sight, my lord the king."

#### **John 18:25-19:22 (NRSV)**

##### *Peter Denies Jesus Again*

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not."<sup>26</sup> One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"<sup>27</sup> Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

##### *Jesus before Pilate*

(Mt 27:1-2, 11-14; Mk 15:1-5;  
Lk 23:1-5)

<sup>28</sup> Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the

headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover.<sup>29</sup> So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?"

<sup>30</sup>They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you."<sup>31</sup> Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death."<sup>32</sup> (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

<sup>33</sup>Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, "**Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?**"

<sup>35</sup>Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?"<sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, "**My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed**

**over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here."**

<sup>37</sup>Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "**You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.**"<sup>38</sup> Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

*Jesus Sentenced to Death*  
(Mt 27:15–31; Mk 15:6–20;  
Lk 23:13–25)

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him."<sup>39</sup> But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"<sup>40</sup> They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

**19** Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.<sup>2</sup> And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.<sup>3</sup> They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and

striking him on the face.

<sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.” <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!” <sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.” <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.”

<sup>8</sup> Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. <sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, “**You would have no power over me unless it had been given you**

**from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.”** <sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.”

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge’s bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” <sup>15</sup> They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but the emperor.” <sup>16</sup> Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

*The Crucifixion of Jesus*  
(Mt 27:32–56; Mk 15:21–41;  
Lk 23:26–49)

So they took Jesus; <sup>17</sup> and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in

Hebrew is called Golgotha.

<sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." <sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. <sup>21</sup> Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" <sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

**Psalms 119:105-112 (NRSV)**

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.  
<sup>106</sup> I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,  
to observe your righteous ordinances.  
<sup>107</sup> I am severely afflicted;  
give me life, O LORD,  
according to your word.

<sup>108</sup> Accept my offerings of praise, O LORD,  
and teach me your ordinances.  
<sup>109</sup> I hold my life in my hand continually,  
but I do not forget your law.  
<sup>110</sup> The wicked have laid a snare for me,  
but I do not stray from your precepts.  
<sup>111</sup> Your decrees are my heritage forever;  
they are the joy of my heart.  
<sup>112</sup> I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.

**Proverbs 26:13-16 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> The lazy person says,  
"There is a lion in the road!  
There is a lion in the streets!"  
<sup>14</sup> As a door turns on its hinges,  
so does a lazy person in bed.  
<sup>15</sup> The lazy person buries a hand in the dish,  
and is too tired to bring it back to the mouth.

<sup>16</sup> The lazy person is wiser in self-esteem than seven who can answer discreetly.

## October 27



### 2 Samuel 16:5-23 (NRSV)

#### *Shimei Curses David*

<sup>5</sup> When King David came to Bahurim, a man of the family of the house of Saul came out whose name was Shimei son of Gera; he came out cursing. <sup>6</sup> He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; now all the people and all the warriors were on his right and on his left. <sup>7</sup> Shimei shouted while he cursed, “Out! Out! Murderer! Scoundrel!” <sup>8</sup> The LORD has avenged on all of you the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, disaster has

overtaken you; for you are a man of blood.”

<sup>9</sup> Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head.” <sup>10</sup> But the king said, “What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the LORD has said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who then shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’” <sup>11</sup> David said to Abishai and to all his servants, “My own son seeks my life; how much more now may this Benjaminite! Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him. <sup>12</sup> It may be that the LORD will look on my distress, and the LORD will repay me with good for this cursing of me today.” <sup>13</sup> So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, throwing stones and flinging dust at him. <sup>14</sup> The king and all the people who were with him arrived weary at the Jordan; and there he refreshed himself.



*The Counsel of Ahithophel*

<sup>15</sup> Now Absalom and all the Israelites came to Jerusalem; Ahithophel was with him.

<sup>16</sup> When Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" <sup>17</sup> Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?"

<sup>18</sup> Hushai said to Absalom, "No; but the one whom the LORD and this people and all the Israelites have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. <sup>19</sup> Moreover, whom should I serve? Should it not be his son? Just as I have served your father, so I will serve you."

<sup>20</sup> Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give us your counsel; what shall we do?"

<sup>21</sup> Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, the ones he has left to look after the house; and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." <sup>22</sup> So they pitched a tent for Absalom

upon the roof; and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. <sup>23</sup> Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the oracle of God; so all the counsel of Ahithophel was esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.

**John 19:23-30 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. <sup>24</sup> So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."

<sup>25</sup> And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When

Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, **“Woman, here is your son.”** <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, **“Here is your mother.”** And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), **“I am thirsty.”** <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the wine, he said, **“It is finished.”** Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

**Psalms 119:113-120 (NRSV)**

- <sup>113</sup> I hate the double-minded,  
but I love your law.
- <sup>114</sup> You are my hiding place  
and my shield;  
I hope in your word.
- <sup>115</sup> Go away from me, you  
evildoers,  
that I may keep the  
commandments of my  
God.

- <sup>116</sup> Uphold me according to  
your promise, that I  
may live,  
and let me not be put to  
shame in my hope.
- <sup>117</sup> Hold me up, that I may be  
safe  
and have regard for your  
statutes continually.
- <sup>118</sup> You spurn all who go  
astray from your  
statutes;  
for their cunning is in  
vain.
- <sup>119</sup> All the wicked of the earth  
you count as dross;  
therefore I love your  
decrees.
- <sup>120</sup> My flesh trembles for fear  
of you,  
and I am afraid of your  
judgments.

**Proverbs 26:17 (NRSV)**

- <sup>17</sup> Like somebody who takes  
a passing dog by the  
ears  
is one who meddles in  
the quarrel of another.

# October 28



## 2 Samuel 17:1-16 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Moreover Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will set out and pursue David tonight. <sup>2</sup> I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged, and throw him into a panic; and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down only the king, <sup>3</sup> and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace.” <sup>4</sup> The advice pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

### *The Counsel of Hushai*

<sup>5</sup> Then Absalom said, “Call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear too what he has to say.” <sup>6</sup> When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, “This is what Ahithophel has said; shall we do as he advises? If not, you tell us.” <sup>7</sup> Then Hushai said to Absalom, “This time the counsel that

Ahithophel has given is not good.” <sup>8</sup> Hushai continued, “You know that your father and his men are warriors, and that they are enraged, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night with the troops. <sup>9</sup> Even now he has hidden himself in one of the pits, or in some other place. And when some of our troops fall at the first attack, whoever hears it will say, ‘There has been a slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom.’ <sup>10</sup> Then even the valiant warrior, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will utterly melt with fear; for all Israel knows that your father is a warrior, and that those who are with him are valiant warriors. <sup>11</sup> But my counsel is that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Beer-sheba, like the sand by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. <sup>12</sup> So we shall come upon him in whatever place he may be found, and we shall light on him as the dew falls on the ground; and he will not survive, nor will any

of those with him. <sup>13</sup> If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we shall drag it into the valley, until not even a pebble is to be found there.”

<sup>14</sup> Absalom and all the men of Israel said, “The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.” For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring ruin on Absalom.

*Hushai Warns David to Escape*

<sup>15</sup> Then Hushai said to the priests Zadok and Abiathar, “Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and so I have counseled.

<sup>16</sup> Therefore send quickly and tell David, ‘Do not lodge tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means cross over; otherwise the king and all the people who are with him will be swallowed up.’ ”

**John 19:31-42** (NRSV)

*Jesus’ Side Is Pierced*

<sup>31</sup> Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. <sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

<sup>35</sup> (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) <sup>36</sup> These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” <sup>37</sup> And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”

*The Burial of Jesus*

(Mt 27:57–61; Mk 15:42–47;

Lk 23:50–56)

<sup>38</sup> After these things,

Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

<sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

<sup>40</sup> They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

<sup>41</sup> Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

**Psalms 119:121-128** (NRSV)

<sup>121</sup> I have done what is just and right;  
do not leave me to my oppressors.

<sup>122</sup> Guarantee your servant's well-being;  
do not let the godless oppress me.

<sup>123</sup> My eyes fail from watching for your salvation, and for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.

<sup>124</sup> Deal with your servant according to your steadfast love, and teach me your statutes.

<sup>125</sup> I am your servant; give me understanding, so that I may know your decrees.

<sup>126</sup> It is time for the LORD to act, for your law has been broken.

<sup>127</sup> Truly I love your commandments more than gold, more than fine gold.

<sup>128</sup> Truly I direct my steps by all your precepts; I hate every false way.

**Proverbs 26:18–19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Like a maniac who shoots deadly firebrands and arrows,

<sup>19</sup> so is one who deceives a neighbor and says, "I am only joking!"

## October 29



### 2 Samuel 17:17-29 (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel; a servant-girl used to go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David; for they could not risk being seen entering the city. <sup>18</sup> But a boy saw them, and told Absalom; so both of them went away quickly, and came to the house of a man at Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard; and they went down into it. <sup>19</sup> The man's wife took a covering, stretched it over the well's mouth, and spread out grain on it; and nothing was known of it. <sup>20</sup> When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the

house, they said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman said to them, "They have crossed over the brook of water." And when they had searched and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

<sup>21</sup> After they had gone, the men came up out of the well, and went and told King David. They said to David, "Go and cross the water quickly; for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you." <sup>22</sup> So David and all the people who were with him set out and crossed the Jordan; by daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.

<sup>23</sup> When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and went off home to his own city. He set his house in order, and hanged himself; he died and was buried in the tomb of his father.

<sup>24</sup> Then David came to Mahanaim, while Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel. <sup>25</sup> Now Absalom had set Amasa over the army in the place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named

Ithra the Ishmaelite, who had married Abigail daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Job's mother. <sup>26</sup> The Israelites and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

<sup>27</sup> When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, <sup>28</sup> brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, wheat, barley, meal, parched grain, beans and lentils, <sup>29</sup> honey and curds, sheep, and cheese from the herd, for David and the people with him to eat; for they said, "The troops are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness."

### **John 20:1-18** (NRSV)

*The Resurrection of Jesus*  
(Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-12)

<sup>1</sup> Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the

tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

<sup>3</sup> Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup> The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

<sup>5</sup> He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

<sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup> and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup> for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples returned to their homes.

### *Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene*

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; <sup>12</sup> and she saw two angels in white, sitting

where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.

<sup>13</sup> They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” <sup>14</sup> When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, **“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?”** Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, **“Mary!”** She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher).

<sup>17</sup> Jesus said to her, **“Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ”** <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she

told them that he had said these things to her.

**Psalm 119:129-136 (NRSV)**

- <sup>129</sup> Your decrees are wonderful;  
therefore my soul keeps them.
- <sup>130</sup> The unfolding of your words gives light;  
it imparts understanding to the simple.
- <sup>131</sup> With open mouth I pant,  
because I long for your commandments.
- <sup>132</sup> Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
as is your custom toward those who love your name.
- <sup>133</sup> Keep my steps steady according to your promise,  
and never let iniquity have dominion over me.
- <sup>134</sup> Redeem me from human oppression,  
that I may keep your precepts.
- <sup>135</sup> Make your face shine upon your servant,  
and teach me your statutes.



<sup>136</sup> My eyes shed streams of  
tears  
because your law is not  
kept.

**Proverbs 26:20** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> For lack of wood the fire  
goes out,  
and where there is no  
whisperer, quarreling  
ceases.

**October  
30**



**2 Samuel 18:1-18** (NRSV)

*The Defeat and  
Death of Absalom*

<sup>1</sup> Then David mustered the  
men who were with him, and  
set over them commanders of  
thousands and commanders of  
hundreds. <sup>2</sup> And David divided  
the army into three groups:  
one third under the command  
of Joab, one third under the  
command of Abishai son of  
Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and

one third under the command  
of Ittai the Gittite. The king  
said to the men, "I myself will  
also go out with you." <sup>3</sup> But  
the men said, "You shall not  
go out. For if we flee, they will  
not care about us. If half of us  
die, they will not care about  
us. But you are worth ten  
thousand of us; therefore it is  
better that you send us help  
from the city." <sup>4</sup> The king said  
to them, "Whatever seems  
best to you I will do." So the  
king stood at the side of the  
gate, while all the army  
marched out by hundreds and  
by thousands. <sup>5</sup> The king  
ordered Joab and Abishai and  
Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for  
my sake with the young man  
Absalom." And all the people  
heard when the king gave  
orders to all the commanders  
concerning Absalom.

<sup>6</sup> So the army went out  
into the field against Israel;  
and the battle was fought in  
the forest of Ephraim. <sup>7</sup> The  
men of Israel were defeated  
there by the servants of David,  
and the slaughter there was  
great on that day, twenty  
thousand men. <sup>8</sup> The battle  
spread over the face of all the

country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.

<sup>9</sup> Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. <sup>10</sup> A man saw it, and told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak." <sup>11</sup> Joab said to the man who told him, "What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt." <sup>12</sup> But the man said to Joab, "Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not raise my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying: For my sake protect the young man Absalom!" <sup>13</sup> On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you

yourself would have stood aloof." <sup>14</sup> Joab said, "I will not waste time like this with you." He took three spears in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive in the oak. <sup>15</sup> And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him, and killed him.

<sup>16</sup> Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the troops. <sup>17</sup> They took Absalom, threw him into a great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones. Meanwhile all the Israelites fled to their homes. <sup>18</sup> Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar that is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance"; he called the pillar by his own name. It is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

### **John 20:19-31 (NRSV)**

*Jesus Appears to the Disciples*  
(Lk 24:36-43; 1 Cor 15:5)

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the

house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."<sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."<sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."<sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

#### *Jesus and Thomas*

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.<sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them.

Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."<sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."<sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

#### *The Purpose of This Book*

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.<sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

#### **Psalm 119:137-152 (NRSV)**

<sup>137</sup> You are righteous, O LORD, and your judgments are right.

138 You have appointed your  
decrees in  
righteousness  
and in all faithfulness.  
139 My zeal consumes me  
because my foes forget  
your words.  
140 Your promise is well tried,  
and your servant loves it.  
141 I am small and despised,  
yet I do not forget your  
precepts.  
142 Your righteousness is an  
everlasting  
righteousness,  
and your law is the truth.  
143 Trouble and anguish have  
come upon me,  
but your commandments  
are my delight.  
144 Your decrees are righteous  
forever;  
give me understanding  
that I may live.  
145 With my whole heart I cry;  
answer me, O LORD.  
I will keep your statutes.  
146 I cry to you; save me,  
that I may observe your  
decrees.  
147 I rise before dawn and cry  
for help;  
I put my hope in your  
words.

148 My eyes are awake before  
each watch of the  
night,  
that I may meditate on  
your promise.  
149 In your steadfast love hear  
my voice;  
O LORD, in your justice  
preserve my life.  
150 Those who persecute me  
with evil purpose draw  
near;  
they are far from your  
law.  
151 Yet you are near, O LORD,  
and all your  
commandments are  
true.  
152 Long ago I learned from  
your decrees  
that you have  
established them  
forever.

**Proverbs 26:21–22 (NRSV)**

21 As charcoal is to hot  
embers and wood to  
fire,  
so is a quarrelsome  
person for kindling  
strife.  
22 The words of a whisperer  
are like delicious  
morsels;

they go down into the inner parts of the body.

## October 31



### 2 Samuel 18:19-19:10 (NRSV)

#### *David Hears of Absalom's Death*

<sup>19</sup> Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me run, and carry tidings to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the power of his enemies." <sup>20</sup> Joab said to him, "You are not to carry tidings today; you may carry tidings another day, but today you shall not do so, because the king's son is dead." <sup>21</sup> Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed before Joab, and ran. <sup>22</sup> Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said again to Joab, "Come what may, let me also run after the Cushite." And Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, seeing that you have no reward for the

tidings?" <sup>23</sup> "Come what may," he said, "I will run." So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and outran the Cushite.

<sup>24</sup> Now David was sitting between the two gates. The sentinel went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he looked up, he saw a man running alone. <sup>25</sup> The sentinel shouted and told the king. The king said, "If he is alone, there are tidings in his mouth." He kept coming, and drew near.

<sup>26</sup> Then the sentinel saw another man running; and the sentinel called to the gatekeeper and said, "See, another man running alone!" The king said, "He also is bringing tidings." <sup>27</sup> The sentinel said, "I think the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok." The king said, "He is a good man, and comes with good tidings."

<sup>28</sup> Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "All is well!" He prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground, and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who

raised their hand against my lord the king.”<sup>29</sup> The king said, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” Ahimaaz answered, “When Joab sent your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I do not know what it was.”<sup>30</sup> The king said, “Turn aside, and stand here.” So he turned aside, and stood still.

<sup>31</sup> Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, “Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you.”<sup>32</sup> The king said to the Cushite, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” The Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man.”

#### *David Mourns for Absalom*

<sup>33</sup> The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!”

**19** It was told Joab, “The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.”<sup>2</sup> So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the troops; for the troops heard that day, “The king is grieving for his son.”

<sup>3</sup> The troops stole into the city that day as soldiers steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle.<sup>4</sup> The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, “O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!”<sup>5</sup> Then Joab came into the house to the king, and said, “Today you have covered with shame the faces of all your officers who have saved your life today, and the lives of your sons and your daughters, and the lives of your wives and your concubines,<sup>6</sup> for love of those who hate you and for hatred of those who love you. You have made it clear today that commanders and officers are nothing to you; for I perceive that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased.”<sup>7</sup> So go out at once and speak kindly to your servants; for I swear by the LORD, if you do not go,

not a man will stay with you this night; and this will be worse for you than any disaster that has come upon you from your youth until now.”<sup>8</sup> Then the king got up and took his seat in the gate. The troops were all told, “See, the king is sitting in the gate”; and all the troops came before the king.

*David Recalled to Jerusalem*

Meanwhile, all the Israelites had fled to their homes.<sup>9</sup> All the people were disputing throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, “The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies, and saved us from the hand of the Philistines; and now he has fled out of the land because of Absalom.”<sup>10</sup> But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?”

**John 21:1-14** (NRSV)

*Jesus Appears  
to Seven Disciples*

<sup>1</sup> After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of

Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way.<sup>2</sup> Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples.<sup>3</sup> Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.”<sup>6</sup> He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.<sup>7</sup> That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea.<sup>8</sup> But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far

from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

<sup>9</sup> When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, **“Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.”** <sup>11</sup> So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, **“Come and have breakfast.”** Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup> This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

**Psalms 119:153-159** (NRSV)

<sup>153</sup> Look on my misery and rescue me,  
for I do not forget your law.

<sup>154</sup> Plead my cause and redeem me;  
give me life according to your promise.

<sup>155</sup> Salvation is far from the wicked,  
for they do not seek your statutes.

<sup>156</sup> Great is your mercy, O LORD;  
give me life according to your justice.

<sup>157</sup> Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,  
yet I do not swerve from your decrees.

<sup>158</sup> I look at the faithless with disgust,  
because they do not keep your commands.

<sup>159</sup> Consider how I love your precepts;  
preserve my life according to your steadfast love.

**Proverbs 26:23** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Like the glaze covering an earthen vessel  
are smooth lips with an evil heart.



# November 1



## 2 Samuel 19:11-40 (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> King David sent this message to the priests Zadok and Abiathar, "Say to the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his house? The talk of all Israel has come to the king. <sup>12</sup> You are my kin, you are my bone and my flesh; why then should you be the last to bring back the king?' <sup>13</sup> And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? So may God do to me, and more, if you are not the commander of my army from now on, in place of Joab.' " <sup>14</sup> Amasa swayed the hearts of all the people of Judah as one, and they sent word to the king, "Return, both you and all your servants." <sup>15</sup> So the king came back to the Jordan; and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king and to bring him over the Jordan.

<sup>16</sup> Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim, hurried to come down with the people of Judah to meet

King David; <sup>17</sup> with him were a thousand people from Benjamin. And Ziba, the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan ahead of the king, <sup>18</sup> while the crossing was taking place, to bring over the king's household, and to do his pleasure.

### *David's Mercy to Shimei*

Shimei son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was about to cross the Jordan, <sup>19</sup> and said to the king, "May my lord not hold me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem; may the king not bear it in mind. <sup>20</sup> For your servant knows that I have sinned; therefore, see, I have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king." <sup>21</sup> Abishai son of Zeruiah answered, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?" <sup>22</sup> But David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should today become an

adversary to me? Shall anyone be put to death in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?"<sup>23</sup> The king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king gave him his oath.

*David and Mephibosheth Meet*

<sup>24</sup> Mephibosheth grandson of Saul came down to meet the king; he had not taken care of his feet, or trimmed his beard, or washed his clothes, from the day the king left until the day he came back in safety.<sup>25</sup> When he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"<sup>26</sup> He answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said to him, 'Saddle a donkey for me, so that I may ride on it and go with the king.' For your servant is lame."<sup>27</sup> He has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what seems good to you.<sup>28</sup> For all my father's house were doomed to death before my lord the king; but

you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right have I, then, to appeal to the king?"

<sup>29</sup> The king said to him, "Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba shall divide the land."

<sup>30</sup> Mephibosheth said to the king, "Let him take it all, since my lord the king has arrived home safely."

*David's Kindness to Barzillai*

<sup>31</sup> Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim; he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan.

<sup>32</sup> Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. He had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man.

<sup>33</sup> The king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you in Jerusalem at my side."

<sup>34</sup> But Barzillai said to the king, "How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?"<sup>35</sup> Today I am eighty years old; can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can your servant

taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? <sup>36</sup> Your servant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king recompense me with such a reward? <sup>37</sup> Please let your servant return, so that I may die in my own town, near the graves of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do for him whatever seems good to you." <sup>38</sup> The king answered, "Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you; and all that you desire of me I will do for you." <sup>39</sup> Then all the people crossed over the Jordan, and the king crossed over; the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own home. <sup>40</sup> The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him; all the people of Judah, and also half the people of Israel, brought the king on his way.

### **John 21:15-25 (NRSV)**

*Jesus and Peter*

<sup>15</sup> When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "**Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?**" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "**Feed my lambs.**" <sup>16</sup> A second time he said to him, "**Simon son of John, do you love me?**" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "**Tend my sheep.**" <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, "**Simon son of John, do you love me?**" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "**Do you love me?**" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "**Feed my sheep.**" <sup>18</sup> **Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.** <sup>19</sup> (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he

would glorify God.) After this he said to him, **“Follow me.”**

*Jesus and the Beloved Disciple*

<sup>20</sup> Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” <sup>21</sup> When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, **“If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!”** <sup>23</sup> So the rumor spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, **“If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?”**

<sup>24</sup> This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. <sup>25</sup> But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

**Psalm 119:160-168 (NRSV)**

<sup>160</sup> The sum of your word is truth;  
and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever.  
<sup>161</sup> Princes persecute me without cause,  
but my heart stands in awe of your words.  
<sup>162</sup> I rejoice at your word like one who finds great spoil.  
<sup>163</sup> I hate and abhor falsehood,  
but I love your law.  
<sup>164</sup> Seven times a day I praise you  
for your righteous ordinances.  
<sup>165</sup> Great peace have those who love your law;  
nothing can make them stumble.  
<sup>166</sup> I hope for your salvation, O LORD,  
and I fulfill your commandments.  
<sup>167</sup> My soul keeps your decrees;  
I love them exceedingly.  
<sup>168</sup> I keep your precepts and decrees,  
for all my ways are before you.

**Proverbs 26:24–26 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> An enemy dissembles in speaking  
while harboring deceit within;  
<sup>25</sup> when an enemy speaks graciously, do not believe it,  
for there are seven abominations  
concealed within;  
<sup>26</sup> though hatred is covered with guile,  
the enemy's wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.

**November  
2**



**2 Samuel 19:41 - 20:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>41</sup> Then all the people of Israel came to the king, and said to him, “Why have our kindred the people of Judah stolen you away, and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David’s men with him?” <sup>42</sup> All the people of Judah answered

the people of Israel, “Because the king is near of kin to us. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king’s expense? Or has he given us any gift?”  
<sup>43</sup> But the people of Israel answered the people of Judah, “We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?” But the words of the people of Judah were fiercer than the words of the people of Israel.

*The Rebellion of Sheba*

**20** Now a scoundrel named Sheba son of Bichri, a Benjaminite, happened to be there. He sounded the trumpet and cried out,

“We have no portion in David,  
no share in the son of Jesse!

Everyone to your tents, O Israel!”

<sup>2</sup> So all the people of Israel withdrew from David and followed Sheba son of Bichri; but the people of Judah

followed their king steadfastly from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten concubines whom he had left to look after the house, and put them in a house under guard, and provided for them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up until the day of their death, living as if in widowhood.

<sup>4</sup> Then the king said to Amasa, "Call the men of Judah together to me within three days, and be here yourself."

<sup>5</sup> So Amasa went to summon Judah; but he delayed beyond the set time that had been appointed him. <sup>6</sup> David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom; take your lord's servants and pursue him, or he will find fortified cities for himself, and escape from us."

<sup>7</sup> Joab's men went out after him, along with the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and all the warriors; they went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba son of Bichri. <sup>8</sup> When they were at the large stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa came

to meet them. Now Joab was wearing a soldier's garment and over it was a belt with a sword in its sheath fastened at his waist; as he went forward it fell out. <sup>9</sup> Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. <sup>10</sup> But Amasa did not notice the sword in Joab's hand; Joab struck him in the belly so that his entrails poured out on the ground, and he died. He did not strike a second blow.

Then Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba son of Bichri. <sup>11</sup> And one of Joab's men took his stand by Amasa, and said, "Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab."

<sup>12</sup> Amasa lay wallowing in his blood on the highway, and the man saw that all the people were stopping. Since he saw that all who came by him were stopping, he carried Amasa from the highway into a field, and threw a garment over him. <sup>13</sup> Once he was removed from the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba son of Bichri.

**Acts 1:1-14** (NRSV)

*The Promise of the Holy Spirit*

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning<sup>2</sup> until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.<sup>3</sup> After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.<sup>4</sup> While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. **“This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me;<sup>5</sup> for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”**

*The Ascension of Jesus*

(Mk 16:19–20; Lk 24:50–53)

<sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?”<sup>7</sup> He replied, **“It is not for you to know the times**

**or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.<sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”<sup>9</sup>** When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.<sup>10</sup> While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them.<sup>11</sup> They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

*Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas*

<sup>12</sup> Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away.<sup>13</sup> When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James,

and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. <sup>14</sup> All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

**Psalms 119:169-176** (NRSV)

- <sup>169</sup> Let my cry come before you, O LORD;  
give me understanding according to your word.
- <sup>170</sup> Let my supplication come before you;  
deliver me according to your promise.
- <sup>171</sup> My lips will pour forth praise,  
because you teach me your statutes.
- <sup>172</sup> My tongue will sing of your promise,  
for all your commandments are right.
- <sup>173</sup> Let your hand be ready to help me,  
for I have chosen your precepts.

- <sup>174</sup> I long for your salvation, O LORD,  
and your law is my delight.
- <sup>175</sup> Let me live that I may praise you,  
and let your ordinances help me.
- <sup>176</sup> I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek out your servant,  
for I do not forget your commandments.

**Proverbs 26:27** (NRSV)

- <sup>27</sup> Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,  
and a stone will come back on the one who starts it rolling.

**November  
3**



**2 Samuel 20:14-26** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth-maacah; and all the Bichrites assembled, and followed him inside. <sup>15</sup> Joab's



forces came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah; they threw up a siege ramp against the city, and it stood against the rampart. Joab's forces were battering the wall to break it down.<sup>16</sup> Then a wise woman called from the city, "Listen! Listen! Tell Joab, 'Come here, I want to speak to you.'"<sup>17</sup> He came near her; and the woman said, "Are you Joab?" He answered, "I am." Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of your servant." He answered, "I am listening."<sup>18</sup> Then she said, "They used to say in the old days, 'Let them inquire at Abel'; and so they would settle a matter."<sup>19</sup> I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel; you seek to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel; why will you swallow up the heritage of the LORD?"<sup>20</sup> Joab answered, "Far be it from me, far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy!"<sup>21</sup> That is not the case! But a man of the hill country of Ephraim, called Sheba son of Bichri, has lifted up his hand against King David; give him up alone, and I will withdraw from the city."

The woman said to Joab, "His head shall be thrown over the wall to you."<sup>22</sup> Then the woman went to all the people with her wise plan. And they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri, and threw it out to Joab. So he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, and all went to their homes, while Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

<sup>23</sup> Now Joab was in command of all the army of Israel; Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in command of the Cherethites and the Pelethites;<sup>24</sup> Adoram was in charge of the forced labor; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder;<sup>25</sup> Sheva was secretary; Zadok and Abiathar were priests;<sup>26</sup> and Ira the Jairite was also David's priest.

### **Acts 1:15-26 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said,<sup>16</sup> "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who

became a guide for those who arrested Jesus—<sup>17</sup> for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.”<sup>18</sup> (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.<sup>19</sup> This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)<sup>20</sup> “For it is written in the book of Psalms,

‘Let his homestead  
become desolate,  
and let there be no one  
to live in it’;

and

‘Let another take his  
position of overseer.’

<sup>21</sup> So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

<sup>22</sup> beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.”

<sup>23</sup> So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and

Matthias.<sup>24</sup> Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen<sup>25</sup> to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”<sup>26</sup> And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

### **Psalm 120:1-7 (NRSV)**

#### *Prayer for Deliverance from Slanderers*

A Song of Ascents.

- 1 In my distress I cry to the  
LORD,  
that he may answer me:
- 2 “Deliver me, O LORD,  
from lying lips,  
from a deceitful tongue.”
- 3 What shall be given to  
you?  
And what more shall be  
done to you,  
you deceitful tongue?
- 4 A warrior’s sharp arrows,  
with glowing coals of the  
broom tree!
- 5 Woe is me, that I am an  
alien in Meshech,  
that I must live among  
the tents of Kedar.

<sup>6</sup> Too long have I had my dwelling  
among those who hate peace.  
<sup>7</sup> I am for peace;  
but when I speak,  
they are for war.

**Proverbs 26:28** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> A lying tongue hates its victims,  
and a flattering mouth works ruin.

**November**  
**4**



**2 Samuel 21:1-22** (NRSV)

*David Avenges the Gibeonites*

Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. The LORD said, “There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death.” <sup>2</sup> So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not of the

people of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had tried to wipe them out in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.) <sup>3</sup> David said to the Gibeonites, “What shall I do for you? How shall I make expiation, that you may bless the heritage of the LORD?”

<sup>4</sup> The Gibeonites said to him, “It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put anyone to death in Israel.” He said, “What do you say that I should do for you?” <sup>5</sup> They said to the king, “The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel— <sup>6</sup> let seven of his sons be handed over to us, and we will impale them before the LORD at Gibeon on the mountain of the LORD.” The king said, “I will hand them over.”

<sup>7</sup> But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Saul’s son Jonathan, because of the oath of the LORD that was between them, between David and Jonathan son of

Saul. <sup>8</sup> The king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Merab daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite; <sup>9</sup> he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they impaled them on the mountain before the LORD. The seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest.

<sup>10</sup> Then Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it on a rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell on them from the heavens; she did not allow the birds of the air to come on the bodies by day, or the wild animals by night. <sup>11</sup> When David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, <sup>12</sup> David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the people of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the

Philistines had hung them up, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilboa. <sup>13</sup> He brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who had been impaled. <sup>14</sup> They buried the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of his father Kish; they did all that the king commanded. After that, God heeded supplications for the land.

*Exploits of David's Men*  
(1 Chr 20:4–8)

<sup>15</sup> The Philistines went to war again with Israel, and David went down together with his servants. They fought against the Philistines, and David grew weary. <sup>16</sup> Ishbi-benob, one of the descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of bronze, and who was fitted out with new weapons, said he would kill David. <sup>17</sup> But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men

swore to him, “You shall not go out with us to battle any longer, so that you do not quench the lamp of Israel.”

<sup>18</sup> After this a battle took place with the Philistines, at Gob; then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph, who was one of the descendants of the giants. <sup>19</sup> Then there was another battle with the Philistines at Gob; and Elhanan son of Jaare-oregim, the Bethlehemite, killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam. <sup>20</sup> There was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he too was descended from the giants.

<sup>21</sup> When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of David’s brother Shimei, killed him.

<sup>22</sup> These four were descended from the giants in Gath; they fell by the hands of David and his servants.

### **Acts 2:1-21** (NRSV)

#### *The Coming of the Holy Spirit*

When the day of Pentecost had come, they

were all together in one place.

<sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup> And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. <sup>7</sup> Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?

<sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretans and

Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”<sup>12</sup> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”<sup>13</sup> But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

*Peter Addresses the Crowd*  
(Joel 2:28–32)

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.<sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> ‘In the last days it will be,  
God declares,  
that I will pour out my  
Spirit upon all flesh,  
and your sons and your  
daughters shall  
prophesy,  
and your young men shall  
see visions,  
and your old men shall  
dream dreams.

- <sup>18</sup> Even upon my slaves, both men and women,  
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;  
and they shall prophesy.  
<sup>19</sup> And I will show portents in the heaven above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.  
<sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood,  
before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day.  
<sup>21</sup> Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

**Psalm 121:1-4** (NRSV)

*Assurance of God’s Protection*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
from where will my help come?  
<sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.  
<sup>3</sup> He will not let your foot be moved;  
he who keeps you will not slumber.

4 He who keeps Israel  
will neither slumber nor  
sleep.

**Proverbs 27:1–2 (NRSV)**

1 Do not boast about  
tomorrow,  
for you do not know  
what a day may bring.  
2 Let another praise you,  
and not your own  
mouth—  
a stranger, and not your  
own lips.

**November**  
**5**



**2 Samuel 22:1-46 (NRSV)**

*David's Song of Thanksgiving*  
(Ps 18:1–50)

**22** David spoke to the LORD  
the words of this song on the  
day when the LORD delivered  
him from the hand of all his  
enemies, and from the hand of  
Saul. <sup>2</sup> He said:

The LORD is my rock, my  
fortress, and my  
deliverer,

3 my God, my rock, in  
whom I take refuge,  
my shield and the horn of  
my salvation,  
my stronghold and my  
refuge,  
my savior; you save me  
from violence.  
4 I call upon the LORD, who is  
worthy to be praised,  
and I am saved from my  
enemies.  
5 For the waves of death  
encompassed me,  
the torrents of perdition  
assailed me;  
6 the cords of Sheol  
entangled me,  
the snares of death  
confronted me.  
7 In my distress I called upon  
the LORD;  
to my God I called.  
From his temple he heard  
my voice,  
and my cry came to his  
ears.  
8 Then the earth reeled and  
rocked;  
the foundations of the  
heavens trembled  
and quaked, because he  
was angry.  
9 Smoke went up from his  
nostrils,

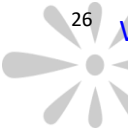
and devouring fire from  
his mouth;  
glowing coals flamed  
forth from him.  
10 He bowed the heavens,  
and came down;  
thick darkness was under  
his feet.  
11 He rode on a cherub, and  
flew;  
he was seen upon the  
wings of the wind.  
12 He made darkness around  
him a canopy,  
thick clouds, a gathering  
of water.  
13 Out of the brightness  
before him  
coals of fire flamed forth.  
14 The LORD thundered from  
heaven;  
the Most High uttered  
his voice.  
15 He sent out arrows, and  
scattered them  
—lightning, and routed  
them.  
16 Then the channels of the  
sea were seen,  
the foundations of the  
world were laid bare  
at the rebuke of the LORD,  
at the blast of the breath  
of his nostrils.

17 He reached from on high,  
he took me,  
he drew me out of  
mighty waters.  
18 He delivered me from my  
strong enemy,  
from those who hated  
me;  
for they were too mighty  
for me.  
19 They came upon me in the  
day of my calamity,  
but the LORD was my  
stay.  
20 He brought me out into a  
broad place;  
he delivered me,  
because he delighted  
in me.  
21 The LORD rewarded me  
according to my  
righteousness;  
according to the  
cleanness of my hands  
he recompensed me.  
22 For I have kept the ways of  
the LORD,  
and have not wickedly  
departed from my God.  
23 For all his ordinances were  
before me,  
and from his statutes I  
did not turn aside.  
24 I was blameless before  
him,



and I kept myself from  
guilt.

25 Therefore the LORD has  
recompensed me  
according to my  
righteousness,  
according to my  
cleanness in his sight.

26  With the loyal you show  
yourself loyal;  
with the blameless you  
show yourself  
blameless;

27 with the pure you show  
yourself pure,  
and with the crooked  
you show yourself  
perverse.

28 You deliver a humble  
people,  
but your eyes are upon  
the haughty to bring  
them down.

29 Indeed, you are my lamp,  
O LORD,  
the LORD lightens my  
darkness.

30 By you I can crush a troop,  
and by my God I can leap  
over a wall.

31 This God—his way is  
perfect;  
the promise of the LORD  
proves true;

he is a shield for all who  
take refuge in him.

32 For who is God, but the  
LORD?

And who is a rock, except  
our God?

33 The God who has girded  
me with strength  
has opened wide my  
path.

34 He made my feet like the  
feet of deer,  
and set me secure on the  
heights.

35 He trains my hands for  
war,  
so that my arms can  
bend a bow of bronze.

36 You have given me the  
shield of your  
salvation,  
and your help has made  
me great.

37 You have made me stride  
freely,  
and my feet do not slip;

38 I pursued my enemies and  
destroyed them,  
and did not turn back  
until they were  
consumed.

39 I consumed them; I struck  
them down, so that  
they did not rise;  
they fell under my feet.

40 For you girded me with  
strength for the battle;  
you made my assailants  
sink under me.  
41 You made my enemies  
turn their backs to me,  
those who hated me,  
and I destroyed them.  
42 They looked, but there was  
no one to save them;  
they cried to the LORD,  
but he did not answer  
them.  
43 I beat them fine like the  
dust of the earth,  
I crushed them and  
stamped them down  
like the mire of the  
streets.  
44 You delivered me from  
strife with the peoples;  
you kept me as the head  
of the nations;  
people whom I had not  
known served me.  
45 Foreigners came cringing  
to me;  
as soon as they heard of  
me, they obeyed me.  
46 Foreigners lost heart,  
and came trembling out  
of their strongholds.

**Acts 2:22-47 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> “You that are Israelites,  
listen to what I have to say:  
Jesus of Nazareth, a man  
attested to you by God with  
deeds of power, wonders, and  
signs that God did through him  
among you, as you yourselves  
know—<sup>23</sup> this man, handed  
over to you according to the  
definite plan and  
foreknowledge of God, you  
crucified and killed by the  
hands of those outside the  
law. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him up,  
having freed him from death,  
because it was impossible for  
him to be held in its power.  
<sup>25</sup> For David says concerning  
him,  
‘I saw the Lord always  
before me,  
for he is at my right hand  
so that I will not be  
shaken;  
<sup>26</sup> therefore my heart was  
glad, and my tongue  
rejoiced;  
moreover my flesh will  
live in hope.  
<sup>27</sup> For you will not abandon  
my soul to Hades,  
or let your Holy One  
experience corruption.

<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'

<sup>29</sup> "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

<sup>30</sup> Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup> Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.'

<sup>32</sup> This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. <sup>33</sup> Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear. <sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand,

<sup>35</sup> until I make your enemies your footstool.'" '

<sup>36</sup> Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

### *The First Converts*

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" <sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."

<sup>40</sup> And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

<sup>41</sup> So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. <sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the

apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

*Life among the Believers*

<sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**Psalm 121:5-8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is your keeper;  
the LORD is your shade at  
your right hand.  
<sup>6</sup> The sun shall not strike you  
by day,  
nor the moon by night.  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you  
from all evil;

he will keep your life.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD will keep  
your going out and your  
coming in  
from this time on and  
forevermore.

**Proverbs 27:3** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> A stone is heavy, and sand  
is weighty,  
but a fool's provocation  
is heavier than both.

**November**  
**6**



**2 Samuel 22:47 – 23:23** (NRSV)

<sup>47</sup> The LORD lives! Blessed be  
my rock,  
and exalted be my God,  
the rock of my  
salvation,  
<sup>48</sup> the God who gave me  
vengeance  
and brought down  
peoples under me,  
<sup>49</sup> who brought me out from  
my enemies;  
you exalted me above  
my adversaries,

you delivered me from  
the violent.  
50 For this I will extol you, O  
LORD, among the  
nations,  
and sing praises to your  
name.  
51 He is a tower of salvation  
for his king,  
and shows steadfast love  
to his anointed,  
to David and his  
descendants forever.

*The Last Words of David*

**23** Now these are the last  
words of David:  
The oracle of David, son of  
Jesse,  
the oracle of the man  
whom God exalted,  
the anointed of the God of  
Jacob,  
the favorite of the Strong  
One of Israel:  
2 The spirit of the LORD  
speaks through me,  
his word is upon my  
tongue.  
3 The God of Israel has  
spoken,  
the Rock of Israel has  
said to me:  
One who rules over people  
justly,

ruling in the fear of God,  
4 is like the light of morning,  
like the sun rising on a  
cloudless morning,  
gleaming from the rain  
on the grassy land.  
5 Is not my house like this  
with God?  
For he has made with me  
an everlasting  
covenant,  
ordered in all things and  
secure.  
Will he not cause to  
prosper  
all my help and my  
desire?  
6 But the godless are all like  
thorns that are thrown  
away;  
for they cannot be  
picked up with the  
hand;  
7 to touch them one uses an  
iron bar  
or the shaft of a spear.  
And they are entirely  
consumed in fire on  
the spot.

*David's Mighty Men*  
(1 Chr 11:10–47)

8 These are the names of  
the warriors whom David had:  
Josheb-basshebeth a

Tahchemonite; he was chief of the Three; he wielded his spear against eight hundred whom he killed at one time.

<sup>9</sup> Next to him among the three warriors was Eleazar son of Dodo son of Ahohi. He was with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle. The Israelites withdrew, <sup>10</sup> but he stood his ground. He struck down the Philistines until his arm grew weary, though his hand clung to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day. Then the people came back to him—but only to strip the dead.

<sup>11</sup> Next to him was Shammah son of Agee, the Hararite. The Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of ground full of lentils; and the army fled from the Philistines.

<sup>12</sup> But he took his stand in the middle of the plot, defended it, and killed the Philistines; and the LORD brought about a great victory.

<sup>13</sup> Towards the beginning of harvest three of the thirty chiefs went down to join David at the cave of Adullam, while a

band of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. <sup>14</sup> David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. <sup>15</sup> David said longingly, “O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!” <sup>16</sup> Then the three warriors broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and brought it to David. But he would not drink of it; he poured it out to the LORD, <sup>17</sup> for he said, “The LORD forbid that I should do this. Can I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?” Therefore he would not drink it. The three warriors did these things.

<sup>18</sup> Now Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, was chief of the Thirty. With his spear he fought against three hundred men and killed them, and won a name beside the Three. <sup>19</sup> He was the most renowned of the Thirty, and became their commander; but he did not attain to the Three.

<sup>20</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant warrior from Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he struck down two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. <sup>21</sup> And he killed an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but Benaiah went against him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. <sup>22</sup> Such were the things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did, and won a name beside the three warriors. <sup>23</sup> He was renowned among the Thirty, but he did not attain to the Three. And David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

**Acts 3:1-11** (NRSV)

*Peter Heals a Crippled Beggar*

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. <sup>2</sup> And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for

alms from those entering the temple. <sup>3</sup> When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. <sup>4</sup> Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." <sup>5</sup> And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup> But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." <sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. <sup>8</sup> Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. <sup>9</sup> All the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup> and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

*Peter Speaks in  
Solomon's Portico*

<sup>11</sup> While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished.

**Psalms 122:1-5** (NRSV)

*Song of Praise and  
Prayer for Jerusalem*

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> I was glad when they said to me,  
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!"  
<sup>2</sup> Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.  
<sup>3</sup> Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.  
<sup>4</sup> To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD.  
<sup>5</sup> For there the thrones for judgment were set up, the thrones of the house of David.

**Proverbs 27:4-6** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming,

but who is able to stand before jealousy?

<sup>5</sup> Better is open rebuke than hidden love.

<sup>6</sup> Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts, but profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

**November  
7**



**2 Samuel 23:24 – 24:9** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> Among the Thirty were Asahel brother of Joab; Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem; <sup>25</sup> Shammah of Harod; Elika of Harod; <sup>26</sup> Helez the Paltite; Ira son of Ikkes of Tekoa; <sup>27</sup> Abiezer of Anathoth; Mebunnai the Hushathite; <sup>28</sup> Zalmon the Ahohite; Maharai of Netophah; <sup>29</sup> Heleb son of Baanah of Netophah; Ittai son of Ribai of Gibeah of the Benjaminites; <sup>30</sup> Benaiah of Pirathon; Hiddai of the torrents of Gaash; <sup>31</sup> Abi-albon the Arbathite; Azmaveth of



Bahurim; <sup>32</sup> Eliahba of  
Shaalbon; the sons of Jashen:  
Jonathan <sup>33</sup> son of Shammah  
the Hararite; Ahiam son of  
Sharar the Hararite;  
<sup>34</sup> Eliphelet son of Ahasbai of  
Maacah; Eliam son of  
Ahithophel the Gilonite;  
<sup>35</sup> Hezro of Carmel; Paarai the  
Arbite; <sup>36</sup> Igal son of Nathan of  
Zobah; Bani the Gadite;  
<sup>37</sup> Zelek the Ammonite;  
Naharai of Beeroth, the  
armor-bearer of Joab son of  
Zeruiah; <sup>38</sup> Ira the Ithrite;  
Gareb the Ithrite; <sup>39</sup> Uriah the  
Hittite—thirty-seven in all.

*David's Census of  
Israel and Judah  
(1 Chr 21:1–6)*

**24** Again the anger of the  
LORD was kindled against  
Israel, and he incited David  
against them, saying, “Go,  
count the people of Israel and  
Judah.” <sup>2</sup> So the king said to  
Joab and the commanders of  
the army, who were with him,  
“Go through all the tribes of  
Israel, from Dan to Beer-  
sheba, and take a census of  
the people, so that I may know  
how many there are.” <sup>3</sup> But  
Joab said to the king, “May the

LORD your God increase the  
number of the people a  
hundredfold, while the eyes of  
my lord the king can still see  
it! But why does my lord the  
king want to do this?” <sup>4</sup> But  
the king’s word prevailed  
against Joab and the  
commanders of the army. So  
Joab and the commanders of  
the army went out from the  
presence of the king to take a  
census of the people of Israel.  
<sup>5</sup> They crossed the Jordan, and  
began from Aroer and from  
the city that is in the middle of  
the valley, toward Gad and on  
to Jazer. <sup>6</sup> Then they came to  
Gilead, and to Kadesh in the  
land of the Hittites; and they  
came to Dan, and from Dan  
they went around to Sidon,  
<sup>7</sup> and came to the fortress of  
Tyre and to all the cities of the  
Hivites and Canaanites; and  
they went out to the Negeb of  
Judah at Beer-sheba. <sup>8</sup> So  
when they had gone through  
all the land, they came back to  
Jerusalem at the end of nine  
months and twenty days.  
<sup>9</sup> Joab reported to the king the  
number of those who had  
been recorded: in Israel there  
were eight hundred thousand

soldiers able to draw the sword, and those of Judah were five hundred thousand.

**Acts 3:12-26 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, “You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? <sup>13</sup> The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him.

<sup>14</sup> But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, <sup>15</sup> and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup> And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

<sup>17</sup> “And now, friends, I know that you acted in

ignorance, as did also your rulers. <sup>18</sup> In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer.

<sup>19</sup> Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, <sup>20</sup> so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, <sup>21</sup> who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets. <sup>22</sup> Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. <sup>23</sup> And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.’ <sup>24</sup> And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days. <sup>25</sup> You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your descendants all the families of

the earth shall be blessed.’  
<sup>26</sup> When God raised up his  
servant, he sent him first to  
you, to bless you by turning  
each of you from your wicked  
ways.”

**Psalms 122:6-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Pray for the peace of  
Jerusalem:  
“May they prosper who  
love you.  
<sup>7</sup> Peace be within your walls,  
and security within your  
towers.”  
<sup>8</sup> For the sake of my  
relatives and friends  
I will say, “Peace be  
within you.”  
<sup>9</sup> For the sake of the house  
of the LORD our God,  
I will seek your good.

**Proverbs 27:7-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> The sated appetite spurns  
honey,  
but to a ravenous  
appetite even the  
bitter is sweet.  
<sup>8</sup> Like a bird that strays from  
its nest  
is one who strays from  
home.  
<sup>9</sup> Perfume and incense make  
the heart glad,

but the soul is torn by  
trouble.

**November  
8**



**2 Samuel 24:10-25 (NRSV)**

*Judgment on David's Sin*  
(1 Chr 21:7-17)

<sup>10</sup> But afterward, David was  
stricken to the heart because  
he had numbered the people.  
David said to the LORD, “I have  
sinned greatly in what I have  
done. But now, O LORD, I pray  
you, take away the guilt of  
your servant; for I have done  
very foolishly.” <sup>11</sup> When David  
rose in the morning, the word  
of the LORD came to the  
prophet Gad, David's seer,  
saying, <sup>12</sup> “Go and say to  
David: Thus says the LORD:  
Three things I offer you;  
choose one of them, and I will  
do it to you.” <sup>13</sup> So Gad came  
to David and told him; he  
asked him, “Shall three years  
of famine come to you on your  
land? Or will you flee three

months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me." <sup>14</sup> Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into human hands."

<sup>15</sup> So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel from that morning until the appointed time; and seventy thousand of the people died, from Dan to Beer-sheba. <sup>16</sup> But when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented concerning the evil, and said to the angel who was bringing destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand." The angel of the LORD was then by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

<sup>17</sup> When David saw the angel who was destroying the people, he said to the LORD, "I alone have sinned, and I alone have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be

against me and against my father's house."

*David's Altar on  
the Threshing Floor*

*(1 Chr 21:18-27)*

<sup>18</sup> That day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

<sup>19</sup> Following Gad's instructions, David went up, as the LORD had commanded. <sup>20</sup> When Araunah looked down, he saw the king and his servants coming toward him; and Araunah went out and prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground. <sup>21</sup> Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to the LORD, so that the plague may be averted from the people." <sup>22</sup> Then Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him; here are the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. <sup>23</sup> All this, O king, Araunah gives to the king."

And Araunah said to the king, “May the LORD your God respond favorably to you.”

<sup>24</sup> But the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will buy them from you for a price; I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

<sup>25</sup> David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being. So the LORD answered his supplication for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel.

**Acts 4:1-22** (NRSV)

*Peter and John  
before the Council*

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, <sup>2</sup> much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>3</sup> So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. <sup>4</sup> But many of those

who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.

<sup>5</sup> The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup> with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. <sup>7</sup> When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” <sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup> if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup> let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. <sup>11</sup> This Jesus is

‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’

<sup>12</sup> There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

<sup>13</sup> Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus. <sup>14</sup> When they saw the man who had been cured standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. <sup>15</sup> So they ordered them to leave the council while they discussed the matter with one another.

<sup>16</sup> They said, “What will we do with them? For it is obvious to all who live in Jerusalem that a notable sign has been done through them; we cannot deny it. <sup>17</sup> But to keep it from spreading further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.” <sup>18</sup> So they called them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup> But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in God’s sight to listen to you rather

than to God, you must judge; <sup>20</sup> for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.” <sup>21</sup> After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened. <sup>22</sup> For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than forty years old.

**Psalm 123:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Supplication for Mercy*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> To you I lift up my eyes,  
O you who are  
enthroned in the  
heavens!
- <sup>2</sup> As the eyes of servants  
look to the hand of their  
master,  
as the eyes of a maid  
to the hand of her  
mistress,  
so our eyes look to the  
LORD our God,  
until he has mercy upon  
us.

**Proverbs 27:10 (NRSV)**

- <sup>10</sup> Do not forsake your friend  
or the friend of your  
parent;

do not go to the house of  
your kindred in the day  
of your calamity.

Better is a neighbor who is  
nearby  
than kindred who are far  
away.

## November 9



### 1 Kings 1:1-37 (NRSV)

#### *The Struggle for the Succession*

King David was old and advanced in years; and although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm. <sup>2</sup> So his servants said to him, "Let a young virgin be sought for my lord the king, and let her wait on the king, and be his attendant; let her lie in your bosom, so that my lord the king may be warm." <sup>3</sup> So they searched for a beautiful girl throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. <sup>4</sup> The girl was very

beautiful. She became the king's attendant and served him, but the king did not know her sexually.

<sup>5</sup> Now Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. <sup>6</sup> His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, "Why have you done thus and so?" He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom. <sup>7</sup> He conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with the priest Abiathar, and they supported Adonijah. <sup>8</sup> But the priest Zadok, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the prophet Nathan, and Shimei, and Rei, and David's own warriors did not side with Adonijah.

<sup>9</sup> Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fatted cattle by the stone Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah, <sup>10</sup> but he did not invite the prophet Nathan or Benaiah or the warriors or his brother Solomon.

<sup>11</sup> Then Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king and our lord David does not know it?"

<sup>12</sup> Now therefore come, let me give you advice, so that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.

<sup>13</sup> Go in at once to King David, and say to him, 'Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your servant, saying: Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne? Why then is Adonijah king?' <sup>14</sup> Then while you are still there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

<sup>15</sup> So Bathsheba went to the king in his room. The king was very old; Abishag the Shunammite was attending the king. <sup>16</sup> Bathsheba bowed and did obeisance to the king, and the king said, "What do you wish?" <sup>17</sup> She said to him, "My lord, you swore to your servant by the LORD your God, saying: Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne. <sup>18</sup> But now suddenly Adonijah has

become king, though you, my lord the king, do not know it.

<sup>19</sup> He has sacrificed oxen, fatted cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the children of the king, the priest Abiathar, and Joab the commander of the army; but your servant Solomon he has not invited. <sup>20</sup> But you, my lord the king—the eyes of all Israel are on you to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

<sup>21</sup> Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his ancestors, that my son Solomon and I will be counted offenders."

<sup>22</sup> While she was still speaking with the king, the prophet Nathan came in.

<sup>23</sup> The king was told, "Here is the prophet Nathan." When he came in before the king, he did obeisance to the king, with his face to the ground.

<sup>24</sup> Nathan said, "My lord the king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne'?"

<sup>25</sup> For today he has gone down and has sacrificed oxen, fatted cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all



the king's children, Joab the commander of the army, and the priest Abiathar, who are now eating and drinking before him, and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!' <sup>26</sup> But he did not invite me, your servant, and the priest Zadok, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon. <sup>27</sup> Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not let your servants know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

*The Accession of Solomon*  
(1 Chr 29:22b—25)

<sup>28</sup> King David answered, "Summon Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. <sup>29</sup> The king swore, saying, "As the LORD lives, who has saved my life from every adversity, <sup>30</sup> as I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so will I do this day." <sup>31</sup> Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground, and did obeisance to the king, and

said, "May my lord King David live forever!"

<sup>32</sup> King David said, "Summon to me the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king, <sup>33</sup> the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. <sup>34</sup> There let the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anoint him king over Israel; then blow the trumpet, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' <sup>35</sup> You shall go up following him. Let him enter and sit on my throne; he shall be king in my place; for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah." <sup>36</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, "Amen! May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, so ordain. <sup>37</sup> As the LORD has been with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David."

**Acts 4:23-37 (NRSV)**

*The Believers Pray for Boldness*

<sup>23</sup> After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. <sup>24</sup> When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them, <sup>25</sup> it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant:

'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things?

<sup>26</sup> The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.'

<sup>27</sup> For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, <sup>28</sup> to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. <sup>29</sup> And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to

speak your word with all boldness, <sup>30</sup> while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

<sup>31</sup> When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

*The Believers Share Their Possessions*

<sup>32</sup> Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. <sup>33</sup> With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

<sup>34</sup> There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. <sup>35</sup> They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had

need. <sup>36</sup> There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”).

<sup>37</sup> He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.

**Psalm 123:3-4** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us,  
for we have had more than enough of contempt.

<sup>4</sup> Our soul has had more than its fill of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud.

**Proverbs 27:11** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Be wise, my child, and make my heart glad, so that I may answer whoever reproaches me.

# November 10



**1 Kings 1:38-53** (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup> So the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, went down and had Solomon ride on King David’s mule, and led him to Gihon. <sup>39</sup> There the priest Zadok took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!” <sup>40</sup> And all the people went up following him, playing on pipes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth quaked at their noise.

<sup>41</sup> Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished feasting. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, “Why is the city in an uproar?” <sup>42</sup> While he was still speaking, Jonathan son of the priest Abiathar arrived. Adonijah said, “Come in, for you are a worthy man and surely you bring good news.” <sup>43</sup> Jonathan answered Adonijah, “No, for

our lord King David has made Solomon king; <sup>44</sup> the king has sent with him the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and they had him ride on the king's mule; <sup>45</sup> the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you heard. <sup>46</sup> Solomon now sits on the royal throne. <sup>47</sup> Moreover the king's servants came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon more famous than yours, and make his throne greater than your throne.' The king bowed in worship on the bed <sup>48</sup> and went on to pray thus, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who today has granted one of my offspring to sit on my throne and permitted me to witness it.' "

<sup>49</sup> Then all the guests of Adonijah got up trembling and went their own ways.

<sup>50</sup> Adonijah, fearing Solomon, got up and went to grasp the

horns of the altar. <sup>51</sup> Solomon was informed, "Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; see, he has laid hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not kill his servant with the sword.' " <sup>52</sup> So Solomon responded, "If he proves to be a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the ground; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die." <sup>53</sup> Then King Solomon sent to have him brought down from the altar. He came to do obeisance to King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go home."

#### **Acts 5:1-11** (NRSV)

##### *Ananias and Sapphira*

But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; <sup>2</sup> with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. <sup>3</sup> "Ananias," Peter asked, "why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? <sup>4</sup> While it remained unsold, did it not remain your

own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us but to God!" <sup>5</sup> Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. <sup>6</sup> The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him.

<sup>7</sup> After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. <sup>8</sup> Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price." And she said, "Yes, that was the price." <sup>9</sup> Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." <sup>10</sup> Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. <sup>11</sup> And great fear seized the whole

church and all who heard of these things.

**Psalm 124:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for  
Israel's Deliverance*

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> If it had not been the LORD  
who was on our side  
—let Israel now say—  
<sup>2</sup> if it had not been the LORD  
who was on our side,  
when our enemies  
attacked us,  
<sup>3</sup> then they would have  
swallowed us up alive,  
when their anger was  
kindled against us;  
<sup>4</sup> then the flood would have  
swept us away,  
the torrent would have  
gone over us;  
<sup>5</sup> then over us would have  
gone  
the raging waters.  
<sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
who has not given us  
as prey to their teeth.

**Proverbs 27:12 (NRSV)**

- <sup>12</sup> The clever see danger and  
hide;  
but the simple go on,  
and suffer for it.

# November 11



## 1 Kings 2:1-25 (NRSV)

### *David's Instruction to Solomon*

When David's time to die drew near, he charged his son Solomon, saying: <sup>2</sup> "I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, be courageous, <sup>3</sup> and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn. <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD will establish his word that he spoke concerning me: 'If your heirs take heed to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you a successor on the throne of Israel.'

<sup>5</sup> "Moreover you know also what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me, how he dealt with the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner son of Ner, and Amasa son of Jether,

whom he murdered, retaliating in time of peace for blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war on the belt around his waist, and on the sandals on his feet. <sup>6</sup> Act therefore according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace. <sup>7</sup> Deal loyally, however, with the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table; for with such loyalty they met me when I fled from your brother Absalom. <sup>8</sup> There is also with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a terrible curse on the day when I went to Mahanaim; but when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.'  
<sup>9</sup> Therefore do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man; you will know what you ought to do to him, and you must bring his gray head down with blood to Sheol."

### *Death of David*

(1 Chr 3:4; 29:26–28)

<sup>10</sup> Then David slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the city of David. <sup>11</sup> The time that David reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. <sup>12</sup> So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.

### *Solomon Consolidates His Reign*

<sup>13</sup> Then Adonijah son of Haggith came to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. She asked, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably." <sup>14</sup> Then he said, "May I have a word with you?" She said, "Go on." <sup>15</sup> He said, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel expected me to reign; however, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the LORD. <sup>16</sup> And now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me." She said to him, "Go on." <sup>17</sup> He said, "Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag the Shunammite

as my wife." <sup>18</sup> Bathsheba said, "Very well; I will speak to the king on your behalf."

<sup>19</sup> So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. The king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her; then he sat on his throne, and had a throne brought for the king's mother, and she sat on his right. <sup>20</sup> Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." And the king said to her, "Make your request, my mother; for I will not refuse you." <sup>21</sup> She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to your brother Adonijah as his wife." <sup>22</sup> King Solomon answered his mother, "And why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom as well! For he is my elder brother; ask not only for him but also for the priest Abiathar and for Joab son of Zeruiah!" <sup>23</sup> Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, "So may God do to me, and more also, for Adonijah has devised this scheme at the risk of his life!" <sup>24</sup> Now therefore as the LORD lives, who has

established me and placed me on the throne of my father David, and who has made me a house as he promised, today Adonijah shall be put to death.”<sup>25</sup> So King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada; he struck him down, and he died.

**Acts 5:12-42 (NRSV)**

*The Apostles Heal Many*

<sup>12</sup> Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico.<sup>13</sup> None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem.<sup>14</sup> Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women,<sup>15</sup> so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he came by.<sup>16</sup> A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

*The Apostles Are Persecuted*

<sup>17</sup> Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy,<sup>18</sup> arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.<sup>19</sup> But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said,<sup>20</sup> “Go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life.”<sup>21</sup> When they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and went on with their teaching.

When the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the council and the whole body of the elders of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.<sup>22</sup> But when the temple police went there, they did not find them in the prison; so they returned and reported,<sup>23</sup> “We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside.”<sup>24</sup> Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests



heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering what might be going on. <sup>25</sup> Then someone arrived and announced, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!" <sup>26</sup> Then the captain went with the temple police and brought them, but without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

<sup>27</sup> When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. <sup>30</sup> The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. <sup>31</sup> God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

<sup>32</sup> And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

<sup>33</sup> When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. <sup>34</sup> But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, respected by all the people, stood up and ordered the men to be put outside for a short time. <sup>35</sup> Then he said to them, "Fellow Israelites, consider carefully what you propose to do to these men. <sup>36</sup> For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him; but he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and disappeared. <sup>37</sup> After him Judas the Galilean rose up at the time of the census and got people to follow him; he also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. <sup>38</sup> So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; because if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; <sup>39</sup> but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow

them—in that case you may even be found fighting against God!”

They were convinced by him, <sup>40</sup> and when they had called in the apostles, they had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. <sup>41</sup> As they left the council, they rejoiced that they were considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name. <sup>42</sup> And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

**Psalms 124:7-8** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> We have escaped like a bird  
from the snare of the  
fowlers;  
the snare is broken,  
and we have escaped.  
<sup>8</sup> Our help is in the name of  
the LORD,  
who made heaven and  
earth.

**Proverbs 27:13** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Take the garment of one  
who has given surety  
for a stranger;

seize the pledge given as  
surety for foreigners.

## November 12



**1 Kings 2:26 – 3:2** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> The king said to the priest Abiathar, “Go to Anathoth, to your estate; for you deserve death. But I will not at this time put you to death, because you carried the ark of the Lord GOD before my father David, and because you shared in all the hardships my father endured.” <sup>27</sup> So Solomon banished Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, thus fulfilling the word of the LORD that he had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

<sup>28</sup> When the news came to Joab—for Joab had supported Adonijah though he had not supported Absalom—Joab fled to the tent of the LORD and grasped the horns of the altar.

<sup>29</sup> When it was told King

Solomon, "Joab has fled to the tent of the LORD and now is beside the altar," Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, strike him down."

<sup>30</sup> So Benaiah came to the tent of the LORD and said to him, "The king commands, 'Come out.'" But he said, "No, I will die here." Then Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, "Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me." <sup>31</sup> The king replied to him, "Do as he has said, strike him down and bury him; and thus take away from me and from my father's house the guilt for the blood that Joab shed without cause.

<sup>32</sup> The LORD will bring back his bloody deeds on his own head, because, without the knowledge of my father David, he attacked and killed with the sword two men more righteous and better than himself, Abner son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah. <sup>33</sup> So shall their blood come back on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants forever; but to David, and to his descendants,

and to his house, and to his throne, there shall be peace from the LORD forevermore."

<sup>34</sup> Then Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down and killed him; and he was buried at his own house near the wilderness.

<sup>35</sup> The king put Benaiah son of Jehoiada over the army in his place, and the king put the priest Zadok in the place of Abiathar.

<sup>36</sup> Then the king sent and summoned Shimei, and said to him, "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem, and live there, and do not go out from there to any place whatever. <sup>37</sup> For on the day you go out, and cross the Wadi Kidron, know for certain that you shall die; your blood shall be on your own head." <sup>38</sup> And Shimei said to the king, "The sentence is fair; as my lord the king has said, so will your servant do." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem many days.

<sup>39</sup> But it happened at the end of three years that two of Shimei's slaves ran away to King Achish son of Maacah of Gath. When it was told Shimei, "Your slaves are in Gath,"

<sup>40</sup> Shimei arose and saddled a donkey, and went to Achish in Gath, to search for his slaves; Shimei went and brought his slaves from Gath. <sup>41</sup> When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and returned, <sup>42</sup> the king sent and summoned Shimei, and said to him, “Did I not make you swear by the LORD, and solemnly adjure you, saying, ‘Know for certain that on the day you go out and go to any place whatever, you shall die’? And you said to me, ‘The sentence is fair; I accept.’” <sup>43</sup> Why then have you not kept your oath to the LORD and the commandment with which I charged you?” <sup>44</sup> The king also said to Shimei, “You know in your own heart all the evil that you did to my father David; so the LORD will bring back your evil on your own head. <sup>45</sup> But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever.” <sup>46</sup> Then the king commanded Benaiah son of Jehoiada; and he went out and struck him down, and he died.

So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

*Solomon’s Prayer for Wisdom*  
(2 Chr 1:2–13)

**3** Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt; he took Pharaoh’s daughter and brought her into the city of David, until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> The people were sacrificing at the high places, however, because no house had yet been built for the name of the LORD.

**Acts 6:1-6** (NRSV)

*Seven Chosen to Serve*

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, <sup>4</sup> while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.”

<sup>5</sup> What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. <sup>6</sup> They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

### **Psalm 125:1-3** (NRSV)

#### *The Security of God's People*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

<sup>2</sup> **As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time on and forevermore.**

<sup>3</sup> For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, so that the righteous might not stretch out their hands to do wrong.

### **Proverbs 27:14** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Whoever blesses a neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, will be counted as cursing.

## **November 13**



### **1 Kings 3:3-28** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David; only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. <sup>4</sup> The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal high place; Solomon

used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. <sup>5</sup> At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." <sup>6</sup> And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. <sup>7</sup> And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. <sup>8</sup> And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. <sup>9</sup> Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

<sup>10</sup> It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.

<sup>11</sup> God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, <sup>12</sup> I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you. <sup>13</sup> I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor all your life; no other king shall compare with you. <sup>14</sup> If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life."

<sup>15</sup> Then Solomon awoke; it had been a dream. He came to Jerusalem where he stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. He offered up burnt offerings and offerings of well-being, and provided a feast for all his servants.

*Solomon's Wisdom  
in Judgment*

<sup>16</sup> Later, two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. <sup>17</sup> The one woman said, "Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. <sup>18</sup> Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were together; there was no one else with us in the house, only the two of us were in the house. <sup>19</sup> Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. <sup>20</sup> She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant slept. She laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. <sup>21</sup> When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, I saw that he was dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, clearly it was not the son I had borne." <sup>22</sup> But the other woman said, "No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours." The first said, "No, the dead son is yours, and the living son is mine." So they argued before the king.

<sup>23</sup> Then the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead'; while the other says, 'Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one.'" <sup>24</sup> So the king said, "Bring me a sword," and they brought a sword before the king. <sup>25</sup> The king said, "Divide the living boy in two; then give half to the one, and half to the other." <sup>26</sup> But the woman whose son was alive said to the king—because compassion for her son burned within her—"Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!" The other said, "It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it." <sup>27</sup> Then the king responded: "Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother." <sup>28</sup> All Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice.

**Acts 6:7-15** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> The word of God continued to spread; the

number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

*The Arrest of Stephen*

<sup>8</sup> Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.

<sup>9</sup> Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. <sup>10</sup> But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.

<sup>11</sup> Then they secretly instigated some men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." <sup>12</sup> They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. <sup>13</sup> They set up false witnesses who said, "This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; <sup>14</sup> for we have heard him say that this Jesus

of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us." <sup>15</sup> And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

**Psalm 125:4-5** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,  
and to those who are upright in their hearts.  
<sup>5</sup> But those who turn aside to their own crooked ways  
the LORD will lead away with evildoers.  
Peace be upon Israel!

**Proverbs 27:15–16** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> A continual dripping on a rainy day  
and a contentious wife are alike;  
<sup>16</sup> to restrain her is to restrain the wind  
or to grasp oil in the right hand.



# November 14



## 1 Kings 4:1-34 (NRSV)

### *Solomon's Administrative Officers*

King Solomon was king over all Israel, <sup>2</sup> and these were his high officials: Azariah son of Zadok was the priest; <sup>3</sup> Elihoreph and Ahijah sons of Shisha were secretaries; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; <sup>4</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in command of the army; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; <sup>5</sup> Azariah son of Nathan was over the officials; Zabud son of Nathan was priest and king's friend; <sup>6</sup> Ahishar was in charge of the palace; and Adoniram son of Abda was in charge of the forced labor.

<sup>7</sup> Solomon had twelve officials over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each one had to make provision for one month in the year. <sup>8</sup> These were their names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim; <sup>9</sup> Ben-deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-shemesh, and

Elon-beth-hanan; <sup>10</sup> Ben-hesed, in Arubboth (to him belonged Socoh and all the land of Hopher); <sup>11</sup> Ben-abinadab, in all Naphath-dor (he had Taphath, Solomon's daughter, as his wife); <sup>12</sup> Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, and from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, as far as the other side of Jokmeam; <sup>13</sup> Ben-geber, in Ramoth-gilead (he had the villages of Jair son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead, and he had the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars); <sup>14</sup> Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; <sup>15</sup> Ahimaaaz, in Naphtali (he had taken Basemath, Solomon's daughter, as his wife); <sup>16</sup> Baana son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth; <sup>17</sup> Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar; <sup>18</sup> Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin; <sup>19</sup> Geber son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of King Sihon of the Amorites and of King Og of Bashan. And there was one official in the land of Judah.

### *Magnificence of Solomon's Rule*

<sup>20</sup> Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea; they ate and drank and were happy. <sup>21</sup> Solomon was sovereign over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, even to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

<sup>22</sup> Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cors of choice flour, and sixty cors of meal, <sup>23</sup> ten fat oxen, and twenty pasture-fed cattle, one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl. <sup>24</sup> For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates; and he had peace on all sides. <sup>25</sup> During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all of them under their vines and fig trees. <sup>26</sup> Solomon also had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. <sup>27</sup> Those officials supplied provisions for

King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table, each one in his month; they left nothing lacking. <sup>28</sup> They also brought to the required place barley and straw for the horses and swift steeds, each according to his charge.

### *Fame of Solomon's Wisdom*

<sup>29</sup> God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore, <sup>30</sup> so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. <sup>31</sup> He was wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol; his fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations. <sup>32</sup> He composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five. <sup>33</sup> He would speak of trees, from the cedar that is in the Lebanon to the hyssop that grows in the wall; he would speak of animals, and birds, and reptiles, and fish. <sup>34</sup> People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of

Solomon; they came from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

**Acts 7:1-10** (NRSV)

*Stephen's Speech  
to the Council  
(Gen 12:1–50:26)*

**7** Then the high priest asked him, "Are these things so?"

<sup>2</sup> And Stephen replied:

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, <sup>3</sup> and said to him, 'Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you.' <sup>4</sup> Then he left the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God had him move from there to this country in which you are now living. <sup>5</sup> He did not give him any of it as a heritage, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as his possession and to his descendants after him, even though he had no child.

<sup>6</sup> And God spoke in these terms, that his descendants would be resident aliens in a

country belonging to others, who would enslave them and mistreat them during four hundred years. <sup>7</sup> 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.'

<sup>8</sup> Then he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

<sup>9</sup> "The patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him, <sup>10</sup> and rescued him from all his afflictions, and enabled him to win favor and to show wisdom when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him ruler over Egypt and over all his household.

**Psalm 126:1-3** (NRSV)

*A Harvest of Joy  
A Song of Ascents.*

<sup>1</sup> When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

<sup>2</sup> Then our mouth was filled  
with laughter,  
and our tongue with  
shouts of joy;  
then it was said among the  
nations,  
“The LORD has done great  
things for them.”

<sup>3</sup> The LORD has done great  
things for us,  
and we rejoiced.

**Proverbs 27:17 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> Iron sharpens iron,  
and one person sharpens  
the wits of another.

## November 15



**1 Kings 5:1 – 6:13 (NRSV)**

*Preparations and Materials  
for the Temple  
(2 Chr 2:1–18)*

Now King Hiram of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father; for Hiram had always been a friend to David.

<sup>2</sup> Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying, <sup>3</sup>“You know that my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. <sup>4</sup>But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune. <sup>5</sup>So I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD said to my father David, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name.’ <sup>6</sup>Therefore command that cedars from the Lebanon be cut for me. My servants will join your servants, and I will give you whatever wages you set for your servants; for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.”

<sup>7</sup>When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly, and said, “Blessed be the LORD today, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people.” <sup>8</sup>Hiram sent word to Solomon, “I have

heard the message that you have sent to me; I will fulfill all your needs in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. <sup>9</sup> My servants shall bring it down to the sea from the Lebanon; I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you indicate. I will have them broken up there for you to take away. And you shall meet my needs by providing food for my household.” <sup>10</sup> So Hiram supplied Solomon’s every need for timber of cedar and cypress. <sup>11</sup> Solomon in turn gave Hiram twenty thousand cors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty cors of fine oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year. <sup>12</sup> So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and the two of them made a treaty.

<sup>13</sup> King Solomon conscripted forced labor out of all Israel; the levy numbered thirty thousand men. <sup>14</sup> He sent them to the Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts; they would be a month in the Lebanon and two months at home; Adoniram was in

charge of the forced labor.

<sup>15</sup> Solomon also had seventy thousand laborers and eighty thousand stonecutters in the hill country, <sup>16</sup> besides Solomon’s three thousand three hundred supervisors who were over the work, having charge of the people who did the work. <sup>17</sup> At the king’s command, they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. <sup>18</sup> So Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders and the Gebalites did the stonecutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

*Solomon Builds the Temple*  
(2 Chr 3:1–14)

**6** In the four hundred eightieth year after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> The house that King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high.

<sup>3</sup> The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits wide, across the width of the house. Its depth was ten cubits in front of the house.

<sup>4</sup> For the house he made windows with recessed frames. <sup>5</sup> He also built a structure against the wall of the house, running around the walls of the house, both the nave and the inner sanctuary; and he made side chambers all around. <sup>6</sup> The lowest story was five cubits wide, the middle one was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for around the outside of the house he made offsets on the wall in order that the supporting beams should not be inserted into the walls of the house.

<sup>7</sup> The house was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron was heard in the temple while it was being built.

<sup>8</sup> The entrance for the middle story was on the south side of the house: one went up by winding stairs to the middle story, and from the middle story to the third. <sup>9</sup> So he built

the house, and finished it; he roofed the house with beams and planks of cedar. <sup>10</sup> He built the structure against the whole house, each story five cubits high, and it was joined to the house with timbers of cedar.

<sup>11</sup> Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, <sup>12</sup> "Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes, obey my ordinances, and keep all my commandments by walking in them, then I will establish my promise with you, which I made to your father David. <sup>13</sup> I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel."

#### **Acts 7:11-29 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Now there came a famine throughout Egypt and Canaan, and great suffering, and our ancestors could find no food. <sup>12</sup> But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there on their first visit. <sup>13</sup> On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. <sup>14</sup> Then

Joseph sent and invited his father Jacob and all his relatives to come to him, seventy-five in all;<sup>15</sup> so Jacob went down to Egypt. He himself died there as well as our ancestors,<sup>16</sup> and their bodies were brought back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

<sup>17</sup> “But as the time drew near for the fulfillment of the promise that God had made to Abraham, our people in Egypt increased and multiplied<sup>18</sup> until another king who had not known Joseph ruled over Egypt.<sup>19</sup> He dealt craftily with our race and forced our ancestors to abandon their infants so that they would die.<sup>20</sup> At this time Moses was born, and he was beautiful before God. For three months he was brought up in his father’s house;<sup>21</sup> and when he was abandoned, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son.<sup>22</sup> So Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was

powerful in his words and deeds.

<sup>23</sup> “When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his relatives, the Israelites.<sup>24</sup> When he saw one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.<sup>25</sup> He supposed that his kinsfolk would understand that God through him was rescuing them, but they did not understand.<sup>26</sup> The next day he came to some of them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers; why do you wrong each other?’<sup>27</sup> But the man who was wronging his neighbor pushed Moses aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?’<sup>28</sup> Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’<sup>29</sup> When he heard this, Moses fled and became a resident alien in the land of Midian. There he became the father of two sons.

**Psalm 126:4-6 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Restore our fortunes, O LORD,

like the watercourses in  
the Negeb.

5 May those who sow in  
tears  
reap with shouts of joy.

6 Those who go out  
weeping,  
bearing the seed for  
sowing,  
shall come home with  
shouts of joy,  
carrying their sheaves.

**Proverbs 27:18–20** (NRSV)

18 Anyone who tends a fig  
tree will eat its fruit,  
and anyone who takes  
care of a master will be  
honored.

19 Just as water reflects the  
face,  
so one human heart  
reflects another.

20 Sheol and Abaddon are  
never satisfied,  
and human eyes are  
never satisfied.

# November 16



**1 Kings 6:14-38** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> So Solomon built the house, and finished it. <sup>15</sup> He lined the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the rafters of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the house with boards of cypress. <sup>16</sup> He built twenty cubits of the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the rafters, and he built this within as an inner sanctuary, as the most holy place. <sup>17</sup> The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits long. <sup>18</sup> The cedar within the house had carvings of gourds and open flowers; all was cedar, no stone was seen. <sup>19</sup> The inner sanctuary he prepared in the innermost part of the house, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. <sup>20</sup> The interior of the inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high;



he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid the altar with cedar.<sup>21</sup> Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold, then he drew chains of gold across, in front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold.<sup>22</sup> Next he overlaid the whole house with gold, in order that the whole house might be perfect; even the whole altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

*The Furnishings of the Temple*  
(2 Chr 4:1–10, 19–22; 5:1)

<sup>23</sup> In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten cubits high.<sup>24</sup> Five cubits was the length of one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the length of the other wing of the cherub; it was ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other.<sup>25</sup> The other cherub also measured ten cubits; both cherubim had the same measure and the same form.<sup>26</sup> The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the other cherub.<sup>27</sup> He put the cherubim in the innermost part of the house;

the wings of the cherubim were spread out so that a wing of one was touching the one wall, and a wing of the other cherub was touching the other wall; their other wings toward the center of the house were touching wing to wing.<sup>28</sup> He also overlaid the cherubim with gold.

<sup>29</sup> He carved the walls of the house all around about with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms.<sup>30</sup> The floor of the house he overlaid with gold, in the inner and outer rooms.

<sup>31</sup> For the entrance to the inner sanctuary he made doors of olivewood; the lintel and the doorposts were five-sided.<sup>32</sup> He covered the two doors of olivewood with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers; he overlaid them with gold, and spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

<sup>33</sup> So also he made for the entrance to the nave doorposts of olivewood, four-sided each,<sup>34</sup> and two doors of cypress wood; the two leaves

of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding. <sup>35</sup> He carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, overlaying them with gold evenly applied upon the carved work. <sup>36</sup> He built the inner court with three courses of dressed stone to one course of cedar beams.

<sup>37</sup> In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. <sup>38</sup> In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. He was seven years in building it.

### **Acts 7:30-43 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush. <sup>31</sup> When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight; and as he approached to look, there came the voice of the Lord: <sup>32</sup> ‘I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ Moses began to tremble and did not dare to look. <sup>33</sup> Then

the Lord said to him, ‘Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. <sup>34</sup> I have surely seen the mistreatment of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Come now, I will send you to Egypt.’

<sup>35</sup> “It was this Moses whom they rejected when they said, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge?’ and whom God now sent as both ruler and liberator through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. <sup>36</sup> He led them out, having performed wonders and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. <sup>37</sup> This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up a prophet for you from your own people as he raised me up.’ <sup>38</sup> He is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living oracles to give to us. <sup>39</sup> Our ancestors were unwilling to obey him;

instead, they pushed him  
aside, and in their hearts they  
turned back to Egypt,<sup>40</sup> saying  
to Aaron, 'Make gods for us  
who will lead the way for us;  
as for this Moses who led us  
out from the land of Egypt, we  
do not know what has  
happened to him.'<sup>41</sup> At that  
time they made a calf, offered  
a sacrifice to the idol, and  
reveled in the works of their  
hands.<sup>42</sup> But God turned away  
from them and handed them  
over to worship the host of  
heaven, as it is written in the  
book of the prophets:

'Did you offer to me slain  
victims and sacrifices  
forty years in the  
wilderness, O house of  
Israel?

<sup>43</sup> No; you took along the  
tent of Moloch,  
and the star of your god  
Rephan,  
the images that you made  
to worship;  
so I will remove you  
beyond Babylon.'

### **Psalm 127:1-2 (NRSV)**

*God's Blessings in the Home*

A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.

<sup>1</sup> Unless the LORD builds the  
house,

those who build it labor  
in vain.

Unless the LORD guards the  
city,  
the guard keeps watch in  
vain.

<sup>2</sup> It is in vain that you rise up  
early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of  
anxious toil;  
for he gives sleep to his  
beloved.

### **Proverbs 27:21–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> The crucible is for silver,  
and the furnace is for  
gold,  
so a person is tested by  
being praised.

<sup>22</sup> Crush a fool in a mortar  
with a pestle  
along with crushed grain,  
but the folly will not be  
driven out.

# November 17



## 1 Kings 7:1-26 (NRSV)

### *Solomon's Palace and Other Buildings*

Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished his entire house.

<sup>2</sup> He built the House of the Forest of the Lebanon one hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, built on four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams on the pillars. <sup>3</sup> It was roofed with cedar on the forty-five rafters, fifteen in each row, which were on the pillars. <sup>4</sup> There were window frames in the three rows, facing each other in the three rows. <sup>5</sup> All the doorways and doorposts had four-sided frames, opposite, facing each other in the three rows.

<sup>6</sup> He made the Hall of Pillars fifty cubits long and thirty cubits wide. There was a porch in front with pillars, and a canopy in front of them.

<sup>7</sup> He made the Hall of the Throne where he was to pronounce judgment, the Hall

of Justice, covered with cedar from floor to floor.

<sup>8</sup> His own house where he would reside, in the other court back of the hall, was of the same construction. Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken in marriage.

<sup>9</sup> All these were made of costly stones, cut according to measure, sawed with saws, back and front, from the foundation to the coping, and from outside to the great court. <sup>10</sup> The foundation was of costly stones, huge stones, stones of eight and ten cubits. <sup>11</sup> There were costly stones above, cut to measure, and cedarwood. <sup>12</sup> The great court had three courses of dressed stone to one layer of cedar beams all around; so had the inner court of the house of the LORD, and the vestibule of the house.

### *Products of Hiram the Bronzeworker*

*(2 Chr 3:15-17; 4:11-18)*

<sup>13</sup> Now King Solomon invited and received Hiram from Tyre. <sup>14</sup> He was the son of

a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, whose father, a man of Tyre, had been an artisan in bronze; he was full of skill, intelligence, and knowledge in working bronze. He came to King Solomon, and did all his work.

<sup>15</sup> He cast two pillars of bronze. Eighteen cubits was the height of the one, and a cord of twelve cubits would encircle it; the second pillar was the same. <sup>16</sup> He also made two capitals of molten bronze, to set on the tops of the pillars; the height of the one capital was five cubits, and the height of the other capital was five cubits. <sup>17</sup> There were nets of checker work with wreaths of chain work for the capitals on the tops of the pillars; seven for the one capital, and seven for the other capital.

<sup>18</sup> He made the columns with two rows around each latticework to cover the capitals that were above the pomegranates; he did the same with the other capital.

<sup>19</sup> Now the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were of lily-work, four cubits high. <sup>20</sup> The capitals

were on the two pillars and also above the rounded projection that was beside the latticework; there were two hundred pomegranates in rows all around; and so with the other capital. <sup>21</sup> He set up the pillars at the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the south and called it Jachin; and he set up the pillar on the north and called it Boaz. <sup>22</sup> On the tops of the pillars was lily-work. Thus the work of the pillars was finished.

<sup>23</sup> Then he made the molten sea; it was round, ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high. A line of thirty cubits would encircle it completely. <sup>24</sup> Under its brim were panels all around it, each of ten cubits, surrounding the sea; there were two rows of panels, cast when it was cast.

<sup>25</sup> It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; the sea was set on them. The hindquarters of each were toward the inside. <sup>26</sup> Its thickness was a handbreadth; its brim was made like the

brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily; it held two thousand baths.

**Acts 7:44-50 (NRSV)**

<sup>44</sup> “Our ancestors had the tent of testimony in the wilderness, as God directed when he spoke to Moses, ordering him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. <sup>45</sup> Our ancestors in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors. And it was there until the time of David, <sup>46</sup> who found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. <sup>47</sup> But it was Solomon who built a house for him. <sup>48</sup> Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands; as the prophet says,

<sup>49</sup> ‘Heaven is my throne,  
and the earth is my  
footstool.  
What kind of house will  
you build for me, says  
the Lord,  
or what is the place of  
my rest?’

<sup>50</sup> Did not my hand make all these things?’

**Psalms 127:3-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.

<sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior  
are the sons of one’s youth.

<sup>5</sup> Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.  
He shall not be put to shame  
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

**Proverbs 27:23–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> Know well the condition of your flocks,  
and give attention to your herds;

<sup>24</sup> for riches do not last forever,  
nor a crown for all generations.

<sup>25</sup> When the grass is gone,  
and new growth appears,  
and the herbage of the mountains is gathered,  
<sup>26</sup> the lambs will provide your clothing,

and the goats the price  
of a field;  
<sup>27</sup> there will be enough goats'  
milk for your food,  
for the food of your  
household  
and nourishment for  
your servant-girls.

## November 18



### 1 Kings 7:27-51 (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> He also made the ten stands of bronze; each stand was four cubits long, four cubits wide, and three cubits high. <sup>28</sup> This was the construction of the stands: they had borders; the borders were within the frames; <sup>29</sup> on the borders that were set in the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. On the frames, both above and below the lions and oxen, there were wreaths of beveled work. <sup>30</sup> Each stand had four bronze wheels and axles of bronze; at the four corners were

supports for a basin. The supports were cast with wreaths at the side of each. <sup>31</sup> Its opening was within the crown whose height was one cubit; its opening was round, as a pedestal is made; it was a cubit and a half wide. At its opening there were carvings; its borders were four-sided, not round. <sup>32</sup> The four wheels were underneath the borders; the axles of the wheels were in the stands; and the height of a wheel was a cubit and a half. <sup>33</sup> The wheels were made like a chariot wheel; their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast. <sup>34</sup> There were four supports at the four corners of each stand; the supports were of one piece with the stands. <sup>35</sup> On the top of the stand there was a round band half a cubit high; on the top of the stand, its stays and its borders were of one piece with it. <sup>36</sup> On the surfaces of its stays and on its borders he carved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, where each had space, with wreaths all around. <sup>37</sup> In this way he made the ten stands; all of

them were cast alike, with the same size and the same form.

<sup>38</sup> He made ten basins of bronze; each basin held forty baths, each basin measured four cubits; there was a basin for each of the ten stands.

<sup>39</sup> He set five of the stands on the south side of the house, and five on the north side of the house; he set the sea on the southeast corner of the house.

<sup>40</sup> Hiram also made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram finished all the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of the LORD: <sup>41</sup> the two pillars, the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars, the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars; <sup>42</sup> the four hundred pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars; <sup>43</sup> the ten stands, the ten basins on the stands; <sup>44</sup> the one sea, and the twelve oxen underneath the sea.

<sup>45</sup> The pots, the shovels, and the basins, all these vessels that Hiram made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD were of burnished bronze. <sup>46</sup> In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan.

<sup>47</sup> Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because there were so many of them; the weight of the bronze was not determined.

<sup>48</sup> So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of the LORD: the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, <sup>49</sup> the lampstands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north, in front of the inner sanctuary; the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; <sup>50</sup> the cups, snuffers, basins, dishes for incense, and firepans, of pure gold; the sockets for the doors of the innermost part of the house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the nave of the temple, of gold.

<sup>51</sup> Thus all the work that King Solomon did on the house of the LORD was



finished. Solomon brought in the things that his father David had dedicated, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and stored them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

**Acts 7:51-60 (NRSV)**

<sup>51</sup> “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. <sup>52</sup> Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers.

<sup>53</sup> You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.”

*The Stoning of Stephen*

<sup>54</sup> When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. <sup>55</sup> But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> “Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man

standing at the right hand of God!” <sup>57</sup> But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him.

<sup>58</sup> Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

<sup>59</sup> While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

<sup>60</sup> Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

**Psalm 128:1-4 (NRSV)**

*The Happy Home of the Faithful*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> Happy is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways.

<sup>2</sup> You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you.

<sup>3</sup> Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots

around your table.  
<sup>4</sup> Thus shall the man be  
blessed  
who fears the LORD.

**Proverbs 28:1** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The wicked flee when no  
one pursues, but the  
righteous are as bold  
as a lion.

**November  
19**



**1 Kings 8:1-21** (NRSV)

*Dedication of the Temple*  
(2 Chr 5:2–6:2)

Then Solomon assembled  
the elders of Israel and all the  
heads of the tribes, the  
leaders of the ancestral  
houses of the Israelites, before  
King Solomon in Jerusalem, to  
bring up the ark of the  
covenant of the LORD out of  
the city of David, which is Zion.  
<sup>2</sup> All the people of Israel  
assembled to King Solomon at  
the festival in the month  
Ethanim, which is the seventh

month. <sup>3</sup> And all the elders of  
Israel came, and the priests  
carried the ark. <sup>4</sup> So they  
brought up the ark of the  
LORD, the tent of meeting, and  
all the holy vessels that were  
in the tent; the priests and the  
Levites brought them up.  
<sup>5</sup> King Solomon and all the  
congregation of Israel, who  
had assembled before him,  
were with him before the ark,  
sacrificing so many sheep and  
oxen that they could not be  
counted or numbered. <sup>6</sup> Then  
the priests brought the ark of  
the covenant of the LORD to its  
place, in the inner sanctuary of  
the house, in the most holy  
place, underneath the wings  
of the cherubim. <sup>7</sup> For the  
cherubim spread out their  
wings over the place of the  
ark, so that the cherubim  
made a covering above the ark  
and its poles. <sup>8</sup> The poles were  
so long that the ends of the  
poles were seen from the holy  
place in front of the inner  
sanctuary; but they could not  
be seen from outside; they are  
there to this day. <sup>9</sup> There was  
nothing in the ark except the  
two tablets of stone that  
Moses had placed there at

Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites, when they came out of the land of Egypt.<sup>10</sup> And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD,<sup>11</sup> so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Then Solomon said,  
“The LORD has said that he would dwell in thick darkness.

<sup>13</sup> I have built you an exalted house,  
a place for you to dwell in forever.”

*Solomon’s Speech*  
(2 Chr 6:3–11)

<sup>14</sup> Then the king turned around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel stood.

<sup>15</sup> He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to my father David, saying,<sup>16</sup> ‘Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a

house, that my name might be there; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.’<sup>17</sup> My father David had it in mind to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

<sup>18</sup> But the LORD said to my father David, ‘You did well to consider building a house for my name;<sup>19</sup> nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be born to you shall build the house for my name.’<sup>20</sup> Now the LORD has upheld the promise that he made; for I have risen in the place of my father David; I sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

<sup>21</sup> There I have provided a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our ancestors when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

**Acts 8:1-13** (NRSV)

And Saul approved of their killing him.

*Saul Persecutes the Church*

That day a severe persecution began against the

church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. <sup>2</sup> Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. <sup>3</sup> But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.

#### *Philip Preaches in Samaria*

<sup>4</sup> Now those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word. <sup>5</sup> Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them. <sup>6</sup> The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Philip, hearing and seeing the signs that he did, <sup>7</sup> for unclean spirits, crying with loud shrieks, came out of many who were possessed; and many others who were paralyzed or lame were cured. <sup>8</sup> So there was great joy in that city.

<sup>9</sup> Now a certain man named Simon had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria,

saying that he was someone great. <sup>10</sup> All of them, from the least to the greatest, listened to him eagerly, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." <sup>11</sup> And they listened eagerly to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. <sup>12</sup> But when they believed Philip, who was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. <sup>13</sup> Even Simon himself believed. After being baptized, he stayed constantly with Philip and was amazed when he saw the signs and great miracles that took place.

#### **Psalm 128:5-6 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> The LORD bless you from Zion.  
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.  
<sup>6</sup> May you see your children's children.  
Peace be upon Israel!

#### **Proverbs 28:2 (NRSV)**

<sup>2</sup> When a land rebels it has many rulers;

but with an intelligent  
ruler  
there is lasting order.

## November 20



**1 Kings 8:22-66** (NRSV)

*Solomon's Prayer of  
Dedication*  
(2 Chr 6:12-39)

<sup>22</sup> Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. <sup>23</sup> He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart, <sup>24</sup> the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand. <sup>25</sup> Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for

your servant my father David that which you promised him, saying, 'There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.'

<sup>26</sup> Therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant my father David.

<sup>27</sup> "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! <sup>28</sup> Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O LORD my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; <sup>29</sup> that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. <sup>30</sup> Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive.

<sup>31</sup> “If someone sins against a neighbor and is given an oath to swear, and comes and swears before your altar in this house, <sup>32</sup> then hear in heaven, and act, and judge your servants, condemning the guilty by bringing their conduct on their own head, and vindicating the righteous by rewarding them according to their righteousness.

<sup>33</sup> “When your people Israel, having sinned against you, are defeated before an enemy but turn again to you, confess your name, pray and plead with you in this house, <sup>34</sup> then hear in heaven, forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them again to the land that you gave to their ancestors.

<sup>35</sup> “When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, and then they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin, because you punish them, <sup>36</sup> then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk; and grant rain on

your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

<sup>37</sup> “If there is famine in the land, if there is plague, blight, mildew, locust, or caterpillar; if their enemy besieges them in any of their cities; whatever plague, whatever sickness there is; <sup>38</sup> whatever prayer, whatever plea there is from any individual or from all your people Israel, all knowing the afflictions of their own hearts so that they stretch out their hands toward this house; <sup>39</sup> then hear in heaven your dwelling place, forgive, act, and render to all whose hearts you know—according to all their ways, for only you know what is in every human heart— <sup>40</sup> so that they may fear you all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our ancestors.

<sup>41</sup> “Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name <sup>42</sup>—for they shall hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm—when a foreigner comes and prays

toward this house, <sup>43</sup> then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and so that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.

<sup>44</sup> “If your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to the LORD toward the city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name, <sup>45</sup> then hear in heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause.

<sup>46</sup> “If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near; <sup>47</sup> yet if they come to their senses in the land to which they have been taken captive, and repent, and plead with you in the land of their captors, saying, ‘We have sinned, and have done wrong;

we have acted wickedly’; <sup>48</sup> if they repent with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies, who took them captive, and pray to you toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, the city that you have chosen, and the house that I have built for your name; <sup>49</sup> then hear in heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their plea, maintain their cause <sup>50</sup> and forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you; and grant them compassion in the sight of their captors, so that they may have compassion on them <sup>51</sup> (for they are your people and heritage, which you brought out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron-smelter). <sup>52</sup> Let your eyes be open to the plea of your servant, and to the plea of your people Israel, listening to them whenever they call to you. <sup>53</sup> For you have separated them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be your heritage, just as you promised through Moses, your servant, when you brought

our ancestors out of Egypt, O Lord God.”

*Solomon Blesses the Assembly*  
(2 Chr 6:40–42)

<sup>54</sup> Now when Solomon finished offering all this prayer and this plea to the LORD, he arose from facing the altar of the LORD, where he had knelt with hands outstretched toward heaven; <sup>55</sup> he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice:

<sup>56</sup> “Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel according to all that he promised; not one word has failed of all his good promise, which he spoke through his servant Moses.

<sup>57</sup> The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our ancestors; may he not leave us or abandon us, <sup>58</sup> but incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances, which he commanded our ancestors.

<sup>59</sup> Let these words of mine, with which I pleaded before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, and may he maintain the cause of

his servant and the cause of his people Israel, as each day requires; <sup>60</sup> so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other. <sup>61</sup> Therefore devote yourselves completely to the LORD our God, walking in his statutes and keeping his commandments, as at this day.”

*Solomon Offers Sacrifices*  
(2 Chr 7:4–11)

<sup>62</sup> Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

<sup>63</sup> Solomon offered as sacrifices of well-being to the LORD twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. <sup>64</sup> The same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that was in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offerings and the grain offerings and the fat pieces of the sacrifices of well-being, because the bronze altar that was before the LORD was too small to receive the burnt offerings and



the grain offerings and the fat pieces of the sacrifices of well-being.

<sup>65</sup> So Solomon held the festival at that time, and all Israel with him—a great assembly, people from Lebohamath to the Wadi of Egypt—before the LORD our God, seven days. <sup>66</sup> On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents, joyful and in good spirits because of all the goodness that the LORD had shown to his servant David and to his people Israel.

**Acts 8:14-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. <sup>15</sup> The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit <sup>16</sup> (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). <sup>17</sup> Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> Now when Simon saw

that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, <sup>19</sup> saying, "Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." <sup>20</sup> But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money! <sup>21</sup> You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. <sup>22</sup> Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. <sup>23</sup> For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and the chains of wickedness." <sup>24</sup> Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may happen to me."

**Psalm 129:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for the Downfall of  
Israel's Enemies*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> "Often have they attacked me from my youth"  
—let Israel now say—  
<sup>2</sup> "often have they attacked me from my youth,

yet they have not  
prevailed against me.

<sup>3</sup> The plowers plowed on my  
back;  
they made their furrows  
long.”

<sup>4</sup> The LORD is righteous;  
he has cut the cords of  
the wicked.

### **Proverbs 28:3–5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> A ruler who oppresses the  
poor  
is a beating rain that  
leaves no food.

<sup>4</sup> Those who forsake the law  
praise the wicked,  
but those who keep the  
law struggle against  
them.

<sup>5</sup> The evil do not understand  
justice,  
but those who seek the  
LORD understand it  
completely.

## **November 21**



### **1 Kings 9:1-28 (NRSV)**

### *God Appears Again to Solomon*

*(2 Chr 7:11–22)*

When Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king’s house and all that Solomon desired to build, <sup>2</sup> the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. <sup>3</sup> The LORD said to him, “I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you made before me; I have consecrated this house that you have built, and put my name there forever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time. <sup>4</sup> As for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, <sup>5</sup> then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised your father David, saying, ‘There shall not fail you a successor on the throne of Israel.’

<sup>6</sup> “If you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my

statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, <sup>7</sup> then I will cut Israel off from the land that I have given them; and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight; and Israel will become a proverb and a taunt among all peoples. <sup>8</sup> This house will become a heap of ruins; everyone passing by it will be astonished, and will hiss; and they will say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this house?' <sup>9</sup> Then they will say, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD their God, who brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, worshiping them and serving them; therefore the LORD has brought this disaster upon them.' "

<sup>10</sup> At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king's house, <sup>11</sup> King Hiram of Tyre having supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold, as much as he desired, King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land

of Galilee. <sup>12</sup> But when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, they did not please him. <sup>13</sup> Therefore he said, "What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?" So they are called the land of Cabul to this day. <sup>14</sup> But Hiram had sent to the king one hundred twenty talents of gold.

*Other Acts of Solomon*  
(2 Chr 8:3–16)

<sup>15</sup> This is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon conscripted to build the house of the LORD and his own house, the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer <sup>16</sup> (Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it down, had killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife; <sup>17</sup> so Solomon rebuilt Gezer), Lower Beth-horon, <sup>18</sup> Baalath, Tamar in the wilderness, within the land, <sup>19</sup> as well as all of Solomon's storage cities, the cities for his chariots, the cities for his

cavalry, and whatever Solomon desired to build, in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

<sup>20</sup> All the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel—<sup>21</sup> their descendants who were still left in the land, whom the Israelites were unable to destroy completely—these Solomon conscripted for slave labor, and so they are to this day. <sup>22</sup> But of the Israelites Solomon made no slaves; they were the soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, and the commanders of his chariotry and cavalry.

<sup>23</sup> These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work: five hundred fifty, who had charge of the people who carried on the work.

<sup>24</sup> But Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David to her own house that Solomon had built for her; then he built the Millo.

<sup>25</sup> Three times a year Solomon used to offer up

burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being on the altar that he built for the LORD, offering incense before the LORD. So he completed the house.

### *Solomon's Commercial Activity* (2 Chr 8:17–18)

<sup>26</sup> King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Elath on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. <sup>27</sup> Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who were familiar with the sea, together with the servants of Solomon. <sup>28</sup> They went to Ophir, and imported from there four hundred twenty talents of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

### **Acts 8:25-40** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Now after Peter and John had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the good news to many villages of the Samaritans.

*Philip and the  
Ethiopian Eunuch  
(Cp Isa 53:7–8)*

<sup>26</sup> Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) <sup>27</sup> So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup> and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

<sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” <sup>30</sup> So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” <sup>31</sup> He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.

<sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to  
the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent  
before its shearer,

so he does not open his  
mouth.

<sup>33</sup> In his humiliation justice  
was denied him.

Who can describe his  
generation?

For his life is taken away  
from the earth.”

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” <sup>35</sup> Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup> As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” <sup>38</sup> He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. <sup>40</sup> But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the

good news to all the towns  
until he came to Caesarea.

**Psalm 129:5-8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> May all who hate Zion  
be put to shame and  
turned backward.  
<sup>6</sup> Let them be like the grass  
on the housetops  
that withers before it  
grows up,  
<sup>7</sup> with which reapers do not  
fill their hands  
or binders of sheaves  
their arms,  
<sup>8</sup> while those who pass by  
do not say,  
“The blessing of the LORD  
be upon you!  
We bless you in the  
name of the LORD!”

**Proverbs 28:6–7** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Better to be poor and walk  
in integrity  
than to be crooked in  
one’s ways even  
though rich.  
<sup>7</sup> Those who keep the law  
are wise children,  
but companions of  
gluttons shame their  
parents.

**November**  
**22**



**1 Kings 10:1-29** (NRSV)

*Visit of the Queen of Sheba*  
(2 Chr 9:1–28)

When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, (fame due to the name of the LORD), she came to test him with hard questions. <sup>2</sup> She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. <sup>3</sup> Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. <sup>4</sup> When the queen of Sheba had observed all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, <sup>5</sup> the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his valets, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

<sup>6</sup> So she said to the king,  
“The report was true that I

heard in my own land of your accomplishments and of your wisdom, <sup>7</sup> but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. Not even half had been told me; your wisdom and prosperity far surpass the report that I had heard. <sup>8</sup> Happy are your wives! Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom! <sup>9</sup> Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel forever, he has made you king to execute justice and righteousness.”

<sup>10</sup> Then she gave the king one hundred twenty talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones; never again did spices come in such quantity as that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which carried gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a great quantity of almug wood and precious stones. <sup>12</sup> From the almug wood the king made supports for the house of the LORD, and

for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers; no such almug wood has come or been seen to this day.

<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba every desire that she expressed, as well as what he gave her out of Solomon's royal bounty. Then she returned to her own land, with her servants.

<sup>14</sup> The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold, <sup>15</sup> besides that which came from the traders and from the business of the merchants, and from all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land. <sup>16</sup> King Solomon made two hundred large shields of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each large shield.

<sup>17</sup> He made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into each shield; and the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. <sup>18</sup> The king also made a great ivory throne, and overlaid it with the finest gold.

<sup>19</sup> The throne had six steps. The top of the throne was

rounded in the back, and on each side of the seat were arm rests and two lions standing beside the arm rests,<sup>20</sup> while twelve lions were standing, one on each end of a step on the six steps. Nothing like it was ever made in any kingdom.<sup>21</sup> All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver—it was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon.<sup>22</sup> For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

<sup>23</sup> Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.<sup>24</sup> The whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind.<sup>25</sup> Every one of them brought a present, objects of silver and gold, garments, weaponry, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

<sup>26</sup> Solomon gathered together chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.<sup>27</sup> The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as numerous as the sycamores of the Shephelah.<sup>28</sup> Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's traders received them from Kue at a price.<sup>29</sup> A chariot could be imported from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty; so through the king's traders they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

### **Acts 9:1-9 (NRSV)**

#### *The Conversion of Saul*

(Acts 22:6–16; 26:12–18)

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest<sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them



bound to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” <sup>5</sup> He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

<sup>6</sup> But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” <sup>7</sup> The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one.

<sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.

<sup>9</sup> For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

### **Psalm 130:1-5** (NRSV)

#### *Waiting for Divine Redemption*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

<sup>3</sup> If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

<sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

<sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;



### **Proverbs 28:8–10** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> One who augments wealth by exorbitant interest gathers it for another who is kind to the poor.

<sup>9</sup> When one will not listen to the law, even one’s prayers are an abomination.

<sup>10</sup> Those who mislead the upright into evil ways will fall into pits of their own making, but the blameless will have a goodly inheritance.

# November 23



## 1 Kings 11:1-28 (NRSV)

### *Solomon's Errors*

King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, <sup>2</sup> from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the Israelites, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you; for they will surely incline your heart to follow their gods"; Solomon clung to these in love. <sup>3</sup> Among his wives were seven hundred princesses and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. <sup>4</sup> For when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. <sup>5</sup> For Solomon followed Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup> So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not

completely follow the LORD, as his father David had done.

<sup>7</sup> Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem.

<sup>8</sup> He did the same for all his foreign wives, who offered incense and sacrificed to their gods.

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, <sup>10</sup> and had commanded him concerning this matter, that he should not follow other gods; but he did not observe what the LORD commanded. <sup>11</sup> Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant. <sup>12</sup> Yet for the sake of your father David I will not do it in your lifetime; I will tear it out of the hand of your son.

<sup>13</sup> I will not, however, tear

away the entire kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.”

#### *Adversaries of Solomon*

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the royal house in Edom. <sup>15</sup> For when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the dead, he killed every male in Edom <sup>16</sup> (for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had eliminated every male in Edom); <sup>17</sup> but Hadad fled to Egypt with some Edomites who were servants of his father. He was a young boy at that time. <sup>18</sup> They set out from Midian and came to Paran; they took people with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, assigned him an allowance of food, and gave him land.

<sup>19</sup> Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him his sister-in-law for a wife, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. <sup>20</sup> The sister of

Tahpenes gave birth by him to his son Genubath, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh’s house; Genubath was in Pharaoh’s house among the children of Pharaoh.

<sup>21</sup> When Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his ancestors and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, “Let me depart, that I may go to my own country.” <sup>22</sup> But Pharaoh said to him, “What do you lack with me that you now seek to go to your own country?” And he said, “No, do let me go.”

<sup>23</sup> God raised up another adversary against Solomon, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, King Hadadezer of Zobah. <sup>24</sup> He gathered followers around him and became leader of a marauding band, after the slaughter by David; they went to Damascus, settled there, and made him king in Damascus. <sup>25</sup> He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, making trouble as Hadad did; he despised Israel and reigned over Aram.

### *Jeroboam's Rebellion*

<sup>26</sup> Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, rebelled against the king. <sup>27</sup> The following was the reason he rebelled against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the gap in the wall of the city of his father David. <sup>28</sup> The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.

### **Acts 9:10-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." <sup>11</sup> The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, <sup>12</sup> and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." <sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, "Lord, I

have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; <sup>14</sup> and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; <sup>16</sup> I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." <sup>17</sup> So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <sup>18</sup> And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, <sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

### *Saul Preaches in Damascus*

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, <sup>20</sup> and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in

the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” <sup>21</sup> All who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?” <sup>22</sup> Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

### *Saul Escapes from the Jews*

<sup>23</sup> After some time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, <sup>24</sup> but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night so that they might kill him; <sup>25</sup> but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

### **Psalm 130:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

<sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD!

For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem.

<sup>8</sup> It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

### **Proverbs 28:11** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> The rich is wise in self-esteem, but an intelligent poor person sees through the pose.

## November 24



### **1 Kings 11:29 – 12:19** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> About that time, when Jeroboam was leaving Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Ahijah had clothed himself with a new garment. The two of them were alone in the open country <sup>30</sup> when Ahijah laid hold of the new garment he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. <sup>31</sup> He

then said to Jeroboam: Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "See, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and will give you ten tribes.<sup>32</sup> One tribe will remain his, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.<sup>33</sup> This is because he has forsaken me, worshiped Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and has not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, as his father David did.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless I will not take the whole kingdom away from him but will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of my servant David whom I chose and who did keep my commandments and my statutes;<sup>35</sup> but I will take the kingdom away from his son and give it to you—that is, the ten tribes.<sup>36</sup> Yet to his son I will give one tribe, so that my servant David may always have a lamp before me in

Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name.<sup>37</sup> I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires; you shall be king over Israel.<sup>38</sup> If you will listen to all that I command you, walk in my ways, and do what is right in my sight by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you, and will build you an enduring house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.<sup>39</sup> For this reason I will punish the descendants of David, but not forever."<sup>40</sup> Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam promptly fled to Egypt, to King Shishak of Egypt, and remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

### *Death of Solomon*

*(2 Chr 9:29–31)*

<sup>41</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did as well as his wisdom, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon?<sup>42</sup> The time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.<sup>43</sup> Solomon slept with his ancestors and was

buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him.

*The Northern Tribes Secede*  
(2 Chr 10:1–19)

**12** Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. <sup>2</sup> When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. <sup>3</sup> And they sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, <sup>4</sup> “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you.” <sup>5</sup> He said to them, “Go away for three days, then come again to me.” So the people went away.

<sup>6</sup> Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the older men who had attended his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?” <sup>7</sup> They answered him, “If you will be a servant to this

people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever.” <sup>8</sup> But he disregarded the advice that the older men gave him, and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and now attended him. <sup>9</sup> He said to them, “What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?’” <sup>10</sup> The young men who had grown up with him said to him, “Thus you should say to this people who spoke to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must lighten it for us’; thus you should say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins. <sup>11</sup> Now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’ ”

<sup>12</sup> So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had said, “Come to me again the third day.” <sup>13</sup> The king answered the people harshly. He

disregarded the advice that the older men had given him<sup>14</sup> and spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions."<sup>15</sup> So the king did not listen to the people, because it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

<sup>16</sup>When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king,

"What share do we have in David?

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

To your tents, O Israel!

Look now to your own house, O David."

So Israel went away to their tents.<sup>17</sup> But Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites who were living in the towns of Judah.<sup>18</sup> When King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was taskmaster over the

forced labor, all Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam then hurriedly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.<sup>19</sup> So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

### **Acts 9:26-35** (NRSV)

#### *Saul in Jerusalem*

<sup>26</sup>When he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.<sup>27</sup> But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.<sup>28</sup> So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.<sup>29</sup> He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him.<sup>30</sup> When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

<sup>31</sup>Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and



Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

*The Healing of Aeneas*

<sup>32</sup> Now as Peter went here and there among all the believers, he came down also to the saints living in Lydda. <sup>33</sup> There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, for he was paralyzed. <sup>34</sup> Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed!" And immediately he got up. <sup>35</sup> And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

**Psalm 131:1 – 132:9 (NRSV)**

*Song of Quiet Trust*

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, my heart is not lifted up,  
my eyes are not raised too high;  
I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.  
<sup>2</sup> But I have calmed and quieted my soul,

like a weaned child with its mother;  
my soul is like the weaned child that is with me.

<sup>3</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time on and forevermore.

**Psalm 132 (NRSV)**

*The Eternal Dwelling of God in Zion*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, remember in David's favor all the hardships he endured;  
<sup>2</sup> how he swore to the LORD and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,  
<sup>3</sup> "I will not enter my house or get into my bed;  
<sup>4</sup> I will not give sleep to my eyes  
or slumber to my eyelids,  
<sup>5</sup> until I find a place for the LORD,  
a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."  
<sup>6</sup> We heard of it in Ephrathah;  
we found it in the fields of Jaar.  
<sup>7</sup> "Let us go to his dwelling place;

let us worship at his  
footstool.”

<sup>8</sup> Rise up, O LORD, and go to  
your resting place,  
you and the ark of your  
might.

<sup>9</sup> Let your priests be clothed  
with righteousness,  
and let your faithful  
shout for joy.

**Proverbs 28:12–13 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> When the righteous  
triumph, there is great  
glory,  
but when the wicked  
prevail, people go into  
hiding.

<sup>13</sup> No one who conceals  
transgressions will  
prosper,  
but one who confesses  
and forsakes them will  
obtain mercy.

**November  
25**



**1 Kings 12:20 – 13:6 (NRSV)**

*First Dynasty: Jeroboam  
Reigns over Israel*

*(2 Chr 11:1–4)*

<sup>20</sup> When all Israel heard  
that Jeroboam had returned,  
they sent and called him to  
the assembly and made him  
king over all Israel. There was  
no one who followed the  
house of David, except the  
tribe of Judah alone.

<sup>21</sup> When Rehoboam came  
to Jerusalem, he assembled all  
the house of Judah and the  
tribe of Benjamin, one  
hundred eighty thousand  
chosen troops to fight against  
the house of Israel, to restore  
the kingdom to Rehoboam son  
of Solomon. <sup>22</sup> But the word of  
God came to Shemaiah the  
man of God: <sup>23</sup> Say to King  
Rehoboam of Judah, son of  
Solomon, and to all the house  
of Judah and Benjamin, and to  
the rest of the people, <sup>24</sup> “Thus  
says the LORD, You shall not go  
up or fight against your  
kindred the people of Israel.  
Let everyone go home, for this  
thing is from me.” So they  
heeded the word of the LORD  
and went home again,  
according to the word of the  
LORD.

### *Jeroboam's Golden Calves*

<sup>25</sup> Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and resided there; he went out from there and built Penuel. <sup>26</sup> Then Jeroboam said to himself, "Now the kingdom may well revert to the house of David. <sup>27</sup> If this people continues to go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will turn again to their master, King Rehoboam of Judah; they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah." <sup>28</sup> So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. He said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." <sup>29</sup> He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. <sup>30</sup> And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one at Bethel and before the other as far as Dan. <sup>31</sup> He also made houses on high places, and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not Levites. <sup>32</sup> Jeroboam appointed a festival on the fifteenth day

of the eighth month like the festival that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar; so he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. <sup>33</sup> He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he alone had devised; he appointed a festival for the people of Israel, and he went up to the altar to offer incense.

### **Acts 9:36-43** (NRSV)

#### *Peter in Lydda and Joppa*

<sup>36</sup> Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. <sup>37</sup> At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. <sup>38</sup> Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." <sup>39</sup> So Peter got up and

went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them.

<sup>40</sup> Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. <sup>41</sup> He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive.

<sup>42</sup> This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

<sup>43</sup> Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

### **Psalms 132:10-12** (NRSV)

- <sup>10</sup> For your servant David's sake  
do not turn away the  
face of your anointed  
one.
- <sup>11</sup> The LORD swore to David a  
sure oath  
from which he will not  
turn back:

"One of the sons of your  
body

I will set on your throne.

- <sup>12</sup> If your sons keep my  
covenant  
and my decrees that I  
shall teach them,  
their sons also,  
forevermore,  
shall sit on your throne."

### **Proverbs 28:14** (NRSV)

- <sup>14</sup> Happy is the one who is  
never without fear,  
but one who is hard-  
hearted will fall into  
calamity.

## **November 26**



### **1 Kings 13:7-34** (NRSV)

*A Man of God from Judah*  
While Jeroboam was  
standing by the altar to offer  
incense, a man of God came  
out of Judah by the word of  
the LORD to Bethel <sup>2</sup> and  
proclaimed against the altar  
by the word of the LORD, and

said, "O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: 'A son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who offer incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.' " <sup>3</sup> He gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign that the LORD has spoken: 'The altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.' " <sup>4</sup> When the king heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him!" But the hand that he stretched out against him withered so that he could not draw it back to himself. <sup>5</sup> The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> The king said to the man of God, "Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, so that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the LORD; and the king's hand was restored to him, and became

as it was before. <sup>7</sup> Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and dine, and I will give you a gift." <sup>8</sup> But the man of God said to the king, "If you give me half your kingdom, I will not go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water in this place. <sup>9</sup> For thus I was commanded by the word of the LORD: You shall not eat food, or drink water, or return by the way that you came." <sup>10</sup> So he went another way, and did not return by the way that he had come to Bethel.

<sup>11</sup> Now there lived an old prophet in Bethel. One of his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words also that he had spoken to the king, they told to their father. <sup>12</sup> Their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" And his sons showed him the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone. <sup>13</sup> Then he said to his sons, "Saddle a donkey for me." So they saddled a donkey for him, and he mounted it. <sup>14</sup> He went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak

tree. He said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" He answered, "I am."<sup>15</sup> Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat some food."<sup>16</sup> But he said, "I cannot return with you, or go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water with you in this place;<sup>17</sup> for it was said to me by the word of the LORD: You shall not eat food or drink water there, or return by the way that you came."<sup>18</sup> Then the other said to him, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD: Bring him back with you into your house so that he may eat food and drink water." But he was deceiving him.<sup>19</sup> Then the man of God went back with him, and ate food and drank water in his house.

<sup>20</sup> As they were sitting at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back;<sup>21</sup> and he proclaimed to the man of God who came from Judah, "Thus says the LORD: Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment that the

LORD your God commanded you,<sup>22</sup> but have come back and have eaten food and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, 'Eat no food, and drink no water,' your body shall not come to your ancestral tomb."<sup>23</sup> After the man of God had eaten food and had drunk, they saddled for him a donkey belonging to the prophet who had brought him back.<sup>24</sup> Then as he went away, a lion met him on the road and killed him. His body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body.<sup>25</sup> People passed by and saw the body thrown in the road, with the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the town where the old prophet lived.

<sup>26</sup> When the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, "It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the LORD; therefore the LORD has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him according to the word that the LORD spoke to him."<sup>27</sup> Then he

said to his sons, "Saddle a donkey for me." So they saddled one,<sup>28</sup> and he went and found the body thrown in the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or attacked the donkey.<sup>29</sup> The prophet took up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to the city, to mourn and to bury him.<sup>30</sup> He laid the body in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!"<sup>31</sup> After he had buried him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones."<sup>32</sup> For the saying that he proclaimed by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.<sup>33</sup> Even after this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people; any who wanted to be priests he consecrated for the high

places.<sup>34</sup> This matter became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

### **Acts 10:1-8 (NRSV)**

#### *Peter and Cornelius*

In Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Cohort, as it was called.<sup>2</sup> He was a devout man who feared God with all his household; he gave alms generously to the people and prayed constantly to God.<sup>3</sup> One afternoon at about three o'clock he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius."<sup>4</sup> He stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" He answered, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God."<sup>5</sup> Now send men to Joppa for a certain Simon who is called Peter;<sup>6</sup> he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside."<sup>7</sup> When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his slaves and a devout soldier from the ranks of those who served

him, <sup>8</sup> and after telling them everything, he sent them to Joppa.

**Psalms 132:13-18** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> For the LORD has chosen  
Zion;  
he has desired it for his  
habitation:  
<sup>14</sup> “This is my resting place  
forever;  
here I will reside, for I  
have desired it.  
<sup>15</sup> I will abundantly bless its  
provisions;  
I will satisfy its poor with  
bread.  
<sup>16</sup> Its priests I will clothe with  
salvation,  
and its faithful will shout  
for joy.  
<sup>17</sup> There I will cause a horn to  
sprout up for David;  
I have prepared a lamp  
for my anointed one.  
<sup>18</sup> His enemies I will clothe  
with disgrace,  
but on him, his crown  
will gleam.”

**Proverbs 28:15-16** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> Like a roaring lion or a  
charging bear  
is a wicked ruler over a  
poor people.

<sup>16</sup> A ruler who lacks  
understanding is a  
cruel oppressor;  
but one who hates  
unjust gain will enjoy a  
long life.

**November  
27**



**1 Kings 14:1-31** (NRSV)

*Judgment on the  
House of Jeroboam*

At that time Abijah son of Jeroboam fell sick. <sup>2</sup> Jeroboam said to his wife, “Go, disguise yourself, so that it will not be known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; for the prophet Ahijah is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people. <sup>3</sup> Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what shall happen to the child.”

<sup>4</sup> Jeroboam’s wife did so; she set out and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of



Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age. <sup>5</sup> But the LORD said to Ahijah, “The wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son; for he is sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her.”

When she came, she pretended to be another woman. <sup>6</sup> But when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he said, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam; why do you pretend to be another? For I am charged with heavy tidings for you. <sup>7</sup> Go, tell Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Because I exalted you from among the people, made you leader over my people Israel, <sup>8</sup> and tore the kingdom away from the house of David to give it to you; yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my sight, <sup>9</sup> but you have done evil above all those who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods, and cast images, provoking me

to anger, and have thrust me behind your back; <sup>10</sup> therefore, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will consume the house of Jeroboam, just as one burns up dung until it is all gone.

<sup>11</sup> Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the open country, the birds of the air shall eat; for the LORD has spoken.’

<sup>12</sup> Therefore set out, go to your house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die.

<sup>13</sup> All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him; for he alone of Jeroboam’s family shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. <sup>14</sup> Moreover the LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam today, even right now!

<sup>15</sup> “The LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; he will root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their

ancestors, and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their sacred poles, provoking the LORD to anger. <sup>16</sup> He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he sinned and which he caused Israel to commit.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Jeroboam’s wife got up and went away, and she came to Tirzah. As she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. <sup>18</sup> All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant the prophet Ahijah.

#### *Death of Jeroboam*

<sup>19</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he reigned, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

<sup>20</sup> The time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years; then he slept with his ancestors, and his son Nadab succeeded him.

#### *Rehoboam Reigns over Judah* (2 Chr 11:5–12:16)

<sup>21</sup> Now Rehoboam son of Solomon reigned in Judah.

Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonite.

<sup>22</sup> Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their ancestors had done. <sup>23</sup> For they also built for themselves high places, pillars, and sacred poles on every high hill and under every green tree; <sup>24</sup> there were also male temple prostitutes in the land. <sup>m</sup> They committed all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.

<sup>25</sup> In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; <sup>26</sup> he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s house; he took everything. He also took away

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<sup>m</sup> See *Leviticus 18, 19, & 20*

all the shields of gold that Solomon had made; <sup>27</sup> so King Rehoboam made shields of bronze instead, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house. <sup>28</sup> As often as the king went into the house of the LORD, the guard carried them and brought them back to the guardroom.

<sup>29</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? <sup>30</sup> There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

<sup>31</sup> Rehoboam slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. His son Abijam succeeded him.

### **Acts 10:9-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. <sup>10</sup> He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. <sup>11</sup> He saw

the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. <sup>12</sup> In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air.

<sup>13</sup> Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." <sup>14</sup> But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." <sup>15</sup> The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane."

<sup>16</sup> This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.

<sup>17</sup> Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon's house and were standing by the gate.

<sup>18</sup> They called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was staying there. <sup>19</sup> While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Look, three men are searching for you.

<sup>20</sup> Now get up, go down, and go with them without

hesitation; for I have sent them.”<sup>21</sup> So Peter went down to the men and said, “I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming?”<sup>22</sup> They answered, “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.”<sup>23</sup> So Peter invited them in and gave them lodging.

The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the believers from Joppa accompanied him.

### **Psalm 133:1-2** (NRSV)

#### *The Blessedness of Unity*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!
- <sup>2</sup> It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

### **Proverbs 28:17–18** (NRSV)

- <sup>17</sup> If someone is burdened with the blood of another, let that killer be a fugitive until death; let no one offer assistance.
- <sup>18</sup> One who walks in integrity will be safe, but whoever follows crooked ways will fall into the Pit.

## **November 28**



### **1 Kings 15:1-24** (NRSV)

#### *Abijam Reigns over Judah: Idolatry and War* (2 Chr 13:1–14:1)

Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah.<sup>2</sup> He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom.<sup>3</sup> He committed all the sins that his father did before him; his

heart was not true to the LORD his God, like the heart of his father David. <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem; <sup>5</sup> because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. <sup>6</sup> The war begun between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued all the days of his life. <sup>7</sup> The rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. <sup>8</sup> Abijam slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David. Then his son Asa succeeded him.

*Asa Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 14:1–15:19)

<sup>9</sup> In the twentieth year of King Jeroboam of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah; <sup>10</sup> he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name

was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. <sup>11</sup> Asa did what was right in the sight of the LORD, as his father David had done. <sup>12</sup> He put away the male temple prostitutes out of the land, and removed all the idols that his ancestors had made. <sup>13</sup> He also removed his mother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made an abominable image for Asherah; Asa cut down her image and burned it at the Wadi Kidron. <sup>14</sup> But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was true to the LORD all his days. <sup>15</sup> He brought into the house of the LORD the votive gifts of his father and his own votive gifts—silver, gold, and utensils.

*Alliance with Aram  
against Israel*  
(2 Chr 16:1–17:1)

<sup>16</sup> There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days. <sup>17</sup> King Baasha of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to King Asa of Judah. <sup>18</sup> Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were

left in the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and gave them into the hands of his servants. King Asa sent them to King Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion of Aram, who resided in Damascus, saying,<sup>19</sup> "Let there be an alliance between me and you, like that between my father and your father: I am sending you a present of silver and gold; go, break your alliance with King Baasha of Israel, so that he may withdraw from me."<sup>20</sup> Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. He conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.<sup>21</sup> When Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and lived in Tirzah.<sup>22</sup> Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah, none was exempt: they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building; with them King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.<sup>23</sup> Now the rest of all the acts of Asa,

all his power, all that he did, and the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was diseased in his feet.<sup>24</sup> Then Asa slept with his ancestors, and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his father David; his son Jehoshaphat succeeded him.

**Acts 10:24-33** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> The following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.<sup>25</sup> On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshiped him.<sup>26</sup> But Peter made him get up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal."<sup>27</sup> And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled;<sup>28</sup> and he said to them, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.<sup>29</sup> So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now

may I ask why you sent for me?"

<sup>30</sup> Cornelius replied, "Four days ago at this very hour, at three o'clock, I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling clothes stood before me. <sup>31</sup> He said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. <sup>32</sup> Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is called Peter; he is staying in the home of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.'

<sup>33</sup> Therefore I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say."

**Psalms 133:3** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion.  
For there the LORD  
ordained his blessing,  
life forevermore.

**Proverbs 28:19–20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread,  
but one who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.  
<sup>20</sup> The faithful will abound with blessings,  
but one who is in a hurry to be rich will not go unpunished.

**November 29**



**1 Kings 15:25 – 16:28** (NRSV)

*Nadab Reigns over Israel*  
<sup>25</sup> Nadab son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of King Asa of Judah; he reigned over Israel two years. <sup>26</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of his ancestor and in the sin that he caused Israel to commit.  
<sup>27</sup> Baasha son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and

Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.<sup>28</sup> So Baasha killed Nadab in the third year of King Asa of Judah, and succeeded him.<sup>29</sup> As soon as he was king, he killed all the house of Jeroboam; he left to the house of Jeroboam not one that breathed, until he had destroyed it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite—<sup>30</sup> because of the sins of Jeroboam that he committed and that he caused Israel to commit, and because of the anger to which he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel.

<sup>31</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?<sup>32</sup> There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days.

*Second Dynasty: Baasha  
Reigns over Israel*

<sup>33</sup> In the third year of King Asa of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah began to reign over all

Israel at Tirzah; he reigned twenty-four years.<sup>34</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sin that he caused Israel to commit.

**16** The word of the LORD came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,<sup>2</sup> “Since I exalted you out of the dust and made you leader over my people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam, and have caused my people Israel to sin, provoking me to anger with their sins,<sup>3</sup> therefore, I will consume Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat.

<sup>4</sup> Anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the air shall eat.”

<sup>5</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, what he did, and his power, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

<sup>6</sup> Baasha slept with his ancestors, and was buried at Tirzah; and his son Elah



succeeded him. <sup>7</sup> Moreover the word of the LORD came by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it.

*Elah Reigns over Israel*

<sup>8</sup> In the twenty-sixth year of King Asa of Judah, Elah son of Baasha began to reign over Israel in Tirzah; he reigned two years. <sup>9</sup> But his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. When he was at Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was in charge of the palace at Tirzah, <sup>10</sup> Zimri came in and struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, and succeeded him.

<sup>11</sup> When he began to reign, as soon as he had seated himself on his throne, he killed all the house of Baasha; he did not leave him a single male of his kindred or his friends.

<sup>12</sup> Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke against Baasha by the prophet Jehu— <sup>13</sup> because of all the sins of Baasha and the sins of his son Elah that they committed, and that they caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols. <sup>14</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

*Third Dynasty: Zimri Reigns over Israel*

<sup>15</sup> In the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah. Now the troops were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, <sup>16</sup> and the troops who were encamped heard it said, “Zimri has conspired, and he has killed the king”; therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. <sup>17</sup> So Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah.

<sup>18</sup> When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house; he burned down the king's house over himself with fire, and died—<sup>19</sup> because of the sins that he committed, doing evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and for the sin that he committed, causing Israel to sin. <sup>20</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the conspiracy that he made, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

*Fourth Dynasty:*

*Omri Reigns over Israel*

<sup>21</sup> Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts; half of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. <sup>22</sup> But the people who followed Omri overcame the people who followed Tibni son of Ginath; so Tibni died, and Omri became king. <sup>23</sup> In the thirty-first year of King Asa of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel; he reigned for twelve years, six of them in Tirzah.

*Samaria the New Capital*

<sup>24</sup> He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; he fortified the hill, and called the city that he built, Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

<sup>25</sup> Omri did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did more evil than all who were before him. <sup>26</sup> For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and in the sins that he caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger by their idols.

<sup>27</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Omri that he did, and the power that he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? <sup>28</sup> Omri slept with his ancestors, and was buried in Samaria; his son Ahab succeeded him.

**Acts 10:34-48** (NRSV)

*Gentiles Hear the Good News*

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is

acceptable to him.<sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all.<sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced:<sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.<sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree;<sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear,<sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.<sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead.<sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

### *Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit*

<sup>44</sup> While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word.<sup>45</sup> The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles,<sup>46</sup> for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said,<sup>47</sup> “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?”<sup>48</sup> So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

### **Psalm 134:1 – 135:4** (NRSV)

#### *Praise in the Night*

A Song of Ascents.

- 1 Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who stand by night in the house of the LORD!
- 2 Lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the LORD.
- 3 May the LORD, maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion.

**Psalm 135 (NRSV)**

*Praise for God's  
Goodness and Might*

- 1 Praise the LORD!  
Praise the name of the  
LORD;  
give praise, O servants of  
the LORD,  
2 you that stand in the  
house of the LORD,  
in the courts of the  
house of our God.  
3 Praise the LORD, for the  
LORD is good;  
sing to his name, for he  
is gracious.  
4 For the LORD has chosen  
Jacob for himself,  
Israel as his own  
possession.

**Proverbs 28:21–22 (NRSV)**

- 21 To show partiality is not  
good—  
yet for a piece of bread a  
person may do wrong.  
22 The miser is in a hurry to  
get rich  
and does not know that  
loss is sure to come.

**November  
30**



**1 Kings 16:29 – 17:24 (NRSV)**

*Ahab Reigns over Israel*  
<sup>29</sup> In the thirty-eighth year  
of King Asa of Judah, Ahab son  
of Omri began to reign over  
Israel; Ahab son of Omri  
reigned over Israel in Samaria  
twenty-two years. <sup>30</sup> Ahab son  
of Omri did evil in the sight of  
the LORD more than all who  
were before him.

*Ahab Marries Jezebel and  
Worships Baal*

<sup>31</sup> And as if it had been a  
light thing for him to walk in  
the sins of Jeroboam son of  
Nebat, he took as his wife  
Jezebel daughter of King  
Ethbaal of the Sidonians, and  
went and served Baal, and  
worshiped him. <sup>32</sup> He erected  
an altar for Baal in the house  
of Baal, which he built in  
Samaria. <sup>33</sup> Ahab also made a  
sacred pole. Ahab did more to  
provoke the anger of the LORD,  
the God of Israel, than had all  
the kings of Israel who were  
before him. <sup>34</sup> In his days Hiel  
of Bethel built Jericho; he laid

its foundation at the cost of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun.

### *Elijah Predicts a Drought*

**17** Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”<sup>2</sup> The word of the LORD came to him, saying,<sup>3</sup> “Go from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.<sup>4</sup> You shall drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.”<sup>5</sup> So he went and did according to the word of the LORD; he went and lived by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.<sup>6</sup> The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the wadi.<sup>7</sup> But after a while the wadi dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

### *The Widow of Zarephath*

<sup>8</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying,<sup>9</sup> “Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.”<sup>10</sup> So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.”<sup>11</sup> As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.”<sup>12</sup> But she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.”<sup>13</sup> Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son.”<sup>14</sup> For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail

until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth.”

<sup>15</sup> She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. <sup>16</sup> The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

### *Elijah Revives the Widow's Son*

<sup>17</sup> After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. <sup>18</sup> She then said to Elijah, “What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to cause the death of my son!” <sup>19</sup> But he said to her, “Give me your son.” He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. <sup>20</sup> He cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?” <sup>21</sup> Then he stretched himself upon the child three times,

and cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again.”

<sup>22</sup> The LORD listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. <sup>23</sup> Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, “See, your son is alive.” <sup>24</sup> So the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth.”

### **Acts 11:1-18 (NRSV)**

#### *Peter's Report to the Church at Jerusalem*

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, <sup>3</sup> saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?” <sup>4</sup> Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, <sup>5</sup> “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a

large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. <sup>6</sup> As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup> I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘**Get up, Peter; kill and eat.**’ <sup>8</sup> But I replied, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ <sup>9</sup> But a second time the voice answered from heaven, ‘**What God has made clean, you must not call profane.**’ <sup>10</sup> This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. <sup>11</sup> At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. <sup>12</sup> The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup> He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup> he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be

saved.’ <sup>15</sup> And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, ‘**John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**’ <sup>17</sup> If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?” <sup>18</sup> When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

**Psalm 135:5-12 (NRSV)**

- <sup>5</sup> For I know that the LORD is great;  
our Lord is above all gods.
- <sup>6</sup> Whatever the LORD pleases he does,  
in heaven and on earth,  
in the seas and all deeps.
- <sup>7</sup> He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth;  
he makes lightnings for the rain

and brings out the wind  
from his storehouses.

<sup>8</sup> He it was who struck down  
the firstborn of Egypt,  
both human beings and  
animals;

<sup>9</sup> he sent signs and wonders  
into your midst, O Egypt,  
against Pharaoh and all  
his servants.

<sup>10</sup> He struck down many  
nations  
and killed mighty kings—

<sup>11</sup> Sihon, king of the  
Amorites,  
and Og, king of Bashan,  
and all the kingdoms of  
Canaan—

<sup>12</sup> and gave their land as a  
heritage,  
a heritage to his people  
Israel.

### **Proverbs 28:23–24 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> Whoever rebukes a person  
will afterward find  
more favor  
than one who flatters  
with the tongue.

<sup>24</sup> Anyone who robs father or  
mother  
and says, “That is no  
crime,”  
is partner to a thug.

## **December 1**



### **1 Kings 18:1-19 (NRSV)**

#### *Elijah's Message to Ahab*

After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year of the drought, saying, “Go, present yourself to Ahab; I will send rain on the earth.” <sup>2</sup> So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. The famine was severe in Samaria. <sup>3</sup> Ahab summoned Obadiah, who was in charge of the palace. (Now Obadiah revered the LORD greatly; <sup>4</sup> when Jezebel was killing off the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets, hid them fifty to a cave, and provided them with bread and water.) <sup>5</sup> Then Ahab said to Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the wadis; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, and not lose some of the animals.” <sup>6</sup> So they divided the land between them to pass through it; Ahab went in one direction by himself, and Obadiah went



in another direction by himself.

<sup>7</sup> As Obadiah was on the way, Elijah met him; Obadiah recognized him, fell on his face, and said, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?" <sup>8</sup> He answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your lord that Elijah is here." <sup>9</sup> And he said, "How have I sinned, that you would hand your servant over to Ahab, to kill me?" <sup>10</sup> As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom to which my lord has not sent to seek you; and when they would say, 'He is not here,' he would require an oath of the kingdom or nation, that they had not found you. <sup>11</sup> But now you say, 'Go, tell your lord that Elijah is here.' <sup>12</sup> As soon as I have gone from you, the spirit of the LORD will carry you I know not where; so, when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have revered the LORD from my youth. <sup>13</sup> Has it not been told my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred of the LORD's prophets fifty to a cave, and provided them

with bread and water?" <sup>14</sup> Yet now you say, 'Go, tell your lord that Elijah is here'; he will surely kill me." <sup>15</sup> Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today." <sup>16</sup> So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

<sup>17</sup> When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" <sup>18</sup> He answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father's house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals. <sup>19</sup> Now therefore have all Israel assemble for me at Mount Carmel, with the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

**Acts 11:19-30** (NRSV)

*The Church in Antioch*

<sup>19</sup> Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the

word to no one except Jews.

<sup>20</sup> But among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus.

<sup>21</sup> The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord. <sup>22</sup> News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

<sup>23</sup> When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion; <sup>24</sup> for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were brought to the Lord. <sup>25</sup> Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, <sup>26</sup> and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for an entire year they met with the church and taught a great many people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called "Christians."

<sup>27</sup> At that time prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. <sup>28</sup> One of them named Agabus stood up and

predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine over all the world; and this took place during the reign of Claudius. <sup>29</sup> The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea; <sup>30</sup> this they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

**Psalm 135:13-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> Your name, O LORD,  
endures forever,  
your renown, O LORD,  
throughout all ages.

<sup>14</sup> For the LORD will vindicate  
his people,  
and have compassion on  
his servants.

<sup>15</sup> The idols of the nations are  
silver and gold,  
the work of human  
hands.

<sup>16</sup> They have mouths, but  
they do not speak;  
they have eyes, but they  
do not see;

<sup>17</sup> they have ears, but they  
do not hear,  
and there is no breath in  
their mouths.

<sup>18</sup> Those who make them  
and all who trust them

shall become like them.  
<sup>19</sup> O house of Israel, bless the  
 LORD!  
 O house of Aaron, bless  
 the LORD!  
<sup>20</sup> O house of Levi, bless the  
 LORD!  
 You that fear the LORD,  
 bless the LORD!  
<sup>21</sup> Blessed be the LORD from  
 Zion,  
 he who resides in  
 Jerusalem.  
 Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 28:25–26 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> The greedy person stirs up  
 strife,  
 but whoever trusts in the  
 LORD will be enriched.  
<sup>26</sup> Those who trust in their  
 own wits are fools;  
 but those who walk in  
 wisdom come through  
 safely.

**December  
 2**



**1 Kings 18:20-46 (NRSV)**

*Elijah's Triumph over the  
 Priests of Baal*

<sup>20</sup> So Ahab sent to all the  
 Israelites, and assembled the  
 prophets at Mount Carmel.  
<sup>21</sup> Elijah then came near to all  
 the people, and said, "How  
 long will you go limping with  
 two different opinions? If the  
 LORD is God, follow him; but if  
 Baal, then follow him." The  
 people did not answer him a  
 word. <sup>22</sup> Then Elijah said to the  
 people, "I, even I only, am left  
 a prophet of the LORD; but  
 Baal's prophets number four  
 hundred fifty. <sup>23</sup> Let two bulls  
 be given to us; let them  
 choose one bull for  
 themselves, cut it in pieces,  
 and lay it on the wood, but put  
 no fire to it; I will prepare the  
 other bull and lay it on the  
 wood, but put no fire to it.  
<sup>24</sup> Then you call on the name  
 of your god and I will call on  
 the name of the LORD; the god  
 who answers by fire is indeed  
 God." All the people  
 answered, "Well spoken!"

<sup>25</sup> Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many; then call on the name of your god, but put no fire to it." <sup>26</sup> So they took the bull that was given them, prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, crying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no answer. They limped about the altar that they had made.

<sup>27</sup> At noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud! Surely he is a god; either he is meditating, or he has wandered away, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." <sup>28</sup> Then they cried aloud and, as was their custom, they cut themselves with swords and lances until the blood gushed out over them. <sup>29</sup> As midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice, no answer, and no response.

<sup>30</sup> Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come closer to me"; and all the people came closer to him. First he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been

thrown down; <sup>31</sup> Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD came, saying, "Israel shall be your name"; <sup>32</sup> with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD. Then he made a trench around the altar, large enough to contain two measures of seed. <sup>33</sup> Next he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." <sup>34</sup> Then he said, "Do it a second time"; and they did it a second time. Again he said, "Do it a third time"; and they did it a third time, <sup>35</sup> so that the water ran all around the altar, and filled the trench also with water.

<sup>36</sup> At the time of the offering of the oblation, the prophet Elijah came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your bidding. <sup>37</sup> Answer me, O LORD,

answer me, so that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back.”

<sup>38</sup> Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and even licked up the water that was in the trench. <sup>39</sup> When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, “The LORD indeed is God; the LORD indeed is God.” <sup>40</sup> Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape.” Then they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Wadi Kishon, and killed them there.

#### *The Drought Ends*

<sup>41</sup> Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of rushing rain.” <sup>42</sup> So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; there he bowed himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees. <sup>43</sup> He said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” He went up and looked, and said, “There is nothing.” Then he said, “Go

again seven times.” <sup>44</sup> At the seventh time he said, “Look, a little cloud no bigger than a person’s hand is rising out of the sea.” Then he said, “Go say to Ahab, ‘Harness your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’ ” <sup>45</sup> In a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind; there was a heavy rain. Ahab rode off and went to Jezreel. <sup>46</sup> But the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; he girded up his loins and ran in front of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

#### **Acts 12:1-19** (NRSV)

##### *James Killed and Peter Imprisoned*

About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. <sup>2</sup> He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. <sup>3</sup> After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) <sup>4</sup> When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after

the Passover. <sup>5</sup> While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.

*Peter Delivered from Prison*

<sup>6</sup> The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison.

<sup>7</sup> Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his wrists. <sup>8</sup> The angel said to him, "Fasten your belt and put on your sandals." He did so. Then he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." <sup>9</sup> Peter went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening with the angel's help was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. <sup>10</sup> After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked

along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him. <sup>11</sup> Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

<sup>12</sup> As soon as he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many had gathered and were praying. <sup>13</sup> When he knocked at the outer gate, a maid named Rhoda came to answer. <sup>14</sup> On recognizing Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed that, instead of opening the gate, she ran in and announced that Peter was standing at the gate. <sup>15</sup> They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel." <sup>16</sup> Meanwhile Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the gate, they saw him and were amazed.


<sup>17</sup> He motioned to them with his hand to be silent, and described for them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he added,

“Tell this to James and to the believers.” Then he left and went to another place.

<sup>18</sup> When morning came, there was no small commotion among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. <sup>19</sup> When Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he examined the guards and ordered them to be put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

**Psalm 136:1-12 (NRSV)**

*God's Work in Creation  
and in History*



<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> O give thanks to the God  
of gods,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

<sup>3</sup> O give thanks to the Lord  
of lords,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>4</sup> who alone does great  
wonders,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>5</sup> who by understanding  
made the heavens,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>6</sup> who spread out the earth  
on the waters,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>7</sup> who made the great lights,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>8</sup> the sun to rule over the  
day,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>9</sup> the moon and stars to rule  
over the night,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>10</sup> who struck Egypt through  
their firstborn,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>11</sup> and brought Israel out  
from among them,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>12</sup> with a strong hand and an  
outstretched arm,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

**Proverbs 28:27-28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> Whoever gives to the poor  
will lack nothing,

but one who turns a  
blind eye will get many  
a curse.

<sup>28</sup> When the wicked prevail,  
people go into hiding;  
but when they perish,  
the righteous increase.

## December 3



**1 Kings 19:1-14** (NRSV)

### *Elijah Flees from Jezebel*

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup> Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." <sup>3</sup> Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

<sup>4</sup> But he himself went a day's journey into the

wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." <sup>5</sup> Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." <sup>6</sup> He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again.

<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you." <sup>8</sup> He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. <sup>9</sup> At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

<sup>10</sup> He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and



killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.”

*Elijah Meets God at Horeb*

<sup>11</sup> He said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.” Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; <sup>12</sup> and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. <sup>13</sup> When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” <sup>14</sup> He answered, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and

they are seeking my life, to take it away.”

**Acts 12:20-23** (NRSV)

*The Death of Herod*

<sup>20</sup> Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. So they came to him in a body; and after winning over Blastus, the king’s chamberlain, they asked for a reconciliation, because their country depended on the king’s country for food. <sup>21</sup> On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat on the platform, and delivered a public address to them. <sup>22</sup> The people kept shouting, “The voice of a god, and not of a mortal!” <sup>23</sup> And immediately, because he had not given the glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

**Psalm 136:13-26** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> who divided the Red Sea in two,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
<sup>14</sup> and made Israel pass through the midst of it,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
15 but overthrew Pharaoh  
and his army in the Red  
Sea,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
16 who led his people  
through the  
wilderness,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
17 who struck down great  
kings,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
18 and killed famous kings,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
19 Sihon, king of the  
Amorites,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
20 and Og, king of Bashan,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
21 and gave their land as a  
heritage,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
22 a heritage to his servant  
Israel,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

23 It is he who remembered  
us in our low estate,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
24 and rescued us from our  
foes,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
25 who gives food to all flesh,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.  
26 O give thanks to the God  
of heaven,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

**Proverbs 29:1 (NRSV)**

1 One who is often  
reproved, yet remains  
stubborn,  
will suddenly be broken  
beyond healing.

## December 4



**1 Kings 19:15 – 20:15 (NRSV)**

15 Then the LORD said to  
him, “Go, return on your way  
to the wilderness of

Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram.<sup>16</sup> Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place.<sup>17</sup> Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill.<sup>18</sup> Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

*Elisha Becomes  
Elijah's Disciple*

<sup>19</sup> So he set out from there, and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing. There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle over him.<sup>20</sup> He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” Then Elijah said to him, “Go back again; for what have I done to you?”<sup>21</sup> He returned from following him, took the

yoke of oxen, and slaughtered them; using the equipment from the oxen, he boiled their flesh, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

*Ahab's Wars with the  
Arameans*

**20** King Ben-hadad of Aram gathered all his army together; thirty-two kings were with him, along with horses and chariots. He marched against Samaria, laid siege to it, and attacked it.<sup>2</sup> Then he sent messengers into the city to King Ahab of Israel, and said to him: “Thus says Ben-hadad:<sup>3</sup> Your silver and gold are mine; your fairest wives and children also are mine.”<sup>4</sup> The king of Israel answered, “As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have.”<sup>5</sup> The messengers came again and said: “Thus says Ben-hadad: I sent to you, saying, ‘Deliver to me your silver and gold, your wives and children’;<sup>6</sup> nevertheless I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the

houses of your servants, and lay hands on whatever pleases them, and take it away.”

<sup>7</sup> Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, “Look now! See how this man is seeking trouble; for he sent to me for my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold; and I did not refuse him.” <sup>8</sup> Then all the elders and all the people said to him, “Do not listen or consent.” <sup>9</sup> So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, “Tell my lord the king: All that you first demanded of your servant I will do; but this thing I cannot do.” The messengers left and brought him word again. <sup>10</sup> Ben-hadad sent to him and said, “The gods do so to me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria will provide a handful for each of the people who follow me.” <sup>11</sup> The king of Israel answered, “Tell him: One who puts on armor should not brag like one who takes it off.” <sup>12</sup> When Ben-hadad heard this message—now he had been drinking with the kings in the booths—he said to his men, “Take your

positions!” And they took their positions against the city.

*Prophetic Opposition to Ahab*

<sup>13</sup> Then a certain prophet came up to King Ahab of Israel and said, “Thus says the LORD, Have you seen all this great multitude? Look, I will give it into your hand today; and you shall know that I am the LORD.”

<sup>14</sup> Ahab said, “By whom?” He said, “Thus says the LORD, By the young men who serve the district governors.” Then he said, “Who shall begin the battle?” He answered, “You.”

<sup>15</sup> Then he mustered the young men who served the district governors, two hundred thirty-two; after them he mustered all the people of Israel, seven thousand.

**Acts 12:24 – 13:12** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> But the word of God continued to advance and gain adherents. <sup>25</sup> Then after completing their mission Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark.

*Barnabas and Saul  
Commissioned*

**13** Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. <sup>2</sup> While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” <sup>3</sup> Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

*The Apostles Preach in Cyprus*

<sup>4</sup> So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus. <sup>5</sup> When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John also to assist them. <sup>6</sup> When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus. <sup>7</sup> He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who

summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. <sup>8</sup> But the magician Elymas (for that is the translation of his name) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. <sup>9</sup> But Saul, also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him <sup>10</sup> and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? <sup>11</sup> And now listen—the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun.” Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand. <sup>12</sup> When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

**Psalm 137:1-4** (NRSV)

*Lament over the Destruction of  
Jerusalem*

<sup>1</sup> By the rivers of Babylon—  
there we sat down and  
there we wept

when we remembered  
Zion.

- <sup>2</sup> On the willows there  
we hung up our harps.  
<sup>3</sup> For there our captors  
asked us for songs,  
and our tormentors asked  
for mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs  
of Zion!”  
<sup>4</sup> How could we sing the  
LORD’S song  
in a foreign land?

**Proverbs 29:2–4 (NRSV)**

- <sup>2</sup> When the righteous are in  
authority, the people  
rejoice;  
but when the wicked  
rule, the people groan.  
<sup>3</sup> A child who loves wisdom  
makes a parent glad,  
but to keep company  
with prostitutes is to  
squander one’s  
substance.  
<sup>4</sup> By justice a king gives  
stability to the land,  
but one who makes  
heavy exactions ruins  
it.

**December**  
**5**



**1 Kings 20:16-43 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> They went out at noon,  
while Ben-hadad was drinking  
himself drunk in the booths,  
he and the thirty-two kings  
allied with him. <sup>17</sup> The young  
men who served the district  
governors went out first. Ben-  
hadad had sent out scouts,  
and they reported to him,  
“Men have come out from  
Samaria.” <sup>18</sup> He said, “If they  
have come out for peace, take  
them alive; if they have come  
out for war, take them alive.”  
<sup>19</sup> But these had already  
come out of the city: the  
young men who served the  
district governors, and the  
army that followed them.  
<sup>20</sup> Each killed his man; the  
Arameans fled and Israel  
pursued them, but King Ben-  
hadad of Aram escaped on a  
horse with the cavalry. <sup>21</sup> The  
king of Israel went out,  
attacked the horses and  
chariots, and defeated the  
Arameans with a great  
slaughter.

<sup>22</sup> Then the prophet approached the king of Israel and said to him, "Come, strengthen yourself, and consider well what you have to do; for in the spring the king of Aram will come up against you."

*The Arameans Are Defeated*

<sup>23</sup> The servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their gods are gods of the hills, and so they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they."

<sup>24</sup> Also do this: remove the kings, each from his post, and put commanders in place of them; <sup>25</sup> and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot; then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." He heeded their voice, and did so.

<sup>26</sup> In the spring Ben-hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. <sup>27</sup> After the Israelites had been mustered and provisioned, they went out to engage them; the

people of Israel encamped opposite them like two little flocks of goats, while the Arameans filled the country.

<sup>28</sup> A man of God approached and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the LORD: Because the Arameans have said, 'The LORD is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys,' therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD." <sup>29</sup> They encamped opposite one another seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle began; the Israelites killed one hundred thousand Aramean foot soldiers in one day. <sup>30</sup> The rest fled into the city of Aphek; and the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand men that were left.

Ben-hadad also fled, and entered the city to hide. <sup>31</sup> His servants said to him, "Look, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life." <sup>32</sup> So they tied sackcloth

around their waists, put ropes on their heads, went to the king of Israel, and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please let me live.'" And he said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother."<sup>33</sup> Now the men were watching for an omen; they quickly took it up from him and said, "Yes, Ben-hadad is your brother." Then he said, "Go and bring him." So Ben-hadad came out to him; and he had him come up into the chariot.<sup>34</sup> Ben-hadad said to him, "I will restore the towns that my father took from your father; and you may establish bazaars for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." The king of Israel responded, "I will let you go on those terms." So he made a treaty with him and let him go.

#### *A Prophet Condemns Ahab*

<sup>35</sup> At the command of the LORD a certain member of a company of prophets said to another, "Strike me!" But the man refused to strike him.<sup>36</sup> Then he said to him, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, as soon as you have left me, a lion will

kill you." And when he had left him, a lion met him and killed him.<sup>37</sup> Then he found another man and said, "Strike me!" So the man hit him, striking and wounding him.<sup>38</sup> Then the prophet departed, and waited for the king along the road, disguising himself with a bandage over his eyes.<sup>39</sup> As the king passed by, he cried to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the thick of the battle; then a soldier turned and brought a man to me, and said, 'Guard this man; if he is missing, your life shall be given for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.'<sup>40</sup> While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone." The king of Israel said to him, "So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided it."<sup>41</sup> Then he quickly took the bandage away from his eyes. The king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets.<sup>42</sup> Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because you have let the man go whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall be for his life, and your people for his people.'" <sup>43</sup> The king of Israel



set out toward home,  
resentful and sullen, and came  
to Samaria.

**Acts 13:13-15** (NRSV)

*Paul and Barnabas in  
Antioch of Pisidia*

<sup>13</sup> Then Paul and his  
companions set sail from  
Paphos and came to Perga in  
Pamphylia. John, however, left  
them and returned to  
Jerusalem; <sup>14</sup> but they went on  
from Perga and came to  
Antioch in Pisidia. And on the  
sabbath day they went into  
the synagogue and sat down.  
<sup>15</sup> After the reading of the law  
and the prophets, the officials  
of the synagogue sent them a  
message, saying, “Brothers, if  
you have any word of  
exhortation for the people,  
give it.”

**Psalms 137:5-9** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> If I forget you, O  
Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither!  
<sup>6</sup> Let my tongue cling to the  
roof of my mouth,  
if I do not remember  
you,  
if I do not set Jerusalem  
above my highest joy.

<sup>7</sup> Remember, O LORD,  
against the Edomites  
the day of Jerusalem’s  
fall,  
how they said, “Tear it  
down! Tear it down!  
Down to its  
foundations!”

<sup>8</sup> O daughter Babylon, you  
devastator!  
Happy shall they be who  
pay you back  
what you have done to  
us!

<sup>9</sup> Happy shall they be who  
take your little ones  
and dash them against  
the rock!

**Proverbs 29:5–8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Whoever flatters a  
neighbor  
is spreading a net for the  
neighbor’s feet.

<sup>6</sup> In the transgression of the  
evil there is a snare,  
but the righteous sing  
and rejoice.

<sup>7</sup> The righteous know the  
rights of the poor;  
the wicked have no such  
understanding.

<sup>8</sup> Scoffers set a city aflame,  
but the wise turn away  
wrath.

# December

## 6



### 1 Kings 21:1-29 (NRSV)

#### *Naboth's Vineyard*

Later the following events took place: Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. <sup>2</sup> And Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, so that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money." <sup>3</sup> But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you my ancestral inheritance." <sup>4</sup> Ahab went home resentful and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him; for he had said, "I will not give you my ancestral inheritance." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and would not eat.

<sup>5</sup> His wife Jezebel came to him and said, "Why are you so depressed that you will not eat?" <sup>6</sup> He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth

the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard for it'; but he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' "

<sup>7</sup> His wife Jezebel said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Get up, eat some food, and be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

<sup>8</sup> So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal; she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived with Naboth in his city. <sup>9</sup> She wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth at the head of the assembly; <sup>10</sup> seat two scoundrels opposite him, and have them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death." <sup>11</sup> The men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. Just as it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, <sup>12</sup> they proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the assembly. <sup>13</sup> The

two scoundrels came in and sat opposite him; and the scoundrels brought a charge against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city, and stoned him to death. <sup>14</sup> Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead."

<sup>15</sup> As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Go, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

<sup>16</sup> As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab set out to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

*Elijah Pronounces  
God's Sentence*

<sup>17</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: <sup>18</sup> Go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who rules in Samaria; he is now in the vineyard of Naboth, where

he has gone to take possession. <sup>19</sup> You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: Have you killed, and also taken possession?" You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, dogs will also lick up your blood."

<sup>20</sup> Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He answered, "I have found you. Because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, <sup>21</sup> I will bring disaster on you; I will consume you, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel; <sup>22</sup> and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin. <sup>23</sup> Also concerning Jezebel the LORD said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the bounds of Jezreel.'

<sup>24</sup> Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the air shall eat."

<sup>25</sup> (Indeed, there was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD, urged on by his wife Jezebel. <sup>26</sup> He acted most abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the LORD drove out before the Israelites.)

<sup>27</sup> When Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth over his bare flesh; he fasted, lay in the sackcloth, and went about dejectedly. <sup>28</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: <sup>29</sup> "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but in his son's days I will bring the disaster on his house."

**Acts 13:16-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> So Paul stood up and with a gesture began to speak:

"You Israelites, and others who fear God, listen. <sup>17</sup> The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with

uplifted arm he led them out of it. <sup>18</sup> For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. <sup>19</sup> After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance <sup>20</sup> for about four hundred fifty years. After that he gave them judges until the time of the prophet Samuel. <sup>21</sup> Then they asked for a king; and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years.

<sup>22</sup> When he had removed him, he made David their king. In his testimony about him he said, 'I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes.' <sup>23</sup> Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised; <sup>24</sup> before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. <sup>25</sup> And as John was finishing his work, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but one is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of the sandals on his feet.'

**Psalm 138:1-6** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving and Praise*

Of David.

- 1 I give you thanks, O LORD,  
with my whole heart;  
before the gods I sing  
your praise;
- 2 I bow down toward your  
holy temple  
and give thanks to your  
name for your  
steadfast love and your  
faithfulness;  
for you have exalted  
your name and your  
word  
above everything.
- 3 On the day I called, you  
answered me,  
you increased my  
strength of soul.
- 4 All the kings of the earth  
shall praise you, O  
LORD,  
for they have heard the  
words of your mouth.
- 5 They shall sing of the ways  
of the LORD,  
for great is the glory of  
the LORD.
- 6 For though the LORD is  
high, he regards the  
lowly;  
but the haughty he  
perceives from far  
away.

**Proverbs 29:9–11** (NRSV)

- 9 If the wise go to law with  
fools,  
there is ranting and  
ridicule without relief.
- 10 The bloodthirsty hate the  
blameless,  
and they seek the life of  
the upright.
- 11 A fool gives full vent to  
anger,  
but the wise quietly  
holds it back.

**December**  
**7**



**1 Kings 22:1-28** (NRSV)

*Joint Campaign with Judah  
against Aram  
(2 Chr 18:1–11)*

- For three years Aram and  
Israel continued without war.
- 2 But in the third year King  
Jehoshaphat of Judah came  
down to the king of Israel.
- 3 The king of Israel said to his  
servants, “Do you know that  
Ramoth-gilead belongs to us,  
yet we are doing nothing to

take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?"<sup>4</sup> He said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am as you are; my people are your people, my horses are your horses."

<sup>5</sup> But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the LORD."

<sup>6</sup> Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred of them, and said to them, "Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?" They said, "Go up; for the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."<sup>7</sup> But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no other prophet of the LORD here of whom we may inquire?"

<sup>8</sup> The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one other by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies anything favorable about me, but only disaster."

Jehoshaphat said, "Let the king not say such a thing."

<sup>9</sup> Then the king of Israel

summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah."<sup>10</sup> Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.<sup>11</sup> Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are destroyed."<sup>12</sup> All the prophets were prophesying the same and saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

*Micaiah Predicts Failure*  
(2 Chr 18:12–27)

<sup>13</sup> The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably."<sup>14</sup> But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, whatever

the LORD says to me, that I will speak.”

<sup>15</sup> When he had come to the king, the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?” He answered him, “Go up and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king.”

<sup>16</sup> But the king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?” <sup>17</sup> Then Micaiah said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep that have no shepherd; and the LORD said, ‘These have no master; let each one go home in peace.’ ” <sup>18</sup> The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything favorable about me, but only disaster?”

<sup>19</sup> Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him to the right and to the left of him. <sup>20</sup> And the LORD said, ‘Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ Then one said

one thing, and another said another, <sup>21</sup> until a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ <sup>22</sup> ‘How?’ the LORD asked him. He replied, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then the LORD said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.’ <sup>23</sup> So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the LORD has decreed disaster for you.”

<sup>24</sup> Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up to Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?”

<sup>25</sup> Micaiah replied, “You will find out on that day when you go in to hide in an inner chamber.” <sup>26</sup> The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son, <sup>27</sup> and say, ‘Thus says the king: Put this fellow in prison, and feed him on reduced rations of bread and water until I come in peace.’ ” <sup>28</sup> Micaiah said, “If you return in peace, the LORD

has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Hear, you peoples, all of you!”

**Acts 13:26-37 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> “My brothers, you descendants of Abraham’s family, and others who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

<sup>27</sup> Because the residents of Jerusalem and their leaders did not recognize him or understand the words of the prophets that are read every sabbath, they fulfilled those words by condemning him.

<sup>28</sup> Even though they found no cause for a sentence of death, they asked Pilate to have him killed. <sup>29</sup> When they had carried out everything that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. <sup>30</sup> But God raised him from the dead;

<sup>31</sup> and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, and they are now his witnesses to the people.

<sup>32</sup> And we bring you the good news that what God promised to our ancestors <sup>33</sup> he has fulfilled for us, their children,

by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, ‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you.’

<sup>34</sup> As to his raising him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,

‘I will give you the holy promises made to David.’

<sup>35</sup> Therefore he has also said in another psalm, ‘You will not let your Holy One experience corruption.’

<sup>36</sup> For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died, was laid beside his ancestors, and experienced corruption; <sup>37</sup> but he whom God raised up experienced no corruption.

**Psalm 138:7-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies; you stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me.



8 The LORD will fulfill his  
purpose for me;  
your steadfast love, O  
LORD, endures forever.  
Do not forsake the work  
of your hands.

**Proverbs 29:12–14 (NRSV)**

- <sup>12</sup> If a ruler listens to  
falsehood,  
all his officials will be  
wicked.
- <sup>13</sup> The poor and the  
oppressor have this in  
common:  
the LORD gives light to  
the eyes of both.
- <sup>14</sup> If a king judges the poor  
with equity,  
his throne will be  
established forever.

**December  
8**



**1 Kings 22:29-53 (NRSV)**

*Defeat and Death of Ahab  
(2 Chr 18:28–34)*

<sup>29</sup> So the king of Israel and  
King Jehoshaphat of Judah

went up to Ramoth-gilead.

<sup>30</sup> The king of Israel said to  
Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise  
myself and go into battle, but  
you wear your robes.” So the  
king of Israel disguised himself  
and went into battle. <sup>31</sup> Now  
the king of Aram had  
commanded the thirty-two  
captains of his chariots, “Fight  
with no one small or great, but  
only with the king of Israel.”

<sup>32</sup> When the captains of the  
chariots saw Jehoshaphat,  
they said, “It is surely the king  
of Israel.” So they turned to  
fight against him; and  
Jehoshaphat cried out.

<sup>33</sup> When the captains of the  
chariots saw that it was not  
the king of Israel, they turned  
back from pursuing him. <sup>34</sup> But  
a certain man drew his bow  
and unknowingly struck the  
king of Israel between the  
scale armor and the  
breastplate; so he said to the  
driver of his chariot, “Turn  
around, and carry me out of  
the battle, for I am wounded.”

<sup>35</sup> The battle grew hot that  
day, and the king was propped  
up in his chariot facing the  
Arameans, until at evening he  
died; the blood from the

wound had flowed into the bottom of the chariot. <sup>36</sup> Then about sunset a shout went through the army, "Every man to his city, and every man to his country!"

<sup>37</sup> So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; they buried the king in Samaria.

<sup>38</sup> They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria; the dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes washed themselves in it, according to the word of the LORD that he had spoken. <sup>39</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house that he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

<sup>40</sup> So Ahab slept with his ancestors; and his son Ahaziah succeeded him.

*Jehoshaphat Reigns  
over Judah*

*(2 Chr 20:31–21:1)*

<sup>41</sup> Jehoshaphat son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of King Ahab of Israel. <sup>42</sup> Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem.

His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.

<sup>43</sup> He walked in all the way of his father Asa; he did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD; yet the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and offered incense on the high places.

<sup>44</sup> Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel.

<sup>45</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his power that he showed, and how he waged war, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?

<sup>46</sup> The remnant of the male temple prostitutes who were still in the land in the days of his father Asa, he exterminated.

<sup>47</sup> There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king.

<sup>48</sup> Jehoshaphat made ships of the Tarshish type to go to Ophir for gold; but they did not go, for the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber.

<sup>49</sup> Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships," but Jehoshaphat was not willing. <sup>50</sup> Jehoshaphat

slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his father David; his son Jehoram succeeded him.

*Ahaziah Reigns over Israel*

<sup>51</sup> Ahaziah son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah; he reigned two years over Israel. <sup>52</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father and mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. <sup>53</sup> He served Baal and worshiped him; he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger, just as his father had done.

**Acts 13:38-43** (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup> Let it be known to you therefore, my brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you; <sup>39</sup> by this Jesus everyone who believes is set free from all those sins from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. <sup>40</sup> Beware, therefore, that what the

prophets said does not happen to you:

<sup>41</sup> 'Look, you scoffers!

Be amazed and perish, for in your days I am doing a work, a work that you will never believe, even if someone tells you.' "

<sup>42</sup> As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people urged them to speak about these things again the next sabbath. <sup>43</sup> When the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

**Psalm 139:1-12** (NRSV)

*The Inescapable God*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

- 1 O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
- 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.
- 3 You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 Even before a word is on my tongue,

O LORD, you know it  
completely.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind  
and before,  
and lay your hand upon  
me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too  
wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot  
attain it.

<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your  
spirit?  
Or where can I flee from  
your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you  
are there;  
if I make my bed in  
Sheol, you are there.

<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the  
morning  
and settle at the farthest  
limits of the sea,  
<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall  
lead me,  
and your right hand shall  
hold me fast.

<sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the  
darkness shall cover  
me,  
and the light around me  
become night,"

<sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not  
dark to you;  
the night is as bright as  
the day,

for darkness is as light to  
you.

**Proverbs 29:15–17 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> The rod and reproof give  
wisdom,  
but a mother is disgraced  
by a neglected child.

<sup>16</sup> When the wicked are in  
authority,  
transgression  
increases,  
but the righteous will  
look upon their  
downfall.

<sup>17</sup> Discipline your children,  
and they will give you  
rest;  
they will give delight to  
your heart.

**December  
9**



**2 Kings 1:1-18 (NRSV)**

*Elijah Denounces Ahaziah*  
After the death of Ahab,  
Moab rebelled against Israel.  
<sup>2</sup> Ahaziah had fallen  
through the lattice in his upper

chamber in Samaria, and lay injured; so he sent messengers, telling them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury." <sup>3</sup> But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Get up, go to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?' <sup>4</sup> Now therefore thus says the LORD, 'You shall not leave the bed to which you have gone, but you shall surely die.' " So Elijah went.

<sup>5</sup> The messengers returned to the king, who said to them, "Why have you returned?"

<sup>6</sup> They answered him, "There came a man to meet us, who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him: Thus says the LORD: Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not leave the bed to which you have gone, but shall surely die.' " <sup>7</sup> He said to them, "What sort of man was he

who came to meet you and told you these things?" <sup>8</sup> They answered him, "A hairy man, with a leather belt around his waist." He said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

<sup>9</sup> Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.' " <sup>10</sup> But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

<sup>11</sup> Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. He went up and said to him, "O man of God, this is the king's order: Come down quickly!" <sup>12</sup> But Elijah answered them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

<sup>13</sup> Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his

fifty. So the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and entreated him, “O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight.”<sup>14</sup> Look, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”<sup>15</sup> Then the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he set out and went down with him to the king,<sup>16</sup> and said to him, “Thus says the LORD: Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebul, the god of Ekron,—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?—therefore you shall not leave the bed to which you have gone, but you shall surely die.”

#### *Death of Ahaziah*

<sup>17</sup> So he died according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken. His brother, Jehoram succeeded him as king in the second year of King Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat

of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son.<sup>18</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

#### **Acts 13:44 – 14:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>44</sup> The next sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

<sup>45</sup> But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy; and blaspheming, they contradicted what was spoken by Paul. <sup>46</sup> Then both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you reject it and judge yourselves to be unworthy of eternal life, we are now turning to the Gentiles.” <sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

‘I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

<sup>48</sup> When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and praised the word of the Lord; and as many as had been

destined for eternal life became believers. <sup>49</sup> Thus the word of the Lord spread throughout the region. <sup>50</sup> But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, and stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region. <sup>51</sup> So they shook the dust off their feet in protest against them, and went to Iconium. <sup>52</sup> And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

*Paul and Barnabas in Iconium*

**14** The same thing occurred in Iconium, where Paul and Barnabas went into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks became believers. <sup>2</sup> But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. <sup>3</sup> So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who testified to the word of his grace by granting signs and wonders to be done through them. <sup>4</sup> But the residents of the city were divided; some

sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles. <sup>5</sup> And when an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, <sup>6</sup> the apostles learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country; <sup>7</sup> and there they continued proclaiming the good news.

**Psalm 139:13-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed  
my inward parts;  
you knit me together in  
my mother's womb.  
<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am  
fearfully and  
wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your  
works;  
that I know very well.  
<sup>15</sup> My frame was not  
hidden from you,  
when I was being made in  
secret,  
intricately woven in the  
depths of the earth.  
<sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my  
unformed substance.  
In your book were written  
all the days that were  
formed for me,

when none of them as  
yet existed.

- 17 How weighty to me are  
your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of  
them!
- 18 I try to count them—they  
are more than the  
sand;  
I come to the end—I am  
still with you.
- 19 O that you would kill the  
wicked, O God,  
and that the bloodthirsty  
would depart from  
me—
- 20 those who speak of you  
maliciously,  
and lift themselves up  
against you for evil!
- 21 Do I not hate those who  
hate you, O LORD?  
And do I not loathe those  
who rise up against  
you?
- 22 I hate them with perfect  
hatred;  
I count them my  
enemies.
- 23 Search me, O God, and  
know my heart;  
test me and know my  
thoughts.
- 24 See if there is any wicked  
way in me,

and lead me in the way  
everlasting.

**Proverbs 29:18** (NRSV)

- 18 Where there is no  
prophecy, the people  
cast off restraint,  
but happy are those who  
keep the law.

## December 10



**2 Kings 2:1-25** (NRSV)

*Elijah Ascends to Heaven*

Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup> Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. <sup>3</sup> The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD



will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

<sup>4</sup> Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. <sup>5</sup> The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

<sup>6</sup> Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. <sup>7</sup> Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

<sup>9</sup> When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit."

<sup>10</sup> He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." <sup>11</sup> As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup> Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

#### *Elisha Succeeds Elijah*

<sup>13</sup> He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan.

<sup>14</sup> He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, the water was

parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

<sup>15</sup> When the company of prophets who were at Jericho saw him at a distance, they declared, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." They came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. <sup>16</sup> They said to him, "See now, we have fifty strong men among your servants; please let them go and seek your master; it may be that the spirit of the LORD has caught him up and thrown him down on some mountain or into some valley." He responded, "No, do not send them." <sup>17</sup> But when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." So they sent fifty men who searched for three days but did not find him. <sup>18</sup> When they came back to him (he had remained at Jericho), he said to them, "Did I not say to you, Do not go?"

### *Elisha Performs Miracles*

<sup>19</sup> Now the people of the city said to Elisha, "The location of this city is good, as my lord sees; but the water is

bad, and the land is unfruitful." <sup>20</sup> He said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it." So they brought it to him. <sup>21</sup> Then he went to the spring of water and threw the salt into it, and said, "Thus says the LORD, I have made this water wholesome; from now on neither death nor miscarriage shall come from it." <sup>22</sup> So the water has been wholesome to this day, according to the word that Elisha spoke.

<sup>23</sup> He went up from there to Bethel; and while he was going up on the way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, "Go away, baldhead! Go away, baldhead!" <sup>24</sup> When he turned around and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two she-bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys. <sup>25</sup> From there he went on to Mount Carmel, and then returned to Samaria.

**Acts 14:8-20 (NRSV)**

*Paul and Barnabas  
in Lystra and Derbe*

<sup>8</sup> In Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet and had never walked, for he had been crippled from birth. <sup>9</sup> He listened to Paul as he was speaking. And Paul, looking at him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, <sup>10</sup> said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And the man sprang up and began to walk. <sup>11</sup> When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!” <sup>12</sup> Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. <sup>13</sup> The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates; he and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifice.

<sup>14</sup> When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting, <sup>15</sup> “Friends, why are you doing this? We are mortals just like you, and we bring you good

news, that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. <sup>16</sup> In past generations he allowed all the nations to follow their own ways; <sup>17</sup> yet he has not left himself without a witness in doing good—giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling you with food and your hearts with joy.” <sup>18</sup> Even with these words, they scarcely restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them.

<sup>19</sup> But Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium and won over the crowds. Then they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. <sup>20</sup> But when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went into the city. The next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.

**Psalms 140:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Deliver me, O LORD, from evildoers;  
protect me from those  
who are violent,

2 who plan evil things in  
their minds  
and stir up wars  
continually.

3 They make their tongue  
sharp as a snake's,  
and under their lips is  
the venom of vipers.  
*Selah*

4 Guard me, O LORD, from  
the hands of the  
wicked;  
protect me from the  
violent  
who have planned my  
downfall.

5 The arrogant have hidden  
a trap for me,  
and with cords they have  
spread a net,  
along the road they have  
set snares for me.  
*Selah*

6 I say to the LORD, "You are  
my God;  
give ear, O LORD, to the  
voice of my  
supplications."

7 O LORD, my Lord, my strong  
deliverer,  
you have covered my  
head in the day of  
battle.

8 Do not grant, O LORD, the  
desires of the wicked;

do not further their evil  
plot. *Selah*

**Proverbs 29:19–20** (NRSV)

19 By mere words servants  
are not disciplined,  
for though they  
understand, they will  
not give heed.

20 Do you see someone who  
is hasty in speech?  
There is more hope for a  
fool than for anyone  
like that.

## December 11



**2 Kings 3:1-27** (NRSV)

*Jehoram Reigns over Israel*  
In the eighteenth year of  
King Jehoshaphat of Judah,  
Jehoram son of Ahab became  
king over Israel in Samaria; he  
reigned twelve years.<sup>2</sup> He did  
what was evil in the sight of  
the LORD, though not like his  
father and mother, for he  
removed the pillar of Baal that  
his father had made.

<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless he clung to the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit; he did not depart from it.

### *War with Moab*

<sup>4</sup> Now King Mesha of Moab was a sheep breeder, who used to deliver to the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs, and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. <sup>5</sup> But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. <sup>6</sup> So King Jehoram marched out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. <sup>7</sup> As he went he sent word to King Jehoshaphat of Judah, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me; will you go with me to battle against Moab?" He answered, "I will; I am with you, my people are your people, my horses are your horses." <sup>8</sup> Then he asked, "By which way shall we march?" Jehoram answered, "By the way of the wilderness of Edom."

<sup>9</sup> So the king of Israel, the king of Judah, and the king of Edom set out; and when they had made a roundabout

march of seven days, there was no water for the army or for the animals that were with them. <sup>10</sup> Then the king of Israel said, "Alas! The LORD has summoned us, three kings, only to be handed over to Moab." <sup>11</sup> But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, through whom we may inquire of the LORD?" Then one of the servants of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha son of Shaphat, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah, is here."

<sup>12</sup> Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

<sup>13</sup> Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to your father's prophets or to your mother's." But the king of Israel said to him, "No; it is the LORD who has summoned us, three kings, only to be handed over to Moab." <sup>14</sup> Elisha said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, whom I serve, were it not that I have regard for King Jehoshaphat of Judah, I would give you neither a look nor a glance.

<sup>15</sup> But get me a musician.” And then, while the musician was playing, the power of the LORD came on him. <sup>16</sup> And he said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘I will make this wadi full of pools.’ <sup>17</sup> For thus says the LORD, ‘You shall see neither wind nor rain, but the wadi shall be filled with water, so that you shall drink, you, your cattle, and your animals.’ <sup>18</sup> This is only a trifle in the sight of the LORD, for he will also hand Moab over to you. <sup>19</sup> You shall conquer every fortified city and every choice city; every good tree you shall fell, all springs of water you shall stop up, and every good piece of land you shall ruin with stones.” <sup>20</sup> The next day, about the time of the morning offering, suddenly water began to flow from the direction of Edom, until the country was filled with water.

<sup>21</sup> When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to put on armor, from the youngest to the oldest, were called out and were drawn up at the frontier. <sup>22</sup> When they rose

early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood. <sup>23</sup> They said, “This is blood; the kings must have fought together, and killed one another. Now then, Moab, to the spoil!” <sup>24</sup> But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and attacked the Moabites, who fled before them; as they entered Moab they continued the attack. <sup>25</sup> The cities they overturned, and on every good piece of land everyone threw a stone, until it was covered; every spring of water they stopped up, and every good tree they felled. Only at Kir-hareseth did the stone walls remain, until the slingers surrounded and attacked it. <sup>26</sup> When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through, opposite the king of Edom; but they could not. <sup>27</sup> Then he took his firstborn son who was to succeed him, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And great wrath came upon

Israel, so they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.

**Acts 14:21-28** (NRSV)

*The Return to Antioch in Syria*

<sup>21</sup> After they had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, then on to Iconium and Antioch. <sup>22</sup> There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, "It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God."

<sup>23</sup> And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.

<sup>24</sup> Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. <sup>25</sup> When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. <sup>26</sup> From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had completed. <sup>27</sup> When they arrived, they called the church

together and related all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. <sup>28</sup> And they stayed there with the disciples for some time.

**Psalms 140:9-13** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Those who surround me  
lift up their heads;  
let the mischief of their  
lips overwhelm them!  
<sup>10</sup> Let burning coals fall on  
them!  
Let them be flung into  
pits, no more to rise!  
<sup>11</sup> Do not let the slanderer be  
established in the land;  
let evil speedily hunt  
down the violent!

<sup>12</sup> I know that the LORD  
maintains the cause of  
the needy,  
and executes justice for  
the poor.

<sup>13</sup> Surely the righteous shall  
give thanks to your  
name;  
the upright shall live in  
your presence.

**Proverbs 29:21-22** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> A slave pampered from  
childhood  
will come to a bad end.

<sup>22</sup> One given to anger stirs up strife, and the hothead causes much transgression.

## December 12



**2 Kings 4:1-17** (NRSV)

### *Elisha and the Widow's Oil* (Cp 1 Kings 17:14-16)

Now the wife of a member of the company of prophets cried to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead; and you know that your servant feared the LORD, but a creditor has come to take my two children as slaves." <sup>2</sup> Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" She answered, "Your servant has nothing in the house, except a jar of oil." <sup>3</sup> He said, "Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not just a few. <sup>4</sup> Then go in, and shut the door behind you and your children, and start

pouring into all these vessels; when each is full, set it aside." <sup>5</sup> So she left him and shut the door behind her and her children; they kept bringing vessels to her, and she kept pouring. <sup>6</sup> When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." But he said to her, "There are no more." Then the oil stopped flowing. <sup>7</sup> She came and told the man of God, and he said, "Go sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your children can live on the rest."

### *Elisha Raises the Shunammite's Son* (Cp 1 Kings 17:17-24)

<sup>8</sup> One day Elisha was passing through Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived, who urged him to have a meal. So whenever he passed that way, he would stop there for a meal. <sup>9</sup> She said to her husband, "Look, I am sure that this man who regularly passes our way is a holy man of God. <sup>10</sup> Let us make a small roof chamber with walls, and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that he can stay there whenever he comes to us."



<sup>11</sup> One day when he came there, he went up to the chamber and lay down there.

<sup>12</sup> He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him.

<sup>13</sup> He said to him, "Say to her, Since you have taken all this trouble for us, what may be done for you? Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?" She answered, "I live among my own people." <sup>14</sup> He said, "What then may be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son, and her husband is old." <sup>15</sup> He said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood at the door.

<sup>16</sup> He said, "At this season, in due time, you shall embrace a son." She replied, "No, my lord, O man of God; do not deceive your servant."

<sup>17</sup> The woman conceived and bore a son at that season, in due time, as Elisha had declared to her.

**Acts 15:1-21 (NRSV)**

*The Council at Jerusalem*

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

<sup>2</sup> And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. <sup>3</sup> So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers.

<sup>4</sup> When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. <sup>5</sup> But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses."

<sup>6</sup> The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. <sup>7</sup> After

there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers.<sup>8</sup> And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us;<sup>9</sup> and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us.<sup>10</sup> Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?<sup>11</sup> On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

<sup>12</sup>The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles.

<sup>13</sup>After they finished speaking, James replied, “My brothers, listen to me.<sup>14</sup> Simeon has

related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name.<sup>15</sup> This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written,

<sup>16</sup> ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; from its ruins I will rebuild it,

and I will set it up,<sup>17</sup> so that all other peoples may seek the Lord— even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called.

Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things<sup>18</sup> known from long ago.’

<sup>19</sup>Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God,<sup>20</sup> but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood.<sup>21</sup> For in every city, for generations past, Moses has had those who proclaim him, for he has been read aloud

every sabbath in the synagogues.”

**Psalms 141:1-2** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Preservation  
from Evil*

A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> I call upon you, O LORD;  
come quickly to me;  
give ear to my voice  
when I call to you.
- <sup>2</sup> Let my prayer be counted  
as incense before you,  
and the lifting up of my  
hands as an evening  
sacrifice.

**Proverbs 29:23** (NRSV)

- <sup>23</sup> A person’s pride will bring  
humiliation,  
but one who is lowly in  
spirit will obtain honor.

**December  
13**



**2 Kings 4:18-44** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup>When the child was older, he went out one day to his father among the reapers.

<sup>19</sup> He complained to his father, “Oh, my head, my head!” The father said to his servant, “Carry him to his mother.”

<sup>20</sup> He carried him and brought him to his mother; the child sat on her lap until noon, and he died. <sup>21</sup> She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, closed the door on him, and left. <sup>22</sup> Then she called to her husband, and said, “Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, so that I may quickly go to the man of God and come back again.” <sup>23</sup> He said, “Why go to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath.” She said, “It will be all right.” <sup>24</sup> Then she saddled the donkey and said to her servant, “Urge the animal on; do not hold back for me unless I tell you.” <sup>25</sup> So she set out, and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her coming, he said to Gehazi his servant, “Look, there is the Shunammite woman; <sup>26</sup> run at once to meet her, and say to her, Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is the child all right?” She answered, “It is

all right.”<sup>27</sup> When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she caught hold of his feet. Gehazi approached to push her away. But the man of God said, “Let her alone, for she is in bitter distress; the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me.”<sup>28</sup> Then she said, “Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, Do not mislead me?”<sup>29</sup> He said to Gehazi, “Gird up your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet anyone, give no greeting, and if anyone greets you, do not answer; and lay my staff on the face of the child.”<sup>30</sup> Then the mother of the child said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave without you.” So he rose up and followed her.<sup>31</sup> Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or sign of life. He came back to meet him and told him, “The child has not awakened.”

<sup>32</sup> When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed.<sup>33</sup> So he went in and closed the door on the two of them, and

prayed to the LORD.<sup>34</sup> Then he got up on the bed and lay upon the child, putting his mouth upon his mouth, his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and while he lay bent over him, the flesh of the child became warm.<sup>35</sup> He got down, walked once to and fro in the room, then got up again and bent over him; the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.<sup>36</sup> Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, “Call the Shunammite woman.” So he called her. When she came to him, he said, “Take your son.”<sup>37</sup> She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground; then she took her son and left.

#### *Elisha Purifies the Pot of Stew*

<sup>38</sup> When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the company of prophets was sitting before him, he said to his servant, “Put the large pot on, and make some stew for the company of prophets.”<sup>39</sup> One of them went out into the field to gather herbs; he found a wild vine and gathered from it

a lapful of wild gourds, and came and cut them up into the pot of stew, not knowing what they were.<sup>40</sup> They served some for the men to eat. But while they were eating the stew, they cried out, "O man of God, there is death in the pot!" They could not eat it.<sup>41</sup> He said, "Then bring some flour." He threw it into the pot, and said, "Serve the people and let them eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

#### *Elisha Feeds One Hundred Men*

(Cp Mt 14:13–21; 15:32–39)

<sup>42</sup> A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, "Give it to the people and let them eat."<sup>43</sup> But his servant said, "How can I set this before a hundred people?" So he repeated, "Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and have some left.' "<sup>44</sup> He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the LORD.

#### **Acts 15:22-35** (NRSV)

##### *The Council's Letter to Gentile Believers*

<sup>22</sup> Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church, decided to choose men from among their members and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers,<sup>23</sup> with the following letter: "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings.<sup>24</sup> Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us, though with no instructions from us, have said things to disturb you and have unsettled your minds,<sup>25</sup> we have decided unanimously to choose representatives and send them to you, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,<sup>26</sup> who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>27</sup> We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth.<sup>28</sup> For it has seemed

good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: <sup>29</sup> that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

<sup>30</sup> So they were sent off and went down to Antioch. When they gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. <sup>31</sup> When its members read it, they rejoiced at the exhortation.

<sup>32</sup> Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers.

<sup>33</sup> After they had been there for some time, they were sent off in peace by the believers to those who had sent them.

<sup>35</sup> But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, and there, with many others, they taught and proclaimed the word of the Lord.

**Psalms 141:3-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD;

keep watch over the door of my lips.  
<sup>4</sup> Do not turn my heart to any evil,  
to busy myself with wicked deeds  
in company with those who work iniquity;  
do not let me eat of their delicacies.  
<sup>5</sup> Let the righteous strike me;  
let the faithful correct me.  
Never let the oil of the wicked anoint my head,  
for my prayer is continually against their wicked deeds.  
<sup>6</sup> When they are given over to those who shall condemn them,  
then they shall learn that my words were pleasant.  
<sup>7</sup> Like a rock that one breaks apart and shatters on the land,  
so shall their bones be strewn at the mouth of Sheol.  
<sup>8</sup> But my eyes are turned toward you, O GOD, my Lord;

in you I seek refuge; do  
not leave me  
defenseless.

<sup>9</sup> Keep me from the trap  
that they have laid for  
me,  
and from the snares of  
evildoers.

<sup>10</sup> Let the wicked fall into  
their own nets,  
while I alone escape.

**Proverbs 29:24–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> To be a partner of a thief is  
to hate one’s own life;  
one hears the victim’s  
curse, but discloses  
nothing.

<sup>25</sup> The fear of others lays a  
snare,  
but one who trusts in the  
LORD is secure.

**December  
14**



**2 Kings 5:1-27 (NRSV)**

*The Healing of Naaman*

Naaman, commander of  
the army of the king of Aram,

was a great man and in high  
favor with his master, because  
by him the LORD had given  
victory to Aram. The man,  
though a mighty warrior,  
suffered from leprosy. <sup>2</sup> Now  
the Arameans on one of their  
raids had taken a young girl  
captive from the land of Israel,  
and she served Naaman’s  
wife. <sup>3</sup> She said to her mistress,  
“If only my lord were with the  
prophet who is in Samaria! He  
would cure him of his  
leprosy.” <sup>4</sup> So Naaman went in  
and told his lord just what the  
girl from the land of Israel had  
said. <sup>5</sup> And the king of Aram  
said, “Go then, and I will send  
along a letter to the king of  
Israel.”

He went, taking with him  
ten talents of silver, six  
thousand shekels of gold, and  
ten sets of garments. <sup>6</sup> He  
brought the letter to the king  
of Israel, which read, “When  
this letter reaches you, know  
that I have sent to you my  
servant Naaman, that you may  
cure him of his leprosy.”

<sup>7</sup> When the king of Israel read  
the letter, he tore his clothes  
and said, “Am I God, to give  
death or life, that this man

sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me.”

<sup>8</sup> But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, “Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel.” <sup>9</sup> So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha’s house.

<sup>10</sup> Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean.” <sup>11</sup> But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, “I thought that for me he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy! <sup>12</sup> Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?” He turned and went away in a rage. <sup>13</sup> But his servants approached and said to him, “Father, if the prophet

had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, ‘Wash, and be clean’?”

<sup>14</sup> So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

<sup>15</sup> Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant.” <sup>16</sup> But he said, “As the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will accept nothing!” He urged him to accept, but he refused. <sup>17</sup> Then Naaman said, “If not, please let two mule-loads of earth be given to your servant; for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god except the LORD. <sup>18</sup> But may the LORD pardon your servant on one count: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning on my arm, and I bow



down in the house of Rimmon, when I do bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the LORD pardon your servant on this one count.”<sup>19</sup> He said to him, “Go in peace.”

### *Gehazi's Greed*

But when Naaman had gone from him a short distance,<sup>20</sup> Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, “My master has let that Aramean Naaman off too lightly by not accepting from him what he offered. As the LORD lives, I will run after him and get something out of him.”<sup>21</sup> So Gehazi went after Naaman. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he jumped down from the chariot to meet him and said, “Is everything all right?”<sup>22</sup> He replied, “Yes, but my master has sent me to say, ‘Two members of a company of prophets have just come to me from the hill country of Ephraim; please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothing.’”

<sup>23</sup>Naaman said, “Please accept two talents.” He urged him, and tied up two talents of

silver in two bags, with two changes of clothing, and gave them to two of his servants, who carried them in front of Gehazi.<sup>24</sup> When he came to the citadel, he took the bags from them, and stored them inside; he dismissed the men, and they left.

<sup>25</sup>He went in and stood before his master; and Elisha said to him, “Where have you been, Gehazi?” He answered, “Your servant has not gone anywhere at all.”<sup>26</sup> But he said to him, “Did I not go with you in spirit when someone left his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to accept money and to accept clothing, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves?”<sup>27</sup> Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you, and to your descendants forever.” So he left his presence leprous, as white as snow.

### **Acts 15:36 – 16:5 (NRSV)**

#### *Paul and Barnabas Separate*

<sup>36</sup>After some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Come, let us return and visit the believers in every city where

we proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.”<sup>37</sup> Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.<sup>38</sup> But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work.<sup>39</sup> The disagreement became so sharp that they parted company; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.<sup>40</sup> But Paul chose Silas and set out, the believers commending him to the grace of the Lord.<sup>41</sup> He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

*Timothy Joins Paul and Silas*

**16** Paul went on also to Derbe and to Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer; but his father was a Greek.<sup>2</sup> He was well spoken of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium.<sup>3</sup> Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him; and he took him and had him circumcised because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that

his father was a Greek.<sup>4</sup> As they went from town to town, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily.

**Psalm 142:1-3a** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Persecutors*

A Maskil of David. When he was in the cave. A Prayer.

- <sup>1</sup> With my voice I cry to the LORD;  
with my voice I make supplication to the LORD.
- <sup>2</sup> I pour out my complaint before him;  
I tell my trouble before him.
- <sup>3</sup> When my spirit is faint,  
you know my way.

**Proverbs 29:26–27** (NRSV)

- <sup>26</sup> Many seek the favor of a ruler,  
but it is from the LORD that one gets justice.
- <sup>27</sup> The unjust are an abomination to the righteous,

but the upright are an abomination to the wicked.

## December 15



### 2 Kings 6:1-23 (NRSV)

#### *The Miracle of the Ax Head*

Now the company of prophets said to Elisha, “As you see, the place where we live under your charge is too small for us. <sup>2</sup> Let us go to the Jordan, and let us collect logs there, one for each of us, and build a place there for us to live.” He answered, “Do so.”

<sup>3</sup> Then one of them said, “Please come with your servants.” And he answered, “I will.” <sup>4</sup> So he went with them. When they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees.

<sup>5</sup> But as one was felling a log, his ax head fell into the water; he cried out, “Alas, master! It was borrowed.” <sup>6</sup> Then the man of God said, “Where did it fall?” When he showed him

the place, he cut off a stick, and threw it in there, and made the iron float. <sup>7</sup> He said, “Pick it up.” So he reached out his hand and took it.

#### *The Aramean Attack Is Thwarted*

<sup>8</sup> Once when the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he took counsel with his officers. He said, “At such and such a place shall be my camp.” <sup>9</sup> But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, “Take care not to pass this place, because the Arameans are going down there.” <sup>10</sup> The king of Israel sent word to the place of which the man of God spoke. More than once or twice he warned such a place so that it was on the alert.

<sup>11</sup> The mind of the king of Aram was greatly perturbed because of this; he called his officers and said to them, “Now tell me who among us sides with the king of Israel?” <sup>12</sup> Then one of his officers said, “No one, my lord king. It is Elisha, the prophet in Israel, who tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedchamber.” <sup>13</sup> He said, “Go

and find where he is; I will send and seize him." He was told, "He is in Dothan." <sup>14</sup> So he sent horses and chariots there and a great army; they came by night, and surrounded the city.

<sup>15</sup> When an attendant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. His servant said, "Alas, master! What shall we do?" <sup>16</sup> He replied, "Do not be afraid, for there are more with us than there are with them." <sup>17</sup> Then Elisha prayed: "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw; the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. <sup>18</sup> When the Arameans came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike this people, please, with blindness." So he struck them with blindness as Elisha had asked. <sup>19</sup> Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, and this is not the city; follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." And he led them to Samaria.

<sup>20</sup> As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open the eyes of these men so that they may see." The LORD opened their eyes, and they saw that they were inside Samaria. <sup>21</sup> When the king of Israel saw them he said to Elisha, "Father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" <sup>22</sup> He answered, "No! Did you capture with your sword and your bow those whom you want to kill? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink; and let them go to their master." <sup>23</sup> So he prepared for them a great feast; after they ate and drank, he sent them on their way, and they went to their master. And the Arameans no longer came raiding into the land of Israel.

**Acts 16:6-15 (NRSV)**

*Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia*

<sup>6</sup> They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. <sup>7</sup> When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia,

but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; <sup>8</sup> so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. <sup>9</sup> During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." <sup>10</sup> When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

*The Conversion of Lydia*

<sup>11</sup> We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, <sup>12</sup> and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. <sup>13</sup> On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. <sup>14</sup> A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira

and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. <sup>15</sup> When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

**Psalm 142:3b-7** (NRSV)

In the path where I walk  
they have hidden a trap  
for me.  
<sup>4</sup> Look on my right hand and  
see—  
there is no one who  
takes notice of me;  
no refuge remains to me;  
no one cares for me.  
<sup>5</sup> I cry to you, O LORD;  
I say, "You are my  
refuge,  
my portion in the land of  
the living."  
<sup>6</sup> Give heed to my cry,  
for I am brought very  
low.  
Save me from my  
persecutors,  
for they are too strong  
for me.  
<sup>7</sup> Bring me out of prison,

so that I may give thanks  
to your name.  
The righteous will  
surround me,  
for you will deal  
bountifully with me.

And what is the name of  
the person's child?  
Surely you know!

**Proverbs 30:1–4 (NRSV)**

*Sayings of Agur*

<sup>1</sup> The words of Agur son  
of Jakeh. An oracle.

Thus says the man: I am  
weary, O God,  
I am weary, O God. How  
can I prevail?

<sup>2</sup> Surely I am too stupid to  
be human;  
I do not have human  
understanding.

<sup>3</sup> I have not learned wisdom,  
nor have I knowledge of  
the holy ones.

<sup>4</sup> Who has ascended to  
heaven and come  
down?

Who has gathered the  
wind in the hollow of  
the hand?

Who has wrapped up the  
waters in a garment?

Who has established all  
the ends of the earth?

What is the person's  
name?

**December  
16**



**2 Kings 6:24 – 7:20 (NRSV)**

*Ben-hadad's Siege of Samaria*

<sup>24</sup> Some time later King Ben-hadad of Aram mustered his entire army; he marched against Samaria and laid siege to it. <sup>25</sup> As the siege continued, famine in Samaria became so great that a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver. <sup>26</sup> Now as the king of Israel was walking on the city wall, a woman cried out to him, "Help, my lord king!" <sup>27</sup> He said, "No! Let the LORD help you. How can I help you? From the threshing floor or from the wine press?" <sup>28</sup> But then the king asked her, "What is your complaint?" She answered, "This woman said

to me, 'Give up your son; we will eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'<sup>29</sup> So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give up your son and we will eat him.' But she has hidden her son."<sup>30</sup> When the king heard the words of the woman he tore his clothes—now since he was walking on the city wall, the people could see that he had sackcloth on his body underneath—<sup>31</sup> and he said, "So may God do to me, and more, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat stays on his shoulders today."<sup>32</sup> So he dispatched a man from his presence.

Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. Before the messenger arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "Are you aware that this murderer has sent someone to take off my head? When the messenger comes, see that you shut the door and hold it closed against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?"<sup>33</sup> While he was still speaking with them, the king came down to him and said, "This trouble is from

the LORD! Why should I hope in the LORD any longer?"

**7**<sup>1</sup> But Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD: thus says the LORD, Tomorrow about this time a measure of choice meal shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria."<sup>2</sup> Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned said to the man of God, "Even if the LORD were to make windows in the sky, could such a thing happen?" But he said, "You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat from it."

#### *The Arameans Flee*

<sup>3</sup> Now there were four leprous men outside the city gate, who said to one another, "Why should we sit here until we die?"<sup>4</sup> If we say, 'Let us enter the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; but if we sit here, we shall also die. Therefore, let us desert to the Aramean camp; if they spare our lives, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die."<sup>5</sup> So they arose at twilight to go to the Aramean

camp; but when they came to the edge of the Aramean camp, there was no one there at all.<sup>6</sup> For the Lord had caused the Aramean army to hear the sound of chariots, and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, "The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to fight against us."<sup>7</sup> So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys leaving the camp just as it was, and fled for their lives.<sup>8</sup> When these leprous men had come to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent, ate and drank, carried off silver, gold, and clothing, and went and hid them. Then they came back, entered another tent, carried off things from it, and went and hid them.

<sup>9</sup> Then they said to one another, "What we are doing is wrong. This is a day of good news; if we are silent and wait until the morning light, we will be found guilty; therefore let us go and tell the king's household."<sup>10</sup> So they came and called to the gatekeepers

of the city, and told them, "We went to the Aramean camp, but there was no one to be seen or heard there, nothing but the horses tied, the donkeys tied, and the tents as they were."<sup>11</sup> Then the gatekeepers called out and proclaimed it to the king's household.<sup>12</sup> The king got up in the night, and said to his servants, "I will tell you what the Arameans have prepared against us. They know that we are starving; so they have left the camp to hide themselves in the open country, thinking, 'When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive and get into the city.'" <sup>13</sup> One of his servants said, "Let some men take five of the remaining horses, since those left here will suffer the fate of the whole multitude of Israel that have perished already; let us send and find out."<sup>14</sup> So they took two mounted men, and the king sent them after the Aramean army, saying, "Go and find out."<sup>15</sup> So they went after them as far as the Jordan; the whole way was littered with garments and equipment that the Arameans



had thrown away in their haste. So the messengers returned, and told the king.

<sup>16</sup> Then the people went out, and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a measure of choice meal was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. <sup>17</sup> Now the king had appointed the captain on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate; the people trampled him to death in the gate, just as the man of God had said when the king came down to him. <sup>18</sup> For when the man of God had said to the king, "Two measures of barley shall be sold for a shekel, and a measure of choice meal for a shekel, about this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria," <sup>19</sup> the captain had answered the man of God, "Even if the LORD were to make windows in the sky, could such a thing happen?" And he had answered, "You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat from it." <sup>20</sup> It did indeed happen to him; the people

trampled him to death in the gate.

**Acts 16:16-24** (NRSV)

*Paul and Silas in Prison*

<sup>16</sup> One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. <sup>17</sup> While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." <sup>18</sup> She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

<sup>19</sup> But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities.

<sup>20</sup> When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews <sup>21</sup> and are advocating customs that are not lawful for

us as Romans to adopt or observe.”<sup>22</sup> The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods.<sup>23</sup> After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely.<sup>24</sup> Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

**Psalms 143:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

A Psalm of David.

- 1 Hear my prayer, O LORD;  
give ear to my  
supplications in your  
faithfulness;  
answer me in your  
righteousness.
- 2 Do not enter into  
judgment with your  
servant,  
for no one living is  
righteous before you.
- 3 For the enemy has  
pursued me,  
crushing my life to the  
ground,

making me sit in  
darkness like those  
long dead.

- 4 Therefore my spirit faints  
within me;  
my heart within me is  
appalled.
- 5 I remember the days of  
old,  
I think about all your  
deeds,  
I meditate on the works  
of your hands.
- 6 I stretch out my hands to  
you;  
my soul thirsts for you  
like a parched land.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 30:5-6 (NRSV)**

- 5 Every word of God proves  
true;  
he is a shield to those  
who take refuge in  
him.
- 6 Do not add to his words,  
or else he will rebuke  
you, and you will be  
found a liar.

# December 17



**2 Kings 8:1-19** (NRSV)

## *The Shunammite Woman's Land Restored*

Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, "Get up and go with your household, and settle wherever you can; for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will come on the land for seven years."<sup>2</sup> So the woman got up and did according to the word of the man of God; she went with her household and settled in the land of the Philistines seven years.<sup>3</sup> At the end of the seven years, when the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she set out to appeal to the king for her house and her land.<sup>4</sup> Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me all the great things that Elisha has done."<sup>5</sup> While he was telling the king how Elisha had restored a dead person to life, the woman whose son he had restored to life appealed to

the king for her house and her land. Gehazi said, "My lord king, here is the woman, and here is her son whom Elisha restored to life."<sup>6</sup> When the king questioned the woman, she told him. So the king appointed an official for her, saying, "Restore all that was hers, together with all the revenue of the fields from the day that she left the land until now."

## *Death of Ben-hadad*

<sup>7</sup> Elisha went to Damascus while King Ben-hadad of Aram was ill. When it was told him, "The man of God has come here,"<sup>8</sup> the king said to Hazael, "Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God. Inquire of the LORD through him, whether I shall recover from this illness."<sup>9</sup> So Hazael went to meet him, taking a present with him, all kinds of goods of Damascus, forty camel loads. When he entered and stood before him, he said, "Your son King Ben-hadad of Aram has sent me to you, saying, 'Shall I recover from this illness?'"<sup>10</sup> Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him,

‘You shall certainly recover’;  
but the LORD has shown me  
that he shall certainly die.”

<sup>11</sup> He fixed his gaze and stared  
at him, until he was ashamed.  
Then the man of God wept.

<sup>12</sup> Hazael asked, “Why does my  
lord weep?” He answered,  
“Because I know the evil that  
you will do to the people of  
Israel; you will set their  
fortresses on fire, you will kill  
their young men with the  
sword, dash in pieces their  
little ones, and rip up their  
pregnant women.” <sup>13</sup> Hazael  
said, “What is your servant,  
who is a mere dog, that he  
should do this great thing?”

Elisha answered, “The LORD  
has shown me that you are to  
be king over Aram.” <sup>14</sup> Then he  
left Elisha, and went to his  
master Ben-hadad, who said  
to him, “What did Elisha say to  
you?” And he answered, “He  
told me that you would  
certainly recover.” <sup>15</sup> But the  
next day he took the bed-  
cover and dipped it in water  
and spread it over the king’s  
face, until he died. And Hazael  
succeeded him.

*Jehoram Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 21:1–20)

<sup>16</sup> In the fifth year of King  
Joram son of Ahab of Israel,  
Jehoram son of King  
Jehoshaphat of Judah began  
to reign. <sup>17</sup> He was thirty-two  
years old when he became  
king, and he reigned eight  
years in Jerusalem. <sup>18</sup> He  
walked in the way of the kings  
of Israel, as the house of Ahab  
had done, for the daughter of  
Ahab was his wife. He did  
what was evil in the sight of  
the LORD. <sup>19</sup> Yet the LORD would  
not destroy Judah, for the sake  
of his servant David, since he  
had promised to give a lamp  
to him and to his descendants  
forever.

**Acts 16:25-40** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> About midnight Paul and  
Silas were praying and singing  
hymns to God, and the  
prisoners were listening to  
them. <sup>26</sup> Suddenly there was  
an earthquake, so violent that  
the foundations of the prison  
were shaken; and immediately  
all the doors were opened and  
everyone’s chains were  
unfastened. <sup>27</sup> When the jailer  
woke up and saw the prison  
doors wide open, he drew his  
sword and was about to kill

himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped.<sup>28</sup> But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here."

<sup>29</sup> The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.<sup>30</sup> Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

<sup>31</sup> They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."<sup>32</sup> They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.<sup>33</sup> At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay.<sup>34</sup> He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

<sup>35</sup> When morning came, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go."<sup>36</sup> And the jailer reported the message to Paul, saying, "The magistrates sent word to let you go; therefore come out now and go in peace."<sup>37</sup> But

Paul replied, "They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they going to discharge us in secret? Certainly not! Let them come and take us out themselves."

<sup>38</sup> The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens;<sup>39</sup> so they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.<sup>40</sup> After leaving the prison they went to Lydia's home; and when they had seen and encouraged the brothers and sisters there, they departed.

**Psalm 143:7-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Answer me quickly, O LORD;  
my spirit fails.  
Do not hide your face from me,  
or I shall be like those  
who go down to the Pit.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear of your  
steadfast love in the  
morning,

for in you I put my trust.  
Teach me the way I should  
go,  
for to you I lift up my  
soul.

<sup>9</sup> Save me, O LORD, from my  
enemies;  
I have fled to you for  
refuge.

<sup>10</sup> Teach me to do your will,  
for you are my God.  
Let your good spirit lead  
me  
on a level path.

<sup>11</sup> For your name's sake, O  
LORD, preserve my life.  
In your righteousness  
bring me out of  
trouble.

<sup>12</sup> In your steadfast love cut  
off my enemies,  
and destroy all my  
adversaries,  
for I am your servant.

### **Proverbs 30:7–9 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Two things I ask of you;  
do not deny them to me  
before I die:

<sup>8</sup> Remove far from me  
falsehood and lying;  
give me neither poverty  
nor riches;  
feed me with the food  
that I need,

<sup>9</sup> or I shall be full, and deny  
you,  
and say, "Who is the  
LORD?"  
or I shall be poor, and  
steal,  
and profane the name of  
my God.

## **December 18**



### **2 Kings 8:20 – 9:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> In his days Edom  
revolted against the rule of  
Judah, and set up a king of  
their own. <sup>21</sup> Then Joram  
crossed over to Zair with all his  
chariots. He set out by night  
and attacked the Edomites  
and their chariot commanders  
who had surrounded him; but  
his army fled home. <sup>22</sup> So  
Edom has been in revolt  
against the rule of Judah to  
this day. Libnah also revolted  
at the same time. <sup>23</sup> Now the  
rest of the acts of Joram, and  
all that he did, are they not  
written in the Book of the

Annals of the Kings of Judah?

<sup>24</sup> So Joram slept with his ancestors, and was buried with them in the city of David; his son Ahaziah succeeded him.

### *Ahaziah Reigns over Judah*

*(2 Chr 22:1–6)*

<sup>25</sup> In the twelfth year of King Joram son of Ahab of Israel, Ahaziah son of King Jehoram of Judah began to reign. <sup>26</sup> Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of King Omri of Israel. <sup>27</sup> He also walked in the way of the house of Ahab, doing what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as the house of Ahab had done, for he was son-in-law to the house of Ahab.

<sup>28</sup> He went with Joram son of Ahab to wage war against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead, where the Arameans wounded Joram. <sup>29</sup> King Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah,

when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. King Ahaziah son of Jehoram of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was wounded.

### *Anointing of Jehu*

**9** Then the prophet Elisha called a member of the company of prophets and said to him, "Gird up your loins; take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. <sup>2</sup> When you arrive, look there for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi; go in and get him to leave his companions, and take him into an inner chamber. <sup>3</sup> Then take the flask of oil, pour it on his head, and say, 'Thus says the LORD: I anoint you king over Israel.' Then open the door and flee; do not linger."

<sup>4</sup> So the young man, the young prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. <sup>5</sup> He arrived while the commanders of the army were in council, and he announced, "I have a message for you, commander." "For which one of us?" asked Jehu. "For you, commander." <sup>6</sup> So Jehu got up and went inside;

the young man poured the oil on his head, saying to him, "Thus says the LORD the God of Israel: I anoint you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. <sup>7</sup> You shall strike down the house of your master Ahab, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD. <sup>8</sup> For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. <sup>9</sup> I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah. <sup>10</sup> The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and no one shall bury her." Then he opened the door and fled.

<sup>11</sup> When Jehu came back to his master's officers, they said to him, "Is everything all right? Why did that madman come to you?" He answered them, "You know the sort and how they babble." <sup>12</sup> They said, "Liar! Come on, tell us!" So he said, "This is just what he said to me: 'Thus says the LORD, I anoint you king over Israel.' "<sup>13</sup> Then hurriedly they all took

their cloaks and spread them for him on the bare steps; and they blew the trumpet, and proclaimed, "Jehu is king."

### **Acts 17:1-9 (NRSV)**

#### *The Uproar in Thessalonica*

After Paul and Silas had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, <sup>3</sup> explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you." <sup>4</sup> Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. <sup>5</sup> But the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the marketplaces they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar. While they were searching for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly, they attacked Jason's house. <sup>6</sup> When they



could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also,"<sup>7</sup> and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus."<sup>8</sup> The people and the city officials were disturbed when they heard this,<sup>9</sup> and after they had taken bail from Jason and the others, they let them go.

**Psalms 144:1-8** (NRSV)

*Prayer for National  
Deliverance and Security*  
Of David.

<sup>1</sup> Blessed be the LORD, my  
rock,  
who trains my hands for  
war, and my fingers for  
battle;  
<sup>2</sup> my rock and my fortress,  
my stronghold and my  
deliverer,  
my shield, in whom I take  
refuge,  
who subdues the  
peoples under me.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, what are human  
beings that you regard  
them,  
or mortals that you think  
of them?  
<sup>4</sup> They are like a breath;  
their days are like a  
passing shadow.  
<sup>5</sup> Bow your heavens, O LORD,  
and come down;  
touch the mountains so  
that they smoke.  
<sup>6</sup> Make the lightning flash  
and scatter them;  
send out your arrows  
and rout them.  
<sup>7</sup> Stretch out your hand  
from on high;  
set me free and rescue  
me from the mighty  
waters,  
from the hand of aliens,  
<sup>8</sup> whose mouths speak lies,  
and whose right hands  
are false.

**Proverbs 30:10** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Do not slander a servant to  
a master,  
or the servant will curse  
you, and you will be  
held guilty.

# December 19



## 2 Kings 9:14-37 (NRSV)

### *Joram of Israel Killed*

<sup>14</sup> Thus Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Joram with all Israel had been on guard at Ramoth-gilead against King Hazael of Aram; <sup>15</sup> but King Joram had returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him, when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. So Jehu said, "If this is your wish, then let no one slip out of the city to go and tell the news in Jezreel." <sup>16</sup> Then Jehu mounted his chariot and went to Jezreel, where Joram was lying ill. King Ahaziah of Judah had come down to visit Joram.

<sup>17</sup> In Jezreel, the sentinel standing on the tower spied the company of Jehu arriving, and said, "I see a company." Joram said, "Take a horseman; send him to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?'" <sup>18</sup> So the horseman went to meet him; he said, "Thus says the

king, 'Is it peace?'" Jehu responded, "What have you to do with peace? Fall in behind me." The sentinel reported, saying, "The messenger reached them, but he is not coming back." <sup>19</sup> Then he sent out a second horseman, who came to them and said, "Thus says the king, 'Is it peace?'" Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Fall in behind me." <sup>20</sup> Again the sentinel reported, "He reached them, but he is not coming back. It looks like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi; for he drives like a maniac."

<sup>21</sup> Joram said, "Get ready." And they got his chariot ready. Then King Joram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah set out, each in his chariot, and went to meet Jehu; they met him at the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. <sup>22</sup> When Joram saw Jehu, he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" He answered, "What peace can there be, so long as the many whoredoms and sorceries of your mother Jezebel continue?" <sup>23</sup> Then Joram reined about and fled, saying to Ahaziah, "Treason, Ahaziah!" <sup>24</sup> Jehu drew his bow

with all his strength, and shot Joram between the shoulders, so that the arrow pierced his heart; and he sank in his chariot. <sup>25</sup> Jehu said to his aide Bidkar, "Lift him out, and throw him on the plot of ground belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, when you and I rode side by side behind his father Ahab how the LORD uttered this oracle against him: <sup>26</sup> 'For the blood of Naboth and for the blood of his children that I saw yesterday, says the LORD, I swear I will repay you on this very plot of ground.' Now therefore lift him out and throw him on the plot of ground, in accordance with the word of the LORD."

*Ahaziah of Judah Killed*  
(2 Chr 22:7-9)

<sup>27</sup> When King Ahaziah of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Beth-haggan. Jehu pursued him, saying, "Shoot him also!" And they shot him in the chariot at the ascent to Gur, which is by Ibleam. Then he fled to Megiddo, and died there. <sup>28</sup> His officers carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem,

and buried him in his tomb with his ancestors in the city of David.

<sup>29</sup> In the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab, Ahaziah began to reign over Judah.

*Jezebel's Violent Death*

<sup>30</sup> When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; she painted her eyes, and adorned her head, and looked out of the window. <sup>31</sup> As Jehu entered the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" <sup>32</sup> He looked up to the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. <sup>33</sup> He said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down; some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, which trampled on her. <sup>34</sup> Then he went in and ate and drank; he said, "See to that cursed woman and bury her; for she is a king's daughter." <sup>35</sup> But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. <sup>36</sup> When they came back and told him, he said, "This is the word of the LORD,

which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, 'In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; <sup>37</sup> the corpse of Jezebel shall be like dung on the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that no one can say, This is Jezebel.' "

**Acts 17:10-15** (NRSV)

*Paul and Silas in Beroea*

<sup>10</sup> That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas off to Beroea; and when they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. <sup>11</sup> These Jews were more receptive than those in Thessalonica, for they welcomed the message very eagerly and examined the scriptures every day to see whether these things were so. <sup>12</sup> Many of them therefore believed, including not a few Greek women and men of high standing. <sup>13</sup> But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Beroea as well, they came there too, to stir up and incite the crowds. <sup>14</sup> Then the believers immediately sent Paul away to the coast, but Silas and Timothy remained behind.

<sup>15</sup> Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him.

**Psalm 144:9-15** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> I will sing a new song to you, O God;  
upon a ten-stringed harp  
I will play to you,  
<sup>10</sup> the one who gives victory to kings,  
who rescues his servant David.  
<sup>11</sup> Rescue me from the cruel sword,  
and deliver me from the hand of aliens,  
whose mouths speak lies,  
and whose right hands are false.  
<sup>12</sup> May our sons in their youth  
be like plants full grown,  
our daughters like corner pillars,  
cut for the building of a palace.  
<sup>13</sup> May our barns be filled,  
with produce of every kind;  
may our sheep increase by thousands,

14 by tens of thousands in  
our fields,  
and may our cattle be  
heavy with young.  
May there be no breach in  
the walls, no exile,  
and no cry of distress in  
our streets.  
15 Happy are the people to  
whom such blessings  
fall;  
happy are the people  
whose God is the LORD.

**Proverbs 30:11–14** (NRSV)

11 There are those who curse  
their fathers  
and do not bless their  
mothers.  
12 There are those who are  
pure in their own eyes  
yet are not cleansed of  
their filthiness.  
13 There are those—how  
lofty are their eyes,  
how high their eyelids  
lift!—  
14 there are those whose  
teeth are swords,  
whose teeth are knives,  
to devour the poor from  
off the earth,  
the needy from among  
mortals.

## December 20



**2 Kings 10:1-31** (NRSV)

*Massacre of Ahab's  
Descendants*

Now Ahab had seventy  
sons in Samaria. So Jehu wrote  
letters and sent them to  
Samaria, to the rulers of  
Jezreel, to the elders, and to  
the guardians of the sons of  
Ahab, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Since your  
master’s sons are with you  
and you have at your disposal  
chariots and horses, a fortified  
city, and weapons, <sup>3</sup>select the  
son of your master who is the  
best qualified, set him on his  
father’s throne, and fight for  
your master’s house.” <sup>4</sup>But  
they were utterly terrified and  
said, “Look, two kings could  
not withstand him; how then  
can we stand?” <sup>5</sup>So the  
steward of the palace, and the  
governor of the city, along  
with the elders and the  
guardians, sent word to Jehu:  
“We are your servants; we will  
do anything you say. We will  
not make anyone king; do  
whatever you think right.”  
<sup>6</sup>Then he wrote them a

second letter, saying, "If you are on my side, and if you are ready to obey me, take the heads of your master's sons and come to me at Jezreel tomorrow at this time." Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the leaders of the city, who were charged with their upbringing. <sup>7</sup> When the letter reached them, they took the king's sons and killed them, seventy persons; they put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel. <sup>8</sup> When the messenger came and told him, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning." <sup>9</sup> Then in the morning when he went out, he stood and said to all the people, "You are innocent. It was I who conspired against my master and killed him; but who struck down all these? <sup>10</sup> Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the LORD has done what he said through his servant Elijah." <sup>11</sup> So Jehu

killed all who were left of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, all his leaders, close friends, and priests, until he left him no survivor.

<sup>12</sup> Then he set out and went to Samaria. On the way, when he was at Beth-eked of the Shepherds, <sup>13</sup> Jehu met relatives of King Ahaziah of Judah and said, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are kin of Ahaziah; we have come down to visit the royal princes and the sons of the queen mother." <sup>14</sup> He said, "Take them alive." They took them alive, and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two in all; he spared none of them.

<sup>15</sup> When he left there, he met Jehonadab son of Rechab coming to meet him; he greeted him, and said to him, "Is your heart as true to mine as mine is to yours?" Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said, "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave him his hand. Jehu took him up with him into the chariot. <sup>16</sup> He said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD." So he had him ride in his chariot.

<sup>17</sup> When he came to Samaria, he killed all who were left to Ahab in Samaria, until he had wiped them out, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke to Elijah.

*Slaughter of  
Worshippers of Baal*

<sup>18</sup> Then Jehu assembled all the people and said to them, "Ahab offered Baal small service; but Jehu will offer much more. <sup>19</sup> Now therefore summon to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers, and all his priests; let none be missing, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal; whoever is missing shall not live." But Jehu was acting with cunning in order to destroy the worshipers of Baal. <sup>20</sup> Jehu decreed, "Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed it. <sup>21</sup> Jehu sent word throughout all Israel; all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was no one left who did not come. They entered the temple of Baal, until the temple of Baal was filled from wall to wall.

<sup>22</sup> He said to the keeper of the wardrobe, "Bring out the

vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." So he brought out the vestments for them. <sup>23</sup> Then Jehu entered the temple of Baal with Jehonadab son of Rechab; he said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and see that there is no worshiper of the LORD here among you, but only worshipers of Baal." <sup>24</sup> Then they proceeded to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings.

Now Jehu had stationed eighty men outside, saying, "Whoever allows any of those to escape whom I deliver into your hands shall forfeit his life." <sup>25</sup> As soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guards and to the officers, "Come in and kill them; let no one escape." So they put them to the sword. The guards and the officers threw them out, and then went into the citadel of the temple of Baal. <sup>26</sup> They brought out the pillar that was in the temple of Baal, and burned it. <sup>27</sup> Then they demolished the pillar of Baal, and destroyed the temple of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day.

<sup>28</sup> Thus Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel. <sup>29</sup> But Jehu did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit—the golden calves that were in Bethel and in Dan. <sup>30</sup> The LORD said to Jehu, “Because you have done well in carrying out what I consider right, and in accordance with all that was in my heart have dealt with the house of Ahab, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.” <sup>31</sup> But Jehu was not careful to follow the law of the LORD the God of Israel with all his heart; he did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which he caused Israel to commit.

**Acts 17:16-34** (NRSV)

*Paul in Athens*

<sup>16</sup> While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup> So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. <sup>18</sup> Also some Epicurean

and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, “What does this babbler want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities.” (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) <sup>19</sup> So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?” <sup>20</sup> It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means.”

<sup>21</sup> Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

<sup>22</sup> Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. <sup>23</sup> For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, he



who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands,<sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.<sup>26</sup> From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live,<sup>27</sup> so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us.

<sup>28</sup> For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said,

‘For we too are his offspring.’

<sup>29</sup> Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.

<sup>30</sup> While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

<sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day

on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

<sup>32</sup> When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, “We will hear you again about this.”<sup>33</sup> At that point Paul left them.<sup>34</sup> But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

#### **Psalm 145:1-7 (NRSV)**

##### *The Greatness and the Goodness of God*

Praise. Of David.

- 1 I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.
- 2 Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever.
- 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable.
- 4 One generation shall laud your works to another,

and shall declare your  
mighty acts.

5 On the glorious splendor  
of your majesty,  
and on your wondrous  
works, I will meditate.

6 The might of your  
awesome deeds shall  
be proclaimed,  
and I will declare your  
greatness.

7 They shall celebrate the  
fame of your abundant  
goodness,  
and shall sing aloud of  
your righteousness.

### **Proverbs 30:15–16** (NRSV)

15 The leech has two  
daughters;  
“Give, give,” they cry.  
Three things are never  
satisfied;  
four never say,  
“Enough”:

16 Sheol, the barren womb,  
the earth ever thirsty for  
water,  
and the fire that never  
says, “Enough.”

## **December 21**



### **2 Kings 10:32 – 11:20** (NRSV)

#### *Death of Jehu*

<sup>32</sup> In those days the LORD began to trim off parts of Israel. Hazael defeated them throughout the territory of Israel: <sup>33</sup> from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the Wadi Arnon, that is, Gilead and Bashan. <sup>34</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all that he did, and all his power, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? <sup>35</sup> So Jehu slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. His son Jehoahaz succeeded him. <sup>36</sup> The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

#### *Athaliah Reigns over Judah* (2 Chr 22:10–12)

**11** Now when Athaliah, Ahaziah’s mother, saw that her son was dead, she set

about to destroy all the royal family.<sup>2</sup> But Jehosheba, King Joram's daughter, Ahaziah's sister, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's children who were about to be killed; she put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus she hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not killed;<sup>3</sup> he remained with her six years, hidden in the house of the LORD, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

*Jehoiada Anoints  
the Child Joash  
(2 Chr 23:1-11)*

<sup>4</sup> But in the seventh year Jehoiada summoned the captains of the Carites and of the guards and had them come to him in the house of the LORD. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the house of the LORD; then he showed them the king's son.<sup>5</sup> He commanded them, "This is what you are to do: one-third of you, those who go off duty on the sabbath and guard the king's house<sup>6</sup> (another third being at the gate Sur and a third at the gate behind the guards), shall

guard the palace;<sup>7</sup> and your two divisions that come on duty in force on the sabbath and guard the house of the LORD<sup>8</sup> shall surround the king, each with weapons in hand; and whoever approaches the ranks is to be killed. Be with the king in his comings and goings."

<sup>9</sup> The captains did according to all that the priest Jehoiada commanded; each brought his men who were to go off duty on the sabbath, with those who were to come on duty on the sabbath, and came to the priest Jehoiada.

<sup>10</sup> The priest delivered to the captains the spears and shields that had been King David's, which were in the house of the LORD;<sup>11</sup> the guards stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, from the south side of the house to the north side of the house, around the altar and the house, to guard the king on every side.<sup>12</sup> Then he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant; they proclaimed him king, and anointed him;

they clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!"

*Death of Athaliah*

(2 Chr 23:12–24:1)

<sup>13</sup> When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she went into the house of the LORD to the people; <sup>14</sup> when she looked, there was the king standing by the pillar, according to custom, with the captains and the trumpeters beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason! Treason!" <sup>15</sup> Then the priest Jehoiada commanded the captains who were set over the army, "Bring her out between the ranks, and kill with the sword anyone who follows her." For the priest said, "Let her not be killed in the house of the LORD." <sup>16</sup> So they laid hands on her; she went through the horses' entrance to the king's house, and there she was put to death.

<sup>17</sup> Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and people, that

they should be the LORD's people; also between the king and the people. <sup>18</sup> Then all the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and tore it down; his altars and his images they broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, before the altars. The priest posted guards over the house of the LORD. <sup>19</sup> He took the captains, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land; then they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, marching through the gate of the guards to the king's house. He took his seat on the throne of the kings. <sup>20</sup> So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house.

**Acts 18:1-11** (NRSV)

*Paul in Corinth*

After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. <sup>2</sup> There he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to

see them, <sup>3</sup> and, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them, and they worked together—by trade they were tentmakers. <sup>4</sup> Every sabbath he would argue in the synagogue and would try to convince Jews and Greeks.

<sup>5</sup> When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with proclaiming the word, testifying to the Jews that the Messiah was Jesus. <sup>6</sup> When they opposed and reviled him, in protest he shook the dust from his clothes and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” <sup>7</sup> Then he left the synagogue and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God; his house was next door to the synagogue. <sup>8</sup> Crispus, the official of the synagogue, became a believer in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul became believers and were baptized. <sup>9</sup> One night the Lord said to Paul in a vision, “**Do not be afraid, but speak and**

**do not be silent;** <sup>10</sup> **for I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you, for there are many in this city who are my people.”** <sup>11</sup> He stayed there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

**Psalm 145:8-21 (NRSV)**

- <sup>8</sup> The LORD is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and  
abounding in steadfast  
love.
- <sup>9</sup> The LORD is good to all,  
and his compassion is  
over all that he has  
made.
- <sup>10</sup> All your works shall give  
thanks to you, O LORD,  
and all your faithful shall  
bless you.
- <sup>11</sup> They shall speak of the  
glory of your kingdom,  
and tell of your power,  
to make known to all  
people your mighty  
deeds,  
and the glorious  
splendor of your  
kingdom.
- <sup>12</sup> Your kingdom is an  
everlasting kingdom,

and your dominion  
endures throughout all  
generations.

The LORD is faithful in all  
his words,  
and gracious in all his  
deeds.

<sup>14</sup> The LORD upholds all who  
are falling,  
and raises up all who are  
bowed down.

<sup>15</sup> The eyes of all look to you,  
and you give them their  
food in due season.

<sup>16</sup> You open your hand,  
satisfying the desire of  
every living thing.

<sup>17</sup> The LORD is just in all his  
ways,  
and kind in all his doings.

<sup>18</sup> *The LORD is near to all who  
call on him,  
to all who call on him in  
truth.*

<sup>19</sup> He fulfills the desire of all  
who fear him;  
he also hears their cry,  
and saves them.

<sup>20</sup> The LORD watches over all  
who love him,  
but all the wicked he will  
destroy.

<sup>21</sup> My mouth will speak the  
praise of the LORD,

and all flesh will bless his  
holy name forever and  
ever.

### **Proverbs 30:17** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> The eye that mocks a  
father  
and scorns to obey a  
mother  
will be pecked out by the  
ravens of the valley  
and eaten by the  
vultures.

## **December 22**



### **2 Kings 11:21 – 12:21** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> Jehoash was seven years  
old when he began to reign.

#### *The Temple Repaired* (2 Chr 24:1–14)

In the seventh year of  
Jehu, Jehoash began to reign;  
he reigned forty years in  
Jerusalem. His mother's name  
was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

<sup>2</sup> Jehoash did what was right in  
the sight of the LORD all his

days, because the priest Jehoiada instructed him.

<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the high places were not taken away; the people continued to sacrifice and make offerings on the high places.

<sup>4</sup> Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money offered as sacred donations that is brought into the house of the LORD, the money for which each person is assessed—the money from the assessment of persons—and the money from the voluntary offerings brought into the house of the LORD, <sup>5</sup> let the priests receive from each of the donors; and let them repair the house wherever any need of repairs is discovered." <sup>6</sup> But by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash the priests had made no repairs on the house.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore King Jehoash summoned the priest Jehoiada with the other priests and said to them, "Why are you not repairing the house? Now therefore do not accept any more money from your donors but hand it over for the repair of the house." <sup>8</sup> So the priests agreed that they would

neither accept more money from the people nor repair the house.

<sup>9</sup> Then the priest Jehoiada took a chest, made a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar on the right side as one entered the house of the LORD; the priests who guarded the threshold put in it all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> Whenever they saw that there was a great deal of money in the chest, the king's secretary and the high priest went up, counted the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and tied it up in bags. <sup>11</sup> They would give the money that was weighed out into the hands of the workers who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; then they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the house of the LORD, <sup>12</sup> to the masons and the stonecutters, as well as to buy timber and quarried stone for making repairs on the house of the LORD, as well as for any outlay for repairs of the house. <sup>13</sup> But for the house of the LORD no basins of silver,

snuffers, bowls, trumpets, or any vessels of gold, or of silver, were made from the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, <sup>14</sup> for that was given to the workers who were repairing the house of the LORD with it. <sup>15</sup> They did not ask an accounting from those into whose hand they delivered the money to pay out to the workers, for they dealt honestly. <sup>16</sup> The money from the guilt offerings and the money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the LORD; it belonged to the priests.

#### *Hazael Threatens Jerusalem*

<sup>17</sup> At that time King Hazael of Aram went up, fought against Gath, and took it. But when Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem, <sup>18</sup> King Jehoash of Judah took all the votive gifts that Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his ancestors, the kings of Judah, had dedicated, as well as his own votive gifts, all the gold that was found in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent these to King Hazael

of Aram. Then Hazael withdrew from Jerusalem.

#### *Death of Joash*

(2 Chr 24:23–27)

<sup>19</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? <sup>20</sup> His servants arose, devised a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of Millo, on the way that goes down to Silla. <sup>21</sup> It was Jozacar son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, who struck him down, so that he died. He was buried with his ancestors in the city of David; then his son Amaziah succeeded him.

#### **Acts 18:12-22** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal. <sup>13</sup> They said, "This man is persuading people to worship God in ways that are contrary to the law." <sup>14</sup> Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of crime or serious villainy, I would be



justified in accepting the complaint of you Jews;<sup>15</sup> but since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves; I do not wish to be a judge of these matters.”<sup>16</sup> And he dismissed them from the tribunal.

<sup>17</sup> Then all of them seized Sosthenes, the official of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of these things.

#### *Paul's Return to Antioch*

<sup>18</sup> After staying there for a considerable time, Paul said farewell to the believers and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had his hair cut, for he was under a vow.

<sup>19</sup> When they reached Ephesus, he left them there, but first he himself went into the synagogue and had a discussion with the Jews.

<sup>20</sup> When they asked him to stay longer, he declined;<sup>21</sup> but on taking leave of them, he said, “I will return to you, if God wills.” Then he set sail from Ephesus.

#### **Psalm 146:1-2 (NRSV)**

##### *Praise for God's Help*

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
- <sup>2</sup> I will praise the LORD as long as I live;  
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

#### **Proverbs 30:18–20 (NRSV)**

- <sup>18</sup> Three things are too wonderful for me;  
four I do not understand:
- <sup>19</sup> the way of an eagle in the sky,  
the way of a snake on a rock,  
the way of a ship on the high seas,  
and the way of a man with a girl.
- <sup>20</sup> This is the way of an adulteress:  
she eats, and wipes her mouth,  
and says, “I have done no wrong.”

# December 23



## 2 Kings 13:1-25 (NRSV)

### *Jehoahaz Reigns over Israel*

In the twenty-third year of King Joash son of Ahaziah of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned seventeen years. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. <sup>3</sup> The anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, so that he gave them repeatedly into the hand of King Hazael of Aram, then into the hand of Ben-hadad son of Hazael. <sup>4</sup> But Jehoahaz entreated the LORD, and the LORD heeded him; for he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram oppressed them. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the LORD gave Israel a savior, so that they escaped from the hand of the Arameans; and the people of Israel lived in their homes as formerly. <sup>6</sup> Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam,

which he caused Israel to sin, but walked in them; the sacred pole also remained in Samaria. <sup>7</sup> So Jehoahaz was left with an army of not more than fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. <sup>8</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did, including his might, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? <sup>9</sup> So Jehoahaz slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria; then his son Joash succeeded him.

### *Jehoash Reigns over Israel*

<sup>10</sup> In the thirty-seventh year of King Joash of Judah, Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned sixteen years. <sup>11</sup> He also did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin, but he walked in them. <sup>12</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, as well as

the might with which he fought against King Amaziah of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? <sup>13</sup> So Joash slept with his ancestors, and Jeroboam sat upon his throne; Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

### *Death of Elisha*

<sup>14</sup> Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die, King Joash of Israel went down to him, and wept before him, crying, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" <sup>15</sup> Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows"; so he took a bow and arrows. <sup>16</sup> Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow"; and he drew it. Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. <sup>17</sup> Then he said, "Open the window eastward"; and he opened it. Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. Then he said, "The LORD's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram! For you shall fight the Arameans in Aphek until you have made an end of them." <sup>18</sup> He continued, "Take the arrows"; and he

took them. He said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them"; he struck three times, and stopped. <sup>19</sup> Then the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck down Aram until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down Aram only three times."

<sup>20</sup> So Elisha died, and they buried him. Now bands of Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year. <sup>21</sup> As a man was being buried, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha; as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life and stood on his feet.

### *Israel Recaptures Cities from Aram*

<sup>22</sup> Now King Hazael of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. <sup>23</sup> But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them; he turned toward them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them; nor has he

banished them from his presence until now.

<sup>24</sup> When King Hazael of Aram died, his son Ben-hadad succeeded him. <sup>25</sup> Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz took again from Ben-hadad son of Hazael the towns that he had taken from his father Jehoahaz in war. Three times Joash defeated him and recovered the towns of Israel.

**Acts 18:23-28** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. <sup>23</sup> After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

*Ministry of Apollos*

<sup>24</sup> Now there came to Ephesus a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria. He was an eloquent man, well-versed in the scriptures. <sup>25</sup> He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord; and he spoke with burning enthusiasm and taught accurately the things

concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup> He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately. <sup>27</sup> And when he wished to cross over to Achaia, the believers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. On his arrival he greatly helped those who through grace had become believers, <sup>28</sup> for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus.

**Psalm 146:3-10** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Do not put your trust in princes,  
in mortals, in whom  
there is no help.  
<sup>4</sup> When their breath  
departs, they return to  
the earth;  
on that very day their  
plans perish.  
<sup>5</sup> Happy are those whose  
help is the God of  
Jacob,

whose hope is in the  
LORD their God,  
6 who made heaven and  
earth,  
the sea, and all that is in  
them;  
7 who keeps faith forever;  
who executes justice for  
the oppressed;  
who gives food to the  
hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners  
free;

8 the LORD opens the eyes  
of the blind.  
The LORD lifts up those who  
are bowed down;  
the LORD loves the  
righteous.

9 The LORD watches over the  
strangers;  
he upholds the orphan  
and the widow,  
but the way of the  
wicked he brings to  
ruin.

10 The LORD will reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, for all  
generations.

Praise the LORD!

### **Proverbs 30:21–23** (NRSV)

21 Under three things the  
earth trembles;

under four it cannot bear  
up:

22 a slave when he becomes  
king,  
and a fool when gluttoned  
with food;

23 an unloved woman when  
she gets a husband,  
and a maid when she  
succeeds her mistress.

## **December 24**



### **2 Kings 14:1-29** (NRSV)

*Amaziah Reigns over Judah  
(2 Chr 25:1–26:2)*

In the second year of King Joash son of Joahaz of Israel, King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, began to reign. <sup>2</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like his ancestor David; in all things he did as his father

Joash had done. <sup>4</sup> But the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. <sup>5</sup> As soon as the royal power was firmly in his hand he killed his servants who had murdered his father the king. <sup>6</sup> But he did not put to death the children of the murderers; according to what is written in the book of the law of Moses, where the LORD commanded, "The parents shall not be put to death for the children, or the children be put to death for the parents; but all shall be put to death for their own sins."

<sup>7</sup> He killed ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and took Sela by storm; he called it Jokthe-el, which is its name to this day.

<sup>8</sup> Then Amaziah sent messengers to King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another in the face."

<sup>9</sup> King Jehoash of Israel sent word to King Amaziah of Judah, "A thornbush on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife';

but a wild animal of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thornbush. <sup>10</sup> You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Be content with your glory, and stay at home; for why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?"

<sup>11</sup> But Amaziah would not listen. So King Jehoash of Israel went up; he and King Amaziah of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. <sup>12</sup> Judah was defeated by Israel; everyone fled home.

<sup>13</sup> King Jehoash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah son of Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh; he came to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits. <sup>14</sup> He seized all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, as well as hostages; then he returned to Samaria.

<sup>15</sup> Now the rest of the acts that Jehoash did, his might,

and how he fought with King Amaziah of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

<sup>16</sup> Jehoash slept with his ancestors, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; then his son Jeroboam succeeded him.

<sup>17</sup> King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz of Israel. <sup>18</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?

<sup>19</sup> They made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. <sup>20</sup> They brought him on horses; he was buried in Jerusalem with his ancestors in the city of David.

<sup>21</sup> All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah.

<sup>22</sup> He rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after King Amaziah slept with his ancestors.

### *Jeroboam II Reigns over Israel*

<sup>23</sup> In the fifteenth year of King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel began to reign in Samaria; he reigned forty-one years. <sup>24</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin.

<sup>25</sup> He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher.

<sup>26</sup> For the LORD saw that the distress of Israel was very bitter; there was no one left, bond or free, and no one to help Israel. <sup>27</sup> But the LORD had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash.

<sup>28</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he fought, and how he recovered for Israel Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged

to Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

<sup>29</sup> Jeroboam slept with his ancestors, the kings of Israel; his son Zechariah succeeded him.

**Acts 19:1-12** (NRSV)

*Paul in Ephesus*

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. <sup>2</sup> He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” They replied, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” <sup>3</sup> Then he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They answered, “Into John’s baptism.” <sup>4</sup> Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” <sup>5</sup> On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—

<sup>7</sup> altogether there were about twelve of them.

<sup>8</sup> He entered the synagogue and for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God. <sup>9</sup> When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation, he left them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup> This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

*The Sons of Sceva*

<sup>11</sup> God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, <sup>12</sup> so that when the handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them.

**Psalms 147:1-11** (NRSV)

*Praise for God’s  
Care for Jerusalem*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
How good it is to sing  
praises to our God;



for he is gracious, and a  
song of praise is fitting.  
2 The LORD builds up  
Jerusalem;  
he gathers the outcasts  
of Israel.  
3 He heals the  
brokenhearted,  
and binds up their  
wounds.  
4 He determines the number  
of the stars;  
he gives to all of them  
their names.  
5 Great is our Lord, and  
abundant in power;  
his understanding is  
beyond measure.  
6 The LORD lifts up the  
downtrodden;  
he casts the wicked to  
the ground.  
7 Sing to the LORD with  
thanksgiving;  
make melody to our God  
on the lyre.  
8 He covers the heavens  
with clouds,  
prepares rain for the  
earth,  
makes grass grow on the  
hills.  
9 He gives to the animals  
their food,

and to the young ravens  
when they cry.  
10 His delight is not in the  
strength of the horse,  
nor his pleasure in the  
speed of a runner;  
11 but the LORD takes  
pleasure in those who  
fear him,  
in those who hope in his  
steadfast love.

**Proverbs 30:24–28 (NRSV)**

24 Four things on earth are  
small,  
yet they are exceedingly  
wise:  
25 the ants are a people  
without strength,  
yet they provide their  
food in the summer;  
26 the badgers are a people  
without power,  
yet they make their  
homes in the rocks;  
27 the locusts have no king,  
yet all of them march in  
rank;  
28 the lizard can be grasped  
in the hand,  
yet it is found in kings'  
palaces.

# December 25



## 2 Kings 15:1-31 (NRSV)

### *Azariah Reigns over Judah* (2 Chr 26:3–23)

In the twenty-seventh year of King Jeroboam of Israel King Azariah son of Amaziah of Judah began to reign. <sup>2</sup> He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his father Amaziah had done.

<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. <sup>5</sup> The LORD struck the king, so that he was leprous to the day of his death, and lived in a separate house. Jotham the king's son was in charge of the palace, governing the people of the land. <sup>6</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?

<sup>7</sup> Azariah slept with his

ancestors; they buried him with his ancestors in the city of David; his son Jotham succeeded him.

### *Zechariah Reigns over Israel*

<sup>8</sup> In the thirty-eighth year of King Azariah of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. <sup>9</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his ancestors had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin.

<sup>10</sup> Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck him down in public and killed him, and reigned in place of him. <sup>11</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Zechariah are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

<sup>12</sup> This was the promise of the LORD that he gave to Jehu, "Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And so it happened.

### *Shallum Reigns over Israel*

<sup>13</sup> Shallum son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of King Uzziah of

Judah; he reigned one month in Samaria. <sup>14</sup> Then Menahem son of Gadi came up from Tirzah and came to Samaria; he struck down Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him; he reigned in place of him. <sup>15</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Shallum, including the conspiracy that he made, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel. <sup>16</sup> At that time Menahem sacked Tiphseh, all who were in it and its territory from Tirzah on; because they did not open it to him, he sacked it. He ripped open all the pregnant women in it.

*Menahem Reigns over Israel*

<sup>17</sup> In the thirty-ninth year of King Azariah of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi began to reign over Israel; he reigned ten years in Samaria. <sup>18</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart all his days from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. <sup>19</sup> King Pul of Assyria came against the land; Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, so that he might help him

confirm his hold on the royal power. <sup>20</sup> Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from all the wealthy, fifty shekels of silver from each one, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land. <sup>21</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? <sup>22</sup> Menahem slept with his ancestors, and his son Pekahiah succeeded him.

*Pekahiah Reigns over Israel*

<sup>23</sup> In the fiftieth year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned two years. <sup>24</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. <sup>25</sup> Pekah son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him with fifty of the Gileadites, and attacked him in Samaria, in the citadel of the palace along with Argob and Arieah; he killed him, and reigned in place of

him. <sup>26</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Pekahiah, and all that he did, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

*Pekah Reigns over Israel*

<sup>27</sup> In the fifty-second year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twenty years. <sup>28</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin.

<sup>29</sup> In the days of King Pekah of Israel, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried the people captive to Assyria.

<sup>30</sup> Then Hoshea son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah, attacked him, and killed him; he reigned in place of him, in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. <sup>31</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, are written in the

Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

**Acts 19:13-22** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." <sup>14</sup> Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. <sup>15</sup> But the evil spirit said to them in reply, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"

<sup>16</sup> Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. <sup>17</sup> When this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, everyone was awestruck; and the name of the Lord Jesus was praised.

<sup>18</sup> Also many of those who became believers confessed and disclosed their practices.

<sup>19</sup> A number of those who practiced magic collected their books and burned them publicly; when the value of these books was calculated, it

was found to come to fifty thousand silver coins.<sup>20</sup> So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

*The Riot in Ephesus*

<sup>21</sup> Now after these things had been accomplished, Paul resolved in the Spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia, and then to go on to Jerusalem. He said, "After I have gone there, I must also see Rome."<sup>22</sup> So he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed for some time longer in Asia.

**Psalms 147:12-20** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!  
Praise your God, O Zion!  
<sup>13</sup> For he strengthens the bars of your gates;  
he blesses your children within you.  
<sup>14</sup> He grants peace within your borders;  
he fills you with the finest of wheat.  
<sup>15</sup> He sends out his command to the earth;  
his word runs swiftly.  
<sup>16</sup> He gives snow like wool;

he scatters frost like ashes.

<sup>17</sup> He hurls down hail like crumbs—  
who can stand before his cold?  
<sup>18</sup> He sends out his word, and melts them;  
he makes his wind blow,  
and the waters flow.  
<sup>19</sup> He declares his word to Jacob,  
his statutes and ordinances to Israel.  
<sup>20</sup> He has not dealt thus with any other nation;  
they do not know his ordinances.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 30:29-31** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> Three things are stately in their stride;  
four are stately in their gait:  
<sup>30</sup> the lion, which is mightiest among wild animals  
and does not turn back before any;  
<sup>31</sup> the strutting rooster, the he-goat,  
and a king striding before his people.

# December 26



**2 Kings 15:32 – 16:20** (NRSV)

*Jotham Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 27:1–9)

<sup>32</sup> In the second year of King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel, King Jotham son of Uzziah of Judah began to reign. <sup>33</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha daughter of Zadok. <sup>34</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his father Uzziah had done.

<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD. <sup>36</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?

<sup>37</sup> In those days the LORD began to send King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah against Judah. <sup>38</sup> Jotham slept with his ancestors, and was

buried with his ancestors in the city of David, his ancestor; his son Ahaz succeeded him.

*Ahaz Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 28:1–27)

**16** In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, King Ahaz son of Jotham of Judah began to reign. <sup>2</sup> Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his ancestor David had done, <sup>3</sup> but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even made his son pass through fire, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> He sacrificed and made offerings on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

<sup>5</sup> Then King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel came up to wage war on Jerusalem; they besieged Ahaz but could not conquer him. <sup>6</sup> At that time the king of Edom recovered Elath for Edom, and drove the

Judeans from Elath; and the Edomites came to Elath, where they live to this day.

<sup>7</sup> Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up, and rescue me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me." <sup>8</sup> Ahaz also took the silver and gold found in the house of the LORD and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria. <sup>9</sup> The king of Assyria listened to him; the king of Assyria marched up against Damascus, and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir; then he killed Rezin.

<sup>10</sup> When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, he saw the altar that was at Damascus. King Ahaz sent to the priest Uriah a model of the altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details. <sup>11</sup> The priest Uriah built the altar; in accordance with all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus, just so did the priest Uriah build it, before King Ahaz arrived from Damascus.

<sup>12</sup> When the king came from Damascus, the king viewed the altar. Then the king drew near to the altar, went up on it, <sup>13</sup> and offered his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured his drink offering, and dashed the blood of his offerings of well-being against the altar. <sup>14</sup> The bronze altar that was before the LORD he removed from the front of the house, from the place between his altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of his altar. <sup>15</sup> King Ahaz commanded the priest Uriah, saying, "Upon the great altar offer the morning burnt offering, and the evening grain offering, and the king's burnt offering, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offering; then dash against it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice; but the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by." <sup>16</sup> The priest Uriah did everything that King Ahaz commanded.

<sup>17</sup> Then King Ahaz cut off the frames of the stands, and

removed the laver from them; he removed the sea from the bronze oxen that were under it, and put it on a pediment of stone.<sup>18</sup> The covered portal for use on the sabbath that had been built inside the palace, and the outer entrance for the king he removed from the house of the LORD. He did this because of the king of Assyria.<sup>19</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?<sup>20</sup> Ahaz slept with his ancestors, and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David; his son Hezekiah succeeded him.

**Acts 19:23-41 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the Way.<sup>24</sup> A man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the artisans.<sup>25</sup> These he gathered together, with the workers of the same trade, and said, "Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business."<sup>26</sup> You also see and hear that not only in

Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods.<sup>27</sup> And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her."

<sup>28</sup> When they heard this, they were enraged and shouted, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"<sup>29</sup> The city was filled with the confusion; and people rushed together to the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's travel companions.<sup>30</sup> Paul wished to go into the crowd, but the disciples would not let him; <sup>31</sup> even some officials of the province of Asia, who were friendly to him, sent him a message urging him not to venture into the theater.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was



in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.<sup>33</sup> Some of the crowd gave instructions to Alexander, whom the Jews had pushed forward. And Alexander motioned for silence and tried to make a defense before the people.

<sup>34</sup> But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours all of them shouted in unison, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"<sup>35</sup> But when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "Citizens of Ephesus, who is there that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven?"<sup>36</sup> Since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash.<sup>37</sup> You have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess.

<sup>38</sup> If therefore Demetrius and the artisans with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges there against one another.<sup>39</sup> If there is anything

further you want to know, it must be settled in the regular assembly.<sup>40</sup> For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion."

<sup>41</sup> When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

**Psalm 148:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Praise for God's*

*Universal Glory*

- 1 Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise him in the heights!
- 2 Praise him, all his angels;  
praise him, all his host!
- 3 Praise him, sun and moon;  
praise him, all you shining stars!
- 4 Praise him, you highest heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens!

**Proverbs 30:32 (NRSV)**

- <sup>32</sup> If you have been foolish, exalting yourself, or if you have been devising evil, put your hand on your mouth.

# December 27



## 2 Kings 17:1-28 (NRSV)

### *Hoshea Reigns over Israel*

In the twelfth year of King Ahaz of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel; he reigned nine years. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, yet not like the kings of Israel who were before him. <sup>3</sup> King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against him; Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute. <sup>4</sup> But the king of Assyria found treachery in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to King So of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria confined him and imprisoned him.

### *Israel Carried Captive to Assyria*

<sup>5</sup> Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria; for three years he besieged it. <sup>6</sup> In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria

captured Samaria; he carried the Israelites away to Assyria. He placed them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

<sup>7</sup> This occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They had worshiped other gods <sup>8</sup> and walked in the customs of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had introduced. <sup>9</sup> The people of Israel secretly did things that were not right against the LORD their God. They built for themselves high places at all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city; <sup>10</sup> they set up for themselves pillars and sacred poles on every high hill and under every green tree; <sup>11</sup> there they made offerings on all the high places, as the nations did whom the LORD carried away before them. They did wicked things, provoking the LORD to anger; <sup>12</sup> they served idols, of which

the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this."<sup>13</sup> Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the law that I commanded your ancestors and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets."<sup>14</sup> They would not listen but were stubborn, as their ancestors had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God.<sup>15</sup> They despised his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their ancestors, and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false; they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them that they should not do as they did.<sup>16</sup> They rejected all the commandments of the LORD their God and made for themselves cast images of two calves; they made a sacred pole, worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.<sup>17</sup> They made their sons and their daughters pass through

fire; they used divination and augury; and they sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger.<sup>18</sup> Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight; none was left but the tribe of Judah alone.

<sup>19</sup>Judah also did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God but walked in the customs that Israel had introduced.<sup>20</sup> The LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel; he punished them and gave them into the hand of plunderers, until he had banished them from his presence.

<sup>21</sup>When he had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king. Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD and made them commit great sin.<sup>22</sup> The people of Israel continued in all the sins that Jeroboam committed; they did not depart from them<sup>23</sup> until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had foretold through all his servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled

from their own land to Assyria until this day.

*Assyria Resettles Samaria*

<sup>24</sup> The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel; they took possession of Samaria, and settled in its cities.

<sup>25</sup> When they first settled there, they did not worship the LORD; therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them. <sup>26</sup> So the king of Assyria was told, "The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the law of the god of the land; therefore he has sent lions among them; they are killing them, because they do not know the law of the god of the land." <sup>27</sup> Then the king of Assyria commanded, "Send there one of the priests whom you carried away from there; let him go and live there, and teach them the law of the god of the land." <sup>28</sup> So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and

lived in Bethel; he taught them how they should worship the LORD.

**Acts 20:1-15** (NRSV)

*Paul Goes to Macedonia and Greece*

After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. <sup>2</sup> When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers much encouragement, he came to Greece, <sup>3</sup> where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia. <sup>4</sup> He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Beroea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. <sup>5</sup> They went ahead and were waiting for us in Troas; <sup>6</sup> but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas,

where we stayed for seven days.

*Paul's Farewell Visit to Troas*

<sup>7</sup> On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight. <sup>8</sup> There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting. <sup>9</sup> A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, began to sink off into a deep sleep while Paul talked still longer. Overcome by sleep, he fell to the ground three floors below and was picked up dead. <sup>10</sup> But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." <sup>11</sup> Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left.

<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile they had taken the boy away alive and were not a little comforted.

*The Voyage from Troas to Miletus*

<sup>13</sup> We went ahead to the ship and set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there; for he had made this arrangement, intending to go by land himself. <sup>14</sup> When he met us in Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene. <sup>15</sup> We sailed from there, and on the following day we arrived opposite Chios. The next day we touched at Samos, and the day after that we came to Miletus.

**Psalm 148:5-14** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
for he commanded and they were created.  
<sup>6</sup> He established them forever and ever;  
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.  
<sup>7</sup> Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you sea monsters and all deeps,  
<sup>8</sup> fire and hail, snow and frost,  
stormy wind fulfilling his command!

9 Mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars!  
10 Wild animals and all cattle,  
creeping things and  
flying birds!  
11 Kings of the earth and all  
peoples,  
princes and all rulers of  
the earth!  
12 Young men and women  
alike,  
old and young together!  
13 Let them praise the name  
of the LORD,  
for his name alone is  
exalted;  
his glory is above earth  
and heaven.  
14 He has raised up a horn for  
his people,  
praise for all his faithful,  
for the people of Israel  
who are close to him.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 30:33 (NRSV)**

33 For as pressing milk  
produces curds,  
and pressing the nose  
produces blood,  
so pressing anger  
produces strife.

## December 28



**2 Kings 17:29 – 18:12 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup> But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the shrines of the high places that the people of Samaria had made, every nation in the cities in which they lived; <sup>30</sup> the people of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, the people of Cuth made Nergal, the people of Hamath made Ashima; <sup>31</sup> the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak; the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. <sup>32</sup> They also worshiped the LORD and appointed from among themselves all sorts of people as priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. <sup>33</sup> So they worshiped the LORD but also served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away. <sup>34</sup> To this day they continue to practice their former customs.

They do not worship the LORD and they do not follow the statutes or the ordinances or the law or the commandment that the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel. <sup>35</sup> The LORD had made a covenant with them and commanded them, "You shall not worship other gods or bow yourselves to them or serve them or sacrifice to them, <sup>36</sup> but you shall worship the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm; you shall bow yourselves to him, and to him you shall sacrifice. <sup>37</sup> The statutes and the ordinances and the law and the commandment that he wrote for you, you shall always be careful to observe. You shall not worship other gods; <sup>38</sup> you shall not forget the covenant that I have made with you. You shall not worship other gods, <sup>39</sup> but you shall worship the LORD your God; he will deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies." <sup>40</sup> They would not listen, however, but

they continued to practice their former custom.

<sup>41</sup> So these nations worshiped the LORD, but also served their carved images; to this day their children and their children's children continue to do as their ancestors did.

*Hezekiah's Reign over Judah*  
(2 Chr 29:1-2; 31:1)

**18** In the third year of King Hoshea son of Elah of Israel, Hezekiah son of King Ahaz of Judah began to reign. <sup>2</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi daughter of Zechariah. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD just as his ancestor David had done. <sup>4</sup> He removed the high places, broke down the pillars, and cut down the sacred pole. He broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it; it was called Nehushtan. <sup>5</sup> He trusted in the LORD the God of Israel; so that there was no one like him among all

the kings of Judah after him, or among those who were before him. <sup>6</sup> For he held fast to the LORD; he did not depart from following him but kept the commandments that the LORD commanded Moses. <sup>7</sup> The LORD was with him; wherever he went, he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him. <sup>8</sup> He attacked the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.

<sup>9</sup> In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of King Hoshea son of Elah of Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against Samaria, besieged it, <sup>10</sup> and at the end of three years, took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel, Samaria was taken.

<sup>11</sup> The king of Assyria carried the Israelites away to Assyria, settled them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, <sup>12</sup> because they did not obey the voice of the LORD their God but transgressed his covenant—all that Moses the

servant of the LORD had commanded; they neither listened nor obeyed.

**Acts 20:16-38** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; he was eager to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

*Paul Speaks to the  
Ephesian Elders*

<sup>17</sup> From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. <sup>18</sup> When they came to him, he said to them:

“You yourselves know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, <sup>19</sup> serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. <sup>20</sup> I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house, <sup>21</sup> as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus. <sup>22</sup> And now, as



a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there,<sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me.<sup>24</sup> But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace.

<sup>25</sup> "And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again.<sup>26</sup> Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you,<sup>27</sup> for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.<sup>28</sup> Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son.<sup>29</sup> I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.<sup>30</sup> Some even from your own group will

come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them.<sup>31</sup> Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears.<sup>32</sup> And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified.<sup>33</sup> I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing.<sup>34</sup> You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions.<sup>35</sup> In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, **'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'** "

<sup>36</sup> When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed.<sup>37</sup> There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him,<sup>38</sup> grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship.

**Psalms 149:1** (NRSV)

*Praise for God's  
Goodness to Israel*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Sing to the LORD a new  
song,  
his praise in the  
assembly of the  
faithful.

**Proverbs 31:1–7** (NRSV)

*The Teaching of  
King Lemuel's Mother*

<sup>1</sup> The words of King  
Lemuel. An oracle that his  
mother taught him:  
<sup>2</sup> No, my son! No, son of my  
womb!  
No, son of my vows!  
<sup>3</sup> Do not give your strength  
to women,  
your ways to those who  
destroy kings.  
<sup>4</sup> It is not for kings, O  
Lemuel,  
it is not for kings to drink  
wine,  
or for rulers to desire  
strong drink;  
<sup>5</sup> or else they will drink and  
forget what has been  
decreed,  
and will pervert the  
rights of all the  
afflicted.

<sup>6</sup> Give strong drink to one  
who is perishing,  
and wine to those in  
bitter distress;  
<sup>7</sup> let them drink and forget  
their poverty,  
and remember their  
misery no more.

## December 29



**2 Kings 18:13 – 19:4** (NRSV)

*Sennacherib Invades Judah*  
(*Isa 36:1–22; 2 Chr 32:1–19*)

<sup>13</sup> In the fourteenth year of  
King Hezekiah, King  
Sennacherib of Assyria came  
up against all the fortified  
cities of Judah and captured  
them. <sup>14</sup> King Hezekiah of  
Judah sent to the king of  
Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I  
have done wrong; withdraw  
from me; whatever you  
impose on me I will bear.” The  
king of Assyria demanded of  
King Hezekiah of Judah three  
hundred talents of silver and  
thirty talents of gold.

<sup>15</sup> Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house.

<sup>16</sup> At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the doorposts that King Hezekiah of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria. <sup>17</sup> The king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They went up and came to Jerusalem. When they arrived, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway to the Fuller's Field. <sup>18</sup> When they called for the king, there came out to them Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder.

<sup>19</sup> The Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah: Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you base this confidence of yours? <sup>20</sup> Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? On whom do you now rely,

that you have rebelled against me? <sup>21</sup> See, you are relying now on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. <sup>22</sup> But if you say to me, 'We rely on the LORD our God,' is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'? <sup>23</sup> Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.

<sup>24</sup> How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

<sup>25</sup> Moreover, is it without the LORD that I have come up against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it."

<sup>26</sup> Then Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, and Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants

in the Aramaic language, for we understand it; do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall.”<sup>27</sup> But the Rabshakeh said to them, “Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the people sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and to drink their own urine?”

<sup>28</sup> Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah, “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria!

<sup>29</sup> Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand.’<sup>30</sup> Do not let Hezekiah make you rely on the LORD by saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’

<sup>31</sup> Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make your peace with me and come out to me; then every one of you will eat from your own vine and your own fig tree, and drink water from your own cistern,’<sup>32</sup> until

I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and honey, that you may live and not die. Do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you by saying, The LORD will deliver us.<sup>33</sup> Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered its land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?<sup>34</sup> Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?<sup>35</sup> Who among all the gods of the countries have delivered their countries out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?’ ”

<sup>36</sup> But the people were silent and answered him not a word, for the king’s command was, “Do not answer him.”

<sup>37</sup> Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

*Hezekiah Consults Isaiah*  
(Isa 37:1–7)

**19** When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> And he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. <sup>3</sup> They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. <sup>4</sup> It may be that the LORD your God heard all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the LORD your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.”

**Acts 21:1-6** (NRSV)

*Paul’s Journey to Jerusalem*

When we had parted from them and set sail, we came by a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and

from there to Patara. <sup>2</sup> When we found a ship bound for Phoenicia, we went on board and set sail. <sup>3</sup> We came in sight of Cyprus; and leaving it on our left, we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, because the ship was to unload its cargo there. <sup>4</sup> We looked up the disciples and stayed there for seven days. Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup> When our days there were ended, we left and proceeded on our journey; and all of them, with wives and children, escorted us outside the city. There we knelt down on the beach and prayed <sup>6</sup> and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

**Psalm 149:2-9** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel be glad in its Maker;  
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.  
<sup>3</sup> Let them praise his name with dancing,  
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.



<sup>4</sup> For the LORD takes  
 pleasure in his people;  
 he adorns the humble  
 with victory.

<sup>5</sup> Let the faithful exult in  
 glory;  
 let them sing for joy on  
 their couches.

<sup>6</sup> Let the high praises of God  
 be in their throats  
 and two-edged swords in  
 their hands,  
<sup>7</sup> to execute vengeance on  
 the nations  
 and punishment on the  
 peoples,  
<sup>8</sup> to bind their kings with  
 fetters  
 and their nobles with  
 chains of iron,  
<sup>9</sup> to execute on them the  
 judgment decreed.  
 This is glory for all his  
 faithful ones.  
 Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 31:8–9** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Speak out for those who  
 cannot speak,  
 for the rights of all the  
 destitute.

<sup>9</sup> Speak out, judge  
 righteously,  
 defend the rights of the  
 poor and needy.

**December  
 30**



**2 Kings 19:5-37** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> When the servants of King  
 Hezekiah came to Isaiah,  
<sup>6</sup> Isaiah said to them, “Say to  
 your master, ‘Thus says the  
 LORD: Do not be afraid because  
 of the words that you have  
 heard, with which the servants  
 of the king of Assyria have  
 reviled me. <sup>7</sup> I myself will put a  
 spirit in him, so that he shall  
 hear a rumor and return to his  
 own land; I will cause him to  
 fall by the sword in his own  
 land.’ ”

*Sennacherib’s Threat*  
*(Isa 37:8–13)*

<sup>8</sup> The Rabshakeh returned,  
 and found the king of Assyria  
 fighting against Libnah; for he  
 had heard that the king had  
 left Lachish. <sup>9</sup> When the king  
 heard concerning King  
 Tirhakah of Ethiopia, “See, he  
 has set out to fight against  
 you,” he sent messengers  
 again to Hezekiah, saying,  
<sup>10</sup> “Thus shall you speak to  
 King Hezekiah of Judah: Do not  
 let your God on whom you

rely deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. <sup>11</sup> See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, destroying them utterly. Shall you be delivered? <sup>12</sup> Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my predecessors destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? <sup>13</sup> Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?"

*Hezekiah's Prayer*

*(Isa 37:14–35)*

<sup>14</sup> Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; then Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. <sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. <sup>16</sup> Incline

your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. <sup>17</sup> Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, <sup>18</sup> and have hurled their gods into the fire, though they were no gods but the work of human hands—wood and stone—and so they were destroyed. <sup>19</sup> So now, O LORD our God, save us, I pray you, from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone."

<sup>20</sup> Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I have heard your prayer to me about King Sennacherib of Assyria. <sup>21</sup> This is the word that the LORD has spoken concerning him:

She despises you, she  
scorns you—  
virgin daughter Zion;  
she tosses her head—  
behind your back,  
daughter Jerusalem.

<sup>22</sup> "Whom have you mocked  
and reviled?"

Against whom have you  
raised your voice  
and haughtily lifted your  
eyes?

Against the Holy One of  
Israel!

23 By your messengers you  
have mocked the Lord,  
and you have said, 'With  
my many chariots  
I have gone up the heights  
of the mountains,  
to the far recesses of  
Lebanon;  
I felled its tallest cedars,  
its choicest cypresses;  
I entered its farthest  
retreat,  
its densest forest.

24 I dug wells  
and drank foreign  
waters,  
I dried up with the sole of  
my foot  
all the streams of Egypt.'

25 "Have you not heard  
that I determined it long  
ago?  
I planned from days of old  
what now I bring to pass,  
that you should make  
fortified cities  
crash into heaps of ruins,  
26 while their inhabitants,  
shorn of strength,

are dismayed and  
confounded;  
they have become like  
plants of the field  
and like tender grass,  
like grass on the  
housetops,  
blighted before it is  
grown.

27 "But I know your rising and  
your sitting,  
your going out and  
coming in,  
and your raging against  
me.

28 Because you have raged  
against me  
and your arrogance has  
come to my ears,  
I will put my hook in your  
nose  
and my bit in your  
mouth;  
I will turn you back on the  
way  
by which you came.

29 "And this shall be the  
sign for you: This year you  
shall eat what grows of itself,  
and in the second year what  
springs from that; then in the  
third year sow, reap, plant  
vineyards, and eat their fruit.  
30 The surviving remnant of the  
house of Judah shall again



take root downward, and bear fruit upward;<sup>31</sup> for from Jerusalem a remnant shall go out, and from Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

<sup>32</sup> “Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. <sup>33</sup> By the way that he came, by the same he shall return; he shall not come into this city, says the LORD. <sup>34</sup> For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”

### *Sennacherib’s Defeat and Death*

*(Isa 37:36–38; 2 Chr 32:20–23)*

<sup>35</sup> That very night the angel of the LORD set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies. <sup>36</sup> Then King Sennacherib of Assyria left, went home, and lived at Nineveh. <sup>37</sup> As he was worshiping in the house of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer

killed him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of Ararat. His son Esar-haddon succeeded him.

### **Acts 21:7-17** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we greeted the believers and stayed with them for one day. <sup>8</sup> The next day we left and came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven, and stayed with him. <sup>9</sup> He had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy. <sup>10</sup> While we were staying there for several days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. <sup>11</sup> He came to us and took Paul’s belt, bound his own feet and hands with it, and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.’ ” <sup>12</sup> When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking

my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”<sup>14</sup> Since he would not be persuaded, we remained silent except to say, “The Lord’s will be done.”

<sup>15</sup> After these days we got ready and started to go up to Jerusalem. <sup>16</sup> Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came along and brought us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to stay.

*Paul Visits James at Jerusalem*

<sup>17</sup> When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us warmly.

**Psalms 150:1-5** (NRSV)

*Praise for God’s*

*Surpassing Greatness*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Praise God in his sanctuary;  
praise him in his mighty firmament!  
<sup>2</sup> Praise him for his mighty deeds;  
praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

<sup>3</sup> Praise him with trumpet sound;  
praise him with lute and harp!  
<sup>4</sup> Praise him with tambourine and dance;  
praise him with strings and pipe!  
<sup>5</sup> Praise him with clanging cymbals;  
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

**Proverbs 31:10–24** (NRSV)

*Ode to a Capable Wife*

<sup>10</sup> A capable wife who can find?  
She is far more precious than jewels.  
<sup>11</sup> The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
and he will have no lack of gain.  
<sup>12</sup> She does him good, and not harm,  
all the days of her life.  
<sup>13</sup> She seeks wool and flax,  
and works with willing hands.  
<sup>14</sup> She is like the ships of the merchant,  
she brings her food from far away.  
<sup>15</sup> She rises while it is still night

and provides food for  
her household  
and tasks for her  
servant-girls.  
16 She considers a field and  
buys it;  
with the fruit of her  
hands she plants a  
vineyard.  
17 She girds herself with  
strength,  
and makes her arms  
strong.  
18 She perceives that her  
merchandise is  
profitable.  
Her lamp does not go out  
at night.  
19 She puts her hands to the  
distaff,  
and her hands hold the  
spindle.  
20 She opens her hand to the  
poor,  
and reaches out her  
hands to the needy.  
21 She is not afraid for her  
household when it  
snows,  
for all her household are  
clothed in crimson.  
22 She makes herself  
coverings;  
her clothing is fine linen  
and purple.

23 Her husband is known in  
the city gates,  
taking his seat among  
the elders of the land.  
24 She makes linen garments  
and sells them;  
she supplies the  
merchant with sashes.

## December 31



### 2 Kings 20:1-21 (NRSV)

#### *Hezekiah's Illness* (2 Chr 32:24–26; Isa 38:1–8)

In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, “Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.”<sup>2</sup> Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD:<sup>3</sup> “Remember now, O LORD, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is

good in your sight.” Hezekiah wept bitterly.<sup>4</sup> Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him:<sup>5</sup> “Turn back, and say to Hezekiah prince of my people, Thus says the LORD, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD.<sup>6</sup> I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David’s sake.”<sup>7</sup> Then Isaiah said, “Bring a lump of figs. Let them take it and apply it to the boil, so that he may recover.”

<sup>8</sup> Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?”

<sup>9</sup> Isaiah said, “This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he has promised: the shadow has now advanced ten intervals; shall it retreat ten intervals?”

<sup>10</sup> Hezekiah answered, “It is

normal for the shadow to lengthen ten intervals; rather let the shadow retreat ten intervals.”<sup>11</sup> The prophet Isaiah cried to the LORD; and he brought the shadow back the ten intervals, by which the sun had declined on the dial of Ahaz.

### *Envoys from Babylon*

*(Isa 39:1–8)*

<sup>12</sup> At that time King Merodach-baladan son of Baladan of Babylon sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.<sup>13</sup> Hezekiah welcomed them; he showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his armory, all that was found in his storehouses; there was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them.<sup>14</sup> Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say? From where did they come to you?” Hezekiah answered, “They have come from a far country, from Babylon.”<sup>15</sup> He

said, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."

<sup>16</sup> Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: <sup>17</sup> Days are coming when all that is in your house, and that which your ancestors have stored up until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the LORD. <sup>18</sup> Some of your own sons who are born to you shall be taken away; they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." <sup>19</sup> Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?"

### *Death of Hezekiah*

*(2 Chr 32:32–33)*

<sup>20</sup> The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah, all his power, how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?

<sup>21</sup> Hezekiah slept with his ancestors; and his son Manasseh succeeded him.

### **Acts 21:18-26** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> The next day Paul went with us to visit James; and all the elders were present.

<sup>19</sup> After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

<sup>20</sup> When they heard it, they praised God. Then they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they are all zealous for the law. <sup>21</sup> They have been told about you that you teach all the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs. <sup>22</sup> What then is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. <sup>23</sup> So do what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow. <sup>24</sup> Join these men, go through the rite of purification with them, and pay for the shaving of their heads. Thus all will know that there is nothing in what they

have been told about you, but that you yourself observe and guard the law. <sup>25</sup> But as for the Gentiles who have become believers, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication.” <sup>26</sup> Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having purified himself, he entered the temple with them, making public the completion of the days of purification when the sacrifice would be made for each of them.

**Psalm 150:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Let everything that  
breathes praise the  
LORD!  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 31:25–31** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Strength and dignity are  
her clothing,  
and she laughs at the  
time to come.

<sup>26</sup> She opens her mouth with  
wisdom,  
and the teaching of  
kindness is on her  
tongue.

<sup>27</sup> She looks well to the ways  
of her household,  
and does not eat the  
bread of idleness.

<sup>28</sup> Her children rise up and  
call her happy;  
her husband too, and he  
praises her:

<sup>29</sup> “Many women have done  
excellently,  
but you surpass them  
all.”

<sup>30</sup> Charm is deceitful, and  
beauty is vain,  
but a woman who fears  
the LORD is to be  
praised.

<sup>31</sup> Give her a share in the  
fruit of her hands,  
and let her works praise  
her in the city gates.

# Year Two

## January 1



**2 Kings 21:1 – 22:2 (NRSV)**

*Manasseh Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 33:1–20)

Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah.<sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, following the abominable practices of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.<sup>3</sup> For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he erected altars for Baal, made a sacred pole, as King Ahab of Israel had done, worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them.<sup>4</sup> He built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put my name."<sup>5</sup> He built altars for all the host of heaven in

the two courts of the house of the LORD.<sup>6</sup> He made his son pass through fire; he practiced soothsaying and augury, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger.<sup>7</sup> The carved image of Asherah that he had made he set in the house of which the LORD said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever;<sup>8</sup> I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land that I gave to their ancestors, if only they will be careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them."<sup>9</sup> But they did not listen; Manasseh misled them to do more evil than the nations had done that the LORD destroyed before the people of Israel.<sup>10</sup> The LORD said by his servants the prophets,<sup>11</sup> "Because King Manasseh of Judah has committed these

abominations, has done things more wicked than all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and has caused Judah also to sin with his idols; <sup>12</sup> therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, I am bringing upon Jerusalem and Judah such evil that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. <sup>13</sup> I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line for Samaria, and the plummet for the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. <sup>14</sup> I will cast off the remnant of my heritage, and give them into the hand of their enemies; they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, <sup>15</sup> because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger, since the day their ancestors came out of Egypt, even to this day.”

<sup>16</sup> Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides the sin that he caused Judah to sin so that they did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

<sup>17</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, all that he did, and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? <sup>18</sup> Manasseh slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza. His son Amon succeeded him.

*Amon Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 33:21–25)

<sup>19</sup> Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. <sup>20</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. <sup>21</sup> He walked in all the way in which his father walked, served the idols that his father served, and worshiped them; <sup>22</sup> he abandoned the LORD, the God of his ancestors, and did not walk in the way of the LORD. <sup>23</sup> The servants of Amon conspired against him, and killed the king in his house. <sup>24</sup> But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon,



and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in place of him.<sup>25</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Amon that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?<sup>26</sup> He was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza; then his son Josiah succeeded him.

*Josiah Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 34:1–2)

**22** Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.<sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

**Acts 21:27-36** (NRSV)

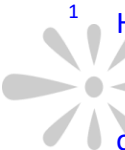
*Paul Arrested in the Temple*  
<sup>27</sup> When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd. They seized him,<sup>28</sup> shouting, "Fellow Israelites, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere

against our people, our law, and this place; more than that, he has actually brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."<sup>29</sup> For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.<sup>30</sup> Then all the city was aroused, and the people rushed together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut.<sup>31</sup> While they were trying to kill him, word came to the tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.<sup>32</sup> Immediately he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. When they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.<sup>33</sup> Then the tribune came, arrested him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; he inquired who he was and what he had done.<sup>34</sup> Some in the crowd shouted one thing, some another; and as he could not learn the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks.

<sup>35</sup> When Paul came to the steps, the violence of the mob was so great that he had to be carried by the soldiers. <sup>36</sup> The crowd that followed kept shouting, “Away with him!”

**Psalm 1:1-6 (NRSV)**

*The Two Ways*



<sup>1</sup> Happy are those  
who do not follow the  
advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that  
sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of  
scorners;

<sup>2</sup> but their delight is in the  
law of the LORD,  
and on his law they  
meditate day and  
night.

<sup>3</sup> They are like trees  
planted by streams of  
water,  
which yield their fruit in its  
season,  
and their leaves do not  
wither.  
In all that they do, they  
prosper.

<sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the  
wind drives away.

<sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will  
not stand in the  
judgment,  
nor sinners in the  
congregation of the  
righteous;

**Proverbs 1:1-6 (NRSV)**

The proverbs of Solomon son  
of David, king of Israel:

*Prologue*

<sup>2</sup> For learning about wisdom  
and instruction,  
for understanding words  
of insight,

<sup>3</sup> for gaining instruction in  
wise dealing,  
righteousness, justice,  
and equity;

<sup>4</sup> to teach shrewdness to the  
simple,  
knowledge and prudence  
to the young—

<sup>5</sup> let the wise also hear and  
gain in learning,  
and the discerning  
acquire skill,

<sup>6</sup> to understand a proverb  
and a figure,  
the words of the wise  
and their riddles.

## January 2



**2 Kings 22:3 – 23:7** (NRSV)

### *Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law*

(2 Chr 34:8–28)

<sup>3</sup>In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the secretary, to the house of the LORD, saying, <sup>4</sup>“Go up to the high priest Hilkiah, and have him count the entire sum of the money that has been brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the threshold have collected from the people; <sup>5</sup>let it be given into the hand of the workers who have the oversight of the house of the LORD; let them give it to the workers who are at the house of the LORD, repairing the house, <sup>6</sup>that is, to the carpenters, to the builders, to the masons; and let them use it to buy timber and quarried stone to repair the house. <sup>7</sup>But no accounting shall be asked from them for the money that is delivered into

their hand, for they deal honestly.”

<sup>8</sup>The high priest Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.” When Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, he read it. <sup>9</sup>Then Shaphan the secretary came to the king, and reported to the king, “Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workers who have oversight of the house of the LORD.” <sup>10</sup>Shaphan the secretary informed the king, “The priest Hilkiah has given me a book.” Shaphan then read it aloud to the king.

<sup>11</sup>When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. <sup>12</sup>Then the king commanded the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary, and the king’s servant Asaiah, saying, <sup>13</sup>“Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD

that is kindled against us, because our ancestors did not obey the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”

<sup>14</sup> So the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; she resided in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter, where they consulted her. <sup>15</sup> She declared to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell the man who sent you to me, <sup>16</sup> Thus says the LORD, I will indeed bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read.

<sup>17</sup> Because they have abandoned me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched.

<sup>18</sup> But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words

that you have heard, <sup>19</sup> because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place, and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the LORD.

<sup>20</sup> Therefore, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place.” They took the message back to the king.

*Josiah's Reformation*  
(2 Chr 34:29–33)

**23** Then the king directed that all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem should be gathered to him. <sup>2</sup> The king went up to the house of the LORD, and with him went all the people of Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant

that had been found in the house of the LORD.<sup>3</sup> The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. All the people joined in the covenant.

<sup>4</sup>The king commanded the high priest Hilkiah, the priests of the second order, and the guardians of the threshold, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel.

<sup>5</sup>He deposed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to make offerings in the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem; those also who made offerings to Baal, to the sun, the moon, the constellations, and all the host of the heavens.<sup>6</sup> He brought out the image of Asherah from the house of the LORD, outside

Jerusalem, to the Wadi Kidron, burned it at the Wadi Kidron, beat it to dust and threw the dust of it upon the graves of the common people.<sup>7</sup> He broke down the houses of the male temple prostitutes that were in the house of the LORD, where the women did weaving for Asherah.

### **Acts 21:37-40** (NRSV)

#### *Paul Defends Himself*

<sup>37</sup>Just as Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, "May I say something to you?" The tribune replied, "Do you know Greek?"<sup>38</sup> Then you are not the Egyptian who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?"<sup>39</sup> Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city; I beg you, let me speak to the people."

<sup>40</sup>When he had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the people for silence; and when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language, saying:

**Psalm 1:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> for the LORD watches over  
the way of the  
righteous,  
but the way of the  
wicked will perish.

**Proverbs 1:7–9** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of  
knowledge;  
fools despise wisdom  
and instruction.

*Warnings against Evil  
Companions*

<sup>8</sup> Hear, my child, your  
father's instruction,  
and do not reject your  
mother's teaching;  
<sup>9</sup> for they are a fair garland  
for your head,  
and pendants for your  
neck.

**January 3**



**2 Kings 23:8-30** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> He brought all the priests  
out of the towns of Judah, and  
defiled the high places where  
the priests had made  
offerings, from Geba to Beer-  
sheba; he broke down the high  
places of the gates that were  
at the entrance of the gate of  
Joshua the governor of the  
city, which were on the left at  
the gate of the city. <sup>9</sup> The  
priests of the high places,  
however, did not come up to  
the altar of the LORD in  
Jerusalem, but ate unleavened  
bread among their kindred.  
<sup>10</sup> He defiled Topheth, which is  
in the valley of Ben-hinnom, so  
that no one would make a son  
or a daughter pass through  
fire as an offering to Molech.  
<sup>11</sup> He removed the horses that  
the kings of Judah had  
dedicated to the sun, at the  
entrance to the house of the  
LORD, by the chamber of the  
eunuch Nathan-melech, which  
was in the precincts; then he  
burned the chariots of the sun  
with fire. <sup>12</sup> The altars on the

roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, he pulled down from there and broke in pieces, and threw the rubble into the Wadi Kidron. <sup>13</sup> The king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of Destruction, which King Solomon of Israel had built for Astarte the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>14</sup> He broke the pillars in pieces, cut down the sacred poles, and covered the sites with human bones.

<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the altar at Bethel, the high place erected by Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin—he pulled down that altar along with the high place. He burned the high place, crushing it to dust; he also burned the sacred pole. <sup>16</sup> As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs there on the mount; and he sent and took the bones out of the tombs, and burned them

on the altar, and defiled it, according to the word of the LORD that the man of God proclaimed, when Jeroboam stood by the altar at the festival; he turned and looked up at the tomb of the man of God who had predicted these things. <sup>17</sup> Then he said, “What is that monument that I see?” The people of the city told him, “It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and predicted these things that you have done against the altar at Bethel.” <sup>18</sup> He said, “Let him rest; let no one move his bones.” So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came out of Samaria. <sup>19</sup> Moreover, Josiah removed all the shrines of the high places that were in the towns of Samaria, which kings of Israel had made, provoking the LORD to anger; he did to them just as he had done at Bethel. <sup>20</sup> He slaughtered on the altars all the priests of the high places who were there, and burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

### *The Passover Celebrated*

(2 Chr 35:1–19)

<sup>21</sup>The king commanded all the people, “Keep the passover to the LORD your God as prescribed in this book of the covenant.” <sup>22</sup>No such passover had been kept since the days of the judges who judged Israel, even during all the days of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah; <sup>23</sup>but in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this passover was kept to the LORD in Jerusalem.

<sup>24</sup>Moreover Josiah put away the mediums, wizards, teraphim, idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so that he established the words of the law that were written in the book that the priest Hilkiah had found in the house of the LORD. <sup>25</sup>Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

<sup>26</sup>Still the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against

Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him.

<sup>27</sup>The LORD said, “I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel; and I will reject this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.”

### *Josiah Dies in Battle*

(2 Chr 35:20–36:1)

<sup>28</sup>Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? <sup>29</sup>In his days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him; but when Pharaoh Neco met him at Megiddo, he killed him.

<sup>30</sup>His servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in place of his father.



**Acts 22:1-16 (NRSV)**

“Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense that I now make before you.”

<sup>2</sup> When they heard him addressing them in Hebrew, they became even more quiet. Then he said:

<sup>3</sup> “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today. <sup>4</sup> I persecuted this Way up to the point of death by binding both men and women and putting them in prison, <sup>5</sup> as the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me. From them I also received letters to the brothers in Damascus, and I went there in order to bind those who were there and to bring them back to Jerusalem for punishment.

*Paul Tells of His Conversion*

*(Acts 9:1–19a; 26:12–18)*

<sup>6</sup> “While I was on my way and approaching Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone about me. <sup>7</sup> I fell to the ground and

heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ <sup>8</sup> I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ Then he said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting.’ <sup>9</sup> Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. <sup>10</sup> I asked, ‘What am I to do, Lord?’ The Lord said to me, ‘Get up and go to Damascus; there you will be told everything that has been assigned to you to do.’ <sup>11</sup> Since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, those who were with me took my hand and led me to Damascus. <sup>12</sup> “A certain Ananias, who was a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews living there, <sup>13</sup> came to me; and standing beside me, he said, ‘Brother Saul, regain your sight!’ In that very hour I regained my sight and saw him. <sup>14</sup> Then he said, ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear his own voice; <sup>15</sup> for you will be his witness to all the world of what you have seen

and heard. <sup>16</sup> And now why do you delay? Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name.'

**Psalms 2:1-6** (NRSV)

*God's Promise to His Anointed*  
(Acts 4:23-31)

1 Why do the nations  
conspire,  
and the peoples plot in  
vain?  
2 The kings of the earth set  
themselves,  
and the rulers take  
counsel together,  
against the LORD and his  
anointed, saying,  
3 "Let us burst their bonds  
asunder,  
and cast their cords from  
us."  
4 He who sits in the heavens  
laughs;  
the LORD has them in  
derision.  
5 Then he will speak to them  
in his wrath,  
and terrify them in his  
fury, saying,  
6 "I have set my king on  
Zion, my holy hill."

**Proverbs 1:10-19** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> My child, if sinners entice  
you,  
do not consent.  
<sup>11</sup> If they say, "Come with us,  
let us lie in wait for  
blood;  
let us wantonly ambush  
the innocent;  
<sup>12</sup> like Sheol let us swallow  
them alive  
and whole, like those  
who go down to the  
Pit.  
<sup>13</sup> We shall find all kinds of  
costly things;  
we shall fill our houses  
with booty.  
<sup>14</sup> Throw in your lot among  
us;  
we will all have one  
purse"—  
<sup>15</sup> my child, do not walk in  
their way,  
keep your foot from their  
paths;  
<sup>16</sup> for their feet run to evil,  
and they hurry to shed  
blood.  
<sup>17</sup> For in vain is the net baited  
while the bird is looking  
on;  
<sup>18</sup> yet they lie in wait—to kill  
themselves!

and set an ambush—for  
their own lives!

<sup>19</sup> Such is the end of all who  
are greedy for gain;  
it takes away the life of  
its possessors.

## January 4



**2 Kings 23:31 – 25:7 (NRSV)**

*Reign and Captivity of  
Jehoahaz  
(2 Chr 36:1–4)*

<sup>31</sup> Jehoahaz was twenty-  
three years old when he began  
to reign; he reigned three  
months in Jerusalem. His  
mother's name was Hamutal  
daughter of Jeremiah of  
Libnah. <sup>32</sup> He did what was evil  
in the sight of the LORD, just as  
his ancestors had done.

<sup>33</sup> Pharaoh Neco confined him  
at Riblah in the land of  
Hamath, so that he might not  
reign in Jerusalem, and  
imposed tribute on the land of  
one hundred talents of silver  
and a talent of gold.

<sup>34</sup> Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim  
son of Josiah king in place of  
his father Josiah, and changed  
his name to Jehoiakim. But he  
took Jehoahaz away; he came  
to Egypt, and died there.

<sup>35</sup> Jehoiakim gave the silver  
and the gold to Pharaoh, but  
he taxed the land in order to  
meet Pharaoh's demand for  
money. He exacted the silver  
and the gold from the people  
of the land, from all according  
to their assessment, to give it  
to Pharaoh Neco.

*Jehoiakim Reigns over Judah  
(2 Chr 36:5–8)*

<sup>36</sup> Jehoiakim was twenty-  
five years old when he began  
to reign; he reigned eleven  
years in Jerusalem. His  
mother's name was Zebidah  
daughter of Pedaiah of  
Rumah. <sup>37</sup> He did what was evil  
in the sight of the LORD, just as  
all his ancestors had done.

*Judah Overrun by Enemies*

**24** In his days King  
Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon  
came up; Jehoiakim became  
his servant for three years;  
then he turned and rebelled  
against him. <sup>2</sup> The LORD sent

against him bands of the Chaldeans, bands of the Arameans, bands of the Moabites, and bands of the Ammonites; he sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servants the prophets. <sup>3</sup> Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the LORD, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, for all that he had committed, <sup>4</sup> and also for the innocent blood that he had shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to pardon. <sup>5</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? <sup>6</sup> So Jehoiakim slept with his ancestors; then his son Jehoiachin succeeded him. <sup>7</sup> The king of Egypt did not come again out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken over all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Wadi of Egypt to the River Euphrates.

*Reign and Captivity of  
Jehoiachin*

*(2 Chr 36:9–10)*

<sup>8</sup> Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as his father had done.

<sup>10</sup> At that time the servants of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. <sup>11</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it; <sup>12</sup> King Jehoiachin of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself, his mother, his servants, his officers, and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign.

*Capture of Jerusalem*

<sup>13</sup> He carried off all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the LORD, which King Solomon of Israel had made, all this as the LORD had

foretold. <sup>14</sup> He carried away all Jerusalem, all the officials, all the warriors, ten thousand captives, all the artisans and the smiths; no one remained, except the poorest people of the land. <sup>15</sup> He carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; the king's mother, the king's wives, his officials, and the elite of the land, he took into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. <sup>16</sup> The king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon all the men of valor, seven thousand, the artisans and the smiths, one thousand, all of them strong and fit for war. <sup>17</sup> The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

*Zedekiah Reigns over Judah*  
(2 Chr 36:11–14; Jer 52:1–3a)

<sup>18</sup> Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. <sup>19</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. <sup>20</sup> Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah so

angered the LORD that he expelled them from his presence.

*The Fall and Captivity of Judah*  
(2 Chr 36:15–21; Jer 52:3b–30)

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

**25** <sup>1</sup> And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it; they built siegeworks against it all around. <sup>2</sup> So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. <sup>3</sup> On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine became so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. <sup>4</sup> Then a breach was made in the city wall; the king with all the soldiers fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah. <sup>5</sup> But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and

overtook him in the plains of Jericho; all his army was scattered, deserting him.

<sup>6</sup> Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who passed sentence on him.

<sup>7</sup> They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, then put out the eyes of Zedekiah; they bound him in fetters and took him to Babylon.

**Acts 22:17-30 (NRSV)**

*Paul Sent to the Gentiles*

<sup>17</sup> “After I had returned to Jerusalem and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance <sup>18</sup> and saw Jesus saying to me, ‘**Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.**’

<sup>19</sup> And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. <sup>20</sup> And while the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I myself was standing by, approving and keeping the coats of those who killed him.’

<sup>21</sup> Then he said to me, ‘**Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.**’ ”

*Paul and the Roman Tribune*

<sup>22</sup> Up to this point they listened to him, but then they shouted, “Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live.”

<sup>23</sup> And while they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and tossing dust into the air, <sup>24</sup> the tribune directed that he was to be brought into the barracks, and ordered him to be examined by flogging, to find out the reason for this outcry against him. <sup>25</sup> But

when they had tied him up with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, “Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who is uncondemned?” <sup>26</sup> When the centurion heard that, he went to the tribune and said to him, “What are you about to do? This man is a Roman citizen.”

<sup>27</sup> The tribune came and asked Paul, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” And he said, “Yes.” <sup>28</sup> The tribune answered, “It cost me a large sum of money to get my citizenship.” Paul said, “But I was born a citizen.”

<sup>29</sup> Immediately those who were about to examine him

drew back from him; and the tribune also was afraid, for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had bound him.

*Paul before the Council*

<sup>30</sup> Since he wanted to find out what Paul was being accused of by the Jews, the next day he released him and ordered the chief priests and the entire council to meet. He brought Paul down and had him stand before them.

**Psalm 2:7-12** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> I will tell of the decree of the LORD:  
He said to me, "You are my son;  
today I have begotten you.  
<sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.  
<sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron,  
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."  
<sup>10</sup> Now therefore, O kings, be wise;

be warned, O rulers of the earth.

<sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with fear,  
with trembling <sup>12</sup> kiss his feet,  
or he will be angry, and you will perish in the way;  
for his wrath is quickly kindled.  
Happy are all who take refuge in him.

**Proverbs 1:20–23** (NRSV)

*The Call of Wisdom*

<sup>20</sup> Wisdom cries out in the street;  
in the squares she raises her voice.  
<sup>21</sup> At the busiest corner she cries out;  
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:  
<sup>22</sup> "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?  
How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing  
and fools hate knowledge?  
<sup>23</sup> Give heed to my reproof;  
I will pour out my thoughts to you;  
I will make my words known to you.

## January 5



### 2 Kings 25:8-30 (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> He burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down.

<sup>10</sup> All the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. <sup>11</sup> Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon—all the rest of the population. <sup>12</sup> But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to be vinedressers and tillers of the soil.

<sup>13</sup> The bronze pillars that were in the house of the LORD,

as well as the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried the bronze to Babylon.

<sup>14</sup> They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the dishes for incense, and all the bronze vessels used in the temple service, <sup>15</sup> as well as the firepans and the basins. What was made of gold the captain of the guard took away for the gold, and what was made of silver, for the silver. <sup>16</sup> As for the two pillars, the one sea, and the stands, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weighing. <sup>17</sup> The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and on it was a bronze capital; the height of the capital was three cubits; latticework and pomegranates, all of bronze, were on the capital all around. The second pillar had the same, with the latticework.

<sup>18</sup> The captain of the guard took the chief priest Seraiah, the second priest Zephaniah, and the three guardians of the threshold; <sup>19</sup> from the city he



took an officer who had been in command of the soldiers, and five men of the king's council who were found in the city; the secretary who was the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city.

<sup>20</sup> Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. <sup>21</sup> The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah went into exile out of its land.

*Gedaliah Made Governor of Judah*

*(Jer 40:5–41:18)*

<sup>22</sup> He appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan as governor over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had left. <sup>23</sup> Now when all the captains of the forces and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah as governor, they came with their men to

Gedaliah at Mizpah, namely, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite.

<sup>24</sup> Gedaliah swore to them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid because of the Chaldean officials; live in the land, serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you." <sup>25</sup> But in the seventh month, Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men; they struck down Gedaliah so that he died, along with the Judeans and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah.

<sup>26</sup> Then all the people, high and low, and the captains of the forces set out and went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

*Jehoiachin Released from Prison*

*(Jer 52:31–34)*

<sup>27</sup> In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, King Evil-merodach of

Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released King Jehoiachin of Judah from prison; <sup>28</sup> he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the other seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. <sup>29</sup> So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes. Every day of his life he dined regularly in the king's presence. <sup>30</sup> For his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion every day, as long as he lived.

#### **Acts 23:1-10 (NRSV)**

While Paul was looking intently at the council he said, "Brothers, up to this day I have lived my life with a clear conscience before God."

<sup>2</sup> Then the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near him to strike him on the mouth. <sup>3</sup> At this Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! Are you sitting there to judge me according to the law, and yet in violation of the law you order me to be struck?"

<sup>4</sup> Those standing nearby said, "Do you dare to insult God's high priest?" <sup>5</sup> And Paul said, "I

did not realize, brothers, that he was high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a leader of your people.' "

<sup>6</sup> When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead."

<sup>7</sup> When he said this, a dissension began between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.

<sup>8</sup> (The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, or angel, or spirit; but the Pharisees acknowledge all three.) <sup>9</sup> Then a great clamor arose, and certain scribes of the Pharisees' group stood up and contended, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" <sup>10</sup> When the dissension became violent, the tribune, fearing that they would tear Paul to pieces, ordered the soldiers to go down, take him by force, and bring him into the barracks.

**Psalms 3:1-5** (NRSV)

*Trust in God under Adversity*

A Psalm of David, when he fled from his son Absalom.

- <sup>1</sup> O LORD, how many are my foes!  
Many are rising against me;  
<sup>2</sup> many are saying to me,  
“There is no help for you in God.” *Selah*  
<sup>3</sup> But you, O LORD, are a shield around me,  
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.  
<sup>4</sup> I cry aloud to the LORD,  
and he answers me from his holy hill. *Selah*  
<sup>5</sup> I lie down and sleep;  
I wake again, for the LORD sustains me.

**Proverbs 1:24–28** (NRSV)

- <sup>24</sup> Because I have called and you refused,  
have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,  
<sup>25</sup> and because you have ignored all my counsel  
and would have none of my reproof,  
<sup>26</sup> I also will laugh at your calamity;  
I will mock when panic strikes you,

- <sup>27</sup> when panic strikes you like a storm,  
and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,  
when distress and anguish come upon you.  
<sup>28</sup> Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;  
they will seek me diligently, but will not find me.

**January 6**



**1 Chronicles 1:1–33** (NRSV)

*From Adam to Abraham*

*(Gen 5:1–32; 10:1–32; 11:10–26; Lk 3:34–38)*

- 1** Adam, Seth, Enosh; <sup>2</sup> Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared; <sup>3</sup> Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech; <sup>4</sup> Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.  
<sup>5</sup> The descendants of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. <sup>6</sup> The descendants of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Diphath,

and Togarmah.<sup>7</sup> The descendants of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

<sup>8</sup> The descendants of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.

<sup>9</sup> The descendants of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>10</sup> Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first to be a mighty one on the earth.

<sup>11</sup> Egypt became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim,<sup>12</sup> Pathrusim, Casluhim, and Caphtorim, from whom the Philistines come.

<sup>13</sup> Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,<sup>14</sup> and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Gergashites,<sup>15</sup> the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,<sup>16</sup> the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

<sup>17</sup> The descendants of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.

<sup>18</sup> Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber.

<sup>19</sup> To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg

(for in his days the earth was divided), and the name of his brother Joktan.<sup>20</sup> Joktan

became the father of

Almodad, Sheleph,

Hazarmaveth, Jerah,

<sup>21</sup> Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,

<sup>22</sup> Ebal, Abimael, Sheba,

<sup>23</sup> Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab;

all these were the

descendants of Joktan.

<sup>24</sup> Shem, Arpachshad,

Shelah;<sup>25</sup> Eber, Peleg, Reu;

<sup>26</sup> Serug, Nahor, Terah;

<sup>27</sup> Abram, that is, Abraham.

#### *From Abraham to Jacob*

*(Gen 25:1–4, 12–16; 36:1–30)*

<sup>28</sup> The sons of Abraham:

Isaac and Ishmael.<sup>29</sup> These are their genealogies: the firstborn

of Ishmael, Nebaioth; and

Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

<sup>30</sup> Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

Hadad, Tema,<sup>31</sup> Jetur,

Naphish, and Kedemah. These

are the sons of Ishmael.<sup>32</sup> The

sons of Keturah, Abraham's

concubine: she bore Zimran,

Jokshan, Medan, Midian,

Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of

Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>33</sup> The sons of Midian: Ephah,

Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and

Eldaah. All these were the

descendants of Keturah.

**Acts 23:11-15** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> That night the Lord stood near him and said, “Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome.”

*The Plot to Kill Paul*

<sup>12</sup> In the morning the Jews joined in a conspiracy and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. <sup>13</sup> There were more than forty who joined in this conspiracy. <sup>14</sup> They went to the chief priests and elders and said, “We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food until we have killed Paul. <sup>15</sup> Now then, you and the council must notify the tribune to bring him down to you, on the pretext that you want to make a more thorough examination of his case. And we are ready to do away with him before he arrives.”

**Psalms 3:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> I am not afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

<sup>7</sup> Rise up, O LORD!  
Deliver me, O my God!  
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;  
you break the teeth of the wicked.

<sup>8</sup> Deliverance belongs to the LORD;  
may your blessing be on your people! *Selah*



**Proverbs 1:29–33** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, <sup>30</sup> would have none of my counsel, and despised all my reproof, <sup>31</sup> therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way and be sated with their own devices. <sup>32</sup> For waywardness kills the simple, and the complacency of fools destroys them; <sup>33</sup> but those who listen to me will be secure and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.”

## January 7



### 1 Chronicles 1:1-34-2:17

(NRSV)

<sup>34</sup> Abraham became the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel. <sup>35</sup> The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. <sup>36</sup> The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek. <sup>37</sup> The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

<sup>38</sup> The sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. <sup>39</sup> The sons of Lotan: Hori and Homam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. <sup>40</sup> The sons of Shobal: Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. <sup>41</sup> The sons of Anah: Dishon. The sons of Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. <sup>42</sup> The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Jaakan. The sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

<sup>43</sup> These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites: Bela son of

Beor, whose city was called Dinhabah. <sup>44</sup> When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah succeeded him. <sup>45</sup> When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites succeeded him. <sup>46</sup> When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, succeeded him; and the name of his city was Avith.

<sup>47</sup> When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah succeeded him.

<sup>48</sup> When Samlah died, Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates succeeded him. <sup>49</sup> When Shaul died, Baal-hanan son of Achbor succeeded him.

<sup>50</sup> When Baal-hanan died, Hadad succeeded him; the name of his city was Pai, and his wife's name Mehetabel daughter of Matred, daughter of Me-zahab. <sup>51</sup> And Hadad died.

The clans of Edom were: clans Timna, Aliah, Jetheth, <sup>52</sup> Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, <sup>53</sup> Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, <sup>54</sup> Magdiel, and Iram; these are the clans of Edom.

*The Sons of Israel and the  
Descendants of Judah*  
(Gen 29:31–30:24; 35:16–18; 46:8–  
25; Ruth 4:18–22; Mt 1:2–6)

**2** These are the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, <sup>2</sup> Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. <sup>3</sup> The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah; these three the Canaanite woman Bath-shua bore to him. Now Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death. <sup>4</sup> His daughter-in-law Tamar also bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

<sup>5</sup> The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. <sup>6</sup> The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all.

<sup>7</sup> The sons of Carmi: Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the matter of the devoted thing; <sup>8</sup> and Ethan's son was Azariah.

<sup>9</sup> The sons of Hezron, who were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai. <sup>10</sup> Ram became the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah. <sup>11</sup> Nahshon became the father of Salma, Salma of Boaz, <sup>12</sup> Boaz of Obed, Obed of Jesse. <sup>13</sup> Jesse became the

father of Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, <sup>14</sup> Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, <sup>15</sup> Ozem the sixth, David the seventh; <sup>16</sup> and their sisters were Zeruah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three. <sup>17</sup> Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite.

**Acts 23:16-35** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Now the son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush; so he went and gained entrance to the barracks and told Paul. <sup>17</sup> Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to report to him." <sup>18</sup> So he took him, brought him to the tribune, and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you; he has something to tell you." <sup>19</sup> The tribune took him by the hand, drew him aside privately, and asked, "What is it that you have to report to me?" <sup>20</sup> He answered, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul

down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more thoroughly into his case. <sup>21</sup> But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him. They have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they kill him. They are ready now and are waiting for your consent.” <sup>22</sup> So the tribune dismissed the young man, ordering him, “Tell no one that you have informed me of this.”

#### *Paul Sent to Felix the Governor*

<sup>23</sup> Then he summoned two of the centurions and said, “Get ready to leave by nine o’clock tonight for Caesarea with two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen. <sup>24</sup> Also provide mounts for Paul to ride, and take him safely to Felix the governor.” <sup>25</sup> He wrote a letter to this effect: <sup>26</sup> “Claudius Lysias to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings. <sup>27</sup> This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them, but when I had learned that he

was a Roman citizen, I came with the guard and rescued him. <sup>28</sup> Since I wanted to know the charge for which they accused him, I had him brought to their council. <sup>29</sup> I found that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but was charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment. <sup>30</sup> When I was informed that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him.”

<sup>31</sup> So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him during the night to Antipatris. <sup>32</sup> The next day they let the horsemen go on with him, while they returned to the barracks. <sup>33</sup> When they came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him. <sup>34</sup> On reading the letter, he asked what province he belonged to, and when he learned that he was from Cilicia, <sup>35</sup> he said, “I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive.” Then he



ordered that he be kept under guard in Herod's headquarters.

**Psalms 4:1-3** (NRSV)

*Confident Plea for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Answer me when I call, O God of my right!  
You gave me room when I was in distress.  
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

<sup>2</sup> How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?

How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies? *Selah*

<sup>3</sup> But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for himself;  
the LORD hears when I call to him.

**Proverbs 2:1-5** (NRSV)

*The Value of Wisdom*

**2** My child, if you accept my words  
and treasure up my commandments within you,

<sup>2</sup> making your ear attentive to wisdom  
and inclining your heart to understanding;  
<sup>3</sup> if you indeed cry out for insight,  
and raise your voice for understanding;  
<sup>4</sup> if you seek it like silver,  
and search for it as for hidden treasures—  
<sup>5</sup> then you will understand the fear of the LORD  
and find the knowledge of God.

**January 8**



**1 Chronicles 2:18-55** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Caleb son of Hezron had children by his wife Azubah, and by Jerioth; these were her sons: Jeshur, Shobab, and Ardon. <sup>19</sup> When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. <sup>20</sup> Hur became the father of Uri, and Uri became the father of Bezalel.

<sup>21</sup> Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir father of Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub; <sup>22</sup> and Segub became the father of Jair, who had twenty-three towns in the land of Gilead. <sup>23</sup> But Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair, Kenath and its villages, sixty towns. All these were descendants of Machir, father of Gilead. <sup>24</sup> After the death of Hezron, in Caleb-ephathah, Abijah wife of Hezron bore him Ashhur, father of Tekoa.

<sup>25</sup> The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron: Ram his firstborn, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah.

<sup>26</sup> Jerahmeel also had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.

<sup>27</sup> The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel: Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. <sup>28</sup> The sons of Onam: Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur. <sup>29</sup> The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. <sup>30</sup> The sons of Nadab: Seled and Appaim; and Seled

died childless. <sup>31</sup> The son of Appaim: Ishi. The son of Ishi: Sheshan. The son of Sheshan: Ahlai. <sup>32</sup> The sons of Jada, Shammai's brother: Jether and Jonathan; and Jether died childless. <sup>33</sup> The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel. <sup>34</sup> Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters; but Sheshan had an Egyptian slave, whose name was Jarha. <sup>35</sup> So Sheshan gave his daughter in marriage to his slave Jarha; and she bore him Attai. <sup>36</sup> Attai became the father of Nathan, and Nathan of Zabad. <sup>37</sup> Zabad became the father of Ephlal, and Ephlal of Obed. <sup>38</sup> Obed became the father of Jehu, and Jehu of Azariah. <sup>39</sup> Azariah became the father of Helez, and Helez of Eleasah. <sup>40</sup> Eleasah became the father of Sismai, and Sismai of Shallum. <sup>41</sup> Shallum became the father of Jekamiah, and Jekamiah of Elishama.

<sup>42</sup> The sons of Caleb brother of Jerahmeel: Mesha his firstborn, who was father of Ziph. The sons of Mareshah father of Hebron. <sup>43</sup> The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah,

Rekem, and Shema. <sup>44</sup> Shema became father of Raham, father of Jorkeam; and Rekem became the father of Shammai. <sup>45</sup> The son of Shammai: Maon; and Maon was the father of Beth-zur.

<sup>46</sup> Ephah also, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; and Haran became the father of Gazez. <sup>47</sup> The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. <sup>48</sup> Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. <sup>49</sup> She also bore Shaaph father of Madmannah, Sheva father of Machbenah and father of Gibeaz; and the daughter of Caleb was Achsah. <sup>50</sup> These were the descendants of Caleb.

The sons of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal father of Kiriath-jearim, <sup>51</sup> Salma father of Bethlehem, and Hareph father of Bethgader. <sup>52</sup> Shobal father of Kiriath-jearim had other sons: Haroeh, half of the Menuhoth. <sup>53</sup> And the families of Kiriath-jearim: the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraitites; from these

came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites. <sup>54</sup> The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-bethjoab, and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites. <sup>55</sup> The families also of the scribes that lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rechab.

#### **Acts 24:1-23** (NRSV)

*Paul before Felix at Caesarea*

Five days later the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and an attorney, a certain Tertullus, and they reported their case against Paul to the governor. <sup>2</sup> When Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying:

“Your Excellency, because of you we have long enjoyed peace, and reforms have been made for this people because of your foresight. <sup>3</sup> We welcome this in every way and everywhere with utmost gratitude. <sup>4</sup> But, to detain you no further, I beg you to hear us briefly with your customary

graciousness. <sup>5</sup> We have, in fact, found this man a pestilent fellow, an agitator among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. <sup>6</sup> He even tried to profane the temple, and so we seized him. <sup>8</sup> By examining him yourself you will be able to learn from him concerning everything of which we accuse him.”

<sup>9</sup> The Jews also joined in the charge by asserting that all this was true.

#### *Paul's Defense before Felix*

<sup>10</sup> When the governor motioned to him to speak, Paul replied:

“I cheerfully make my defense, knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation. <sup>11</sup> As you can find out, it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem.

<sup>12</sup> They did not find me disputing with anyone in the temple or stirring up a crowd either in the synagogues or throughout the city. <sup>13</sup> Neither can they prove to you the charge that they now bring against me. <sup>14</sup> But this I admit

to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our ancestors, believing everything laid down according to the law or written in the prophets. <sup>15</sup> I have a hope in God—a hope that they themselves also accept—that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous. <sup>16</sup> Therefore I do my best always to have a clear conscience toward God and all people. <sup>17</sup> Now after some years I came to bring alms to my nation and to offer sacrifices. <sup>18</sup> While I was doing this, they found me in the temple, completing the rite of purification, without any crowd or disturbance. <sup>19</sup> But there were some Jews from Asia—they ought to be here before you to make an accusation, if they have anything against me. <sup>20</sup> Or let these men here tell what crime they had found when I stood before the council, <sup>21</sup> unless it was this one sentence that I called out while standing before them, ‘It is about the resurrection of

the dead that I am on trial before you today.’ ”

<sup>22</sup> But Felix, who was rather well informed about the Way, adjourned the hearing with the comment, “When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case.” <sup>23</sup> Then he ordered the centurion to keep him in custody, but to let him have some liberty and not to prevent any of his friends from taking care of his needs.

**Psalm 4:4-8** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> When you are disturbed,  
do not sin;  
ponder it on your beds,  
and be silent. *Selah*  
<sup>5</sup> Offer right sacrifices,  
and put your trust in the  
LORD.  
<sup>6</sup> There are many who say,  
“O that we might see  
some good!  
Let the light of your face  
shine on us, O LORD!”  
<sup>7</sup> You have put gladness in  
my heart  
more than when their  
grain and wine abound.  
<sup>8</sup> I will both lie down and  
sleep in peace;

for you alone, O LORD,  
make me lie down in  
safety.

**Proverbs 2:6–15** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD gives wisdom;  
from his mouth come  
knowledge and  
understanding;  
<sup>7</sup> he stores up sound  
wisdom for the  
upright;  
he is a shield to those  
who walk blamelessly,  
<sup>8</sup> guarding the paths of  
justice  
and preserving the way  
of his faithful ones.  
<sup>9</sup> Then you will understand  
righteousness and  
justice  
and equity, every good  
path;  
<sup>10</sup> for wisdom will come into  
your heart,  
and knowledge will be  
pleasant to your soul;  
<sup>11</sup> prudence will watch over  
you;  
and understanding will  
guard you.  
<sup>12</sup> It will save you from the  
way of evil,  
from those who speak  
perversely,

<sup>13</sup> who forsake the paths of  
uprightness  
to walk in the ways of  
darkness,  
<sup>14</sup> who rejoice in doing evil  
and delight in the  
perverseness of evil;  
<sup>15</sup> those whose paths are  
crooked,  
and who are devious in  
their ways.

## January 9



### 1 Chronicles 3:1-4:4 (NRSV)

*Descendants of David and  
Solomon  
(Mt 1:6–12)*

**3** These are the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite; the second Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelite; <sup>2</sup> the third Absalom, son of Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; the fourth Adonijah, son of Haggith; <sup>3</sup> the fifth Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth Ithream, by

his wife Eglah; <sup>4</sup> six were born to him in Hebron, where he reigned for seven years and six months. And he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four by Bath-shua, daughter of Ammiel; <sup>6</sup> then Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, <sup>7</sup> Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, <sup>8</sup> Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine. <sup>9</sup> All these were David's sons, besides the sons of the concubines; and Tamar was their sister.

<sup>10</sup> The descendants of Solomon: Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, <sup>11</sup> Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, <sup>12</sup> Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, <sup>13</sup> Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son,

<sup>14</sup> Amon his son, Josiah his son.

<sup>15</sup> The sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. <sup>16</sup> The descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son; <sup>17</sup> and the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel

his son, <sup>18</sup> Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah;

<sup>19</sup> The sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; and the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister;

<sup>20</sup> and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed, five. <sup>21</sup> The sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiiah, his son Rephaiah, his son Arnan, his son Obadiah, his son Shecaniah. <sup>22</sup> The son of Shecaniah: Shemaiah. And the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat, six. <sup>23</sup> The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam, three. <sup>24</sup> The sons of Elioenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani, seven.

#### *Descendants of Judah*

**4** The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. <sup>2</sup> Reaiah son of Shobal became the father of Jahath, and Jahath became the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites. <sup>3</sup> These were the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma,

and Idbash; and the name of their sister was Hazzelelponi, <sup>4</sup> and Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These were the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.

#### **Acts 24:24-27** (NRSV)

##### *Paul Held in Custody*

<sup>24</sup> Some days later when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him speak concerning faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup> And as he discussed justice, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present; when I have an opportunity, I will send for you." <sup>26</sup> At the same time he hoped that money would be given him by Paul, and for that reason he used to send for him very often and converse with him.

<sup>27</sup> After two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and since he wanted to grant the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

**Psalms 5:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Trust in God for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader: for the flutes. A Psalm  
of David.

- 1 Give ear to my words, O  
LORD;  
give heed to my sighing.
- 2 Listen to the sound of my  
cry,  
my King and my God,  
for to you I pray.
- 3 O LORD, in the morning you  
hear my voice;  
in the morning I plead  
my case to you, and  
watch.
- 4 For you are not a God who  
delights in wickedness;  
evil will not sojourn with  
you.
- 5 The boastful will not stand  
before your eyes;  
you hate all evildoers.
- 6 You destroy those who  
speak lies;  
the LORD abhors the  
bloodthirsty and  
deceitful.

**Proverbs 2:16-22 (NRSV)**

- 16 You will be saved from the  
loose woman,  
from the adulteress with  
her smooth words,

- 17 who forsakes the partner  
of her youth  
and forgets her sacred  
covenant;
- 18 for her way leads down to  
death,  
and her paths to the  
shades;
- 19 those who go to her never  
come back,  
nor do they regain the  
paths of life.
- 20 Therefore walk in the way  
of the good,  
and keep to the paths of  
the just.
- 21 For the upright will abide  
in the land,  
and the innocent will  
remain in it;
- 22 but the wicked will be cut  
off from the land, and  
the treacherous will be  
rooted out of it.



# January 10



## 1 Chronicles 4:5-37 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Ashhur father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah; <sup>6</sup> Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hopher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah. <sup>7</sup> The sons of Helah: Zereth, Izhar, and Ethnan. <sup>8</sup> Koz became the father of Anub, Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel son of Harum. <sup>9</sup> Jabez was honored more than his brothers; and his mother named him Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." <sup>10</sup> Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!" And God granted what he asked. <sup>11</sup> Chelub the brother of Shuhah became the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton. <sup>12</sup> Eshton became the father of Beth-rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Irnahash. These are the men of Recah. <sup>13</sup> The sons of Kenaz:

Othniel and Seraiah; and the sons of Othniel: Hathath and Meonothai. <sup>14</sup> Meonothai became the father of Ophrah; and Seraiah became the father of Joab father of Ge-harashim, so-called because they were artisans. <sup>15</sup> The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah, and Naam; and the son of Elah: Kenaz. <sup>16</sup> The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. <sup>17</sup> The sons of Ezra: Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. These are the sons of Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered married; and she conceived and bore Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah father of Eshtemoa. <sup>18</sup> And his Judean wife bore Jered father of Gedor, Heber father of Soco, and Jekuthiel father of Zanoah. <sup>19</sup> The sons of the wife of Hodiah, the sister of Naham, were the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite. <sup>20</sup> The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben-zoheth. <sup>21</sup> The sons of Shelah son of Judah: Er father of Lecah, Laadah father of

Mareshah, and the families of the guild of linen workers at Beth-ashbea;<sup>22</sup> and Jokim, and the men of Cozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who married into Moab but returned to Lehem (now the records are ancient).<sup>23</sup> These were the potters and inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah; they lived there with the king in his service.

*Descendants of Simeon*

(Gen 46:10)

<sup>24</sup> The sons of Simeon:

Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul;<sup>25</sup> Shallum was his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.<sup>26</sup> The sons of Mishma: Hammuel his son, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son.<sup>27</sup> Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers did not have many children, nor did all their family multiply like the Judeans.<sup>28</sup> They lived in Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual,<sup>29</sup> Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,<sup>30</sup> Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,<sup>31</sup> Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until David became king.<sup>32</sup> And their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan, five towns,<sup>33</sup> along

with all their villages that were around these towns as far as Baal. These were their settlements. And they kept a genealogical record.

<sup>34</sup> Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah,<sup>35</sup> Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah son of Seraiah son of Asiel,<sup>36</sup> Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah,<sup>37</sup> Ziza son of Shiphi son of Allon son of Jedaiah son of Shimri son of Shemaiah—

**Acts 25:1-13** (NRSV)

*Paul Appeals to the Emperor*

Three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> where the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews gave him a report against Paul. They appealed to him<sup>3</sup> and requested, as a favor to them against Paul, to have him transferred to Jerusalem. They were, in fact, planning an ambush to kill him along the way.<sup>4</sup> Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and that he himself intended to go there shortly.<sup>5</sup> "So," he said, "let those of you who

have the authority come down with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them accuse him.”

<sup>6</sup> After he had stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea; the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought. <sup>7</sup> When he arrived, the Jews who had gone down from Jerusalem surrounded him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. <sup>8</sup> Paul said in his defense, “I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against the emperor.” <sup>9</sup> But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, “Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?” <sup>10</sup> Paul said, “I am appealing to the emperor’s tribunal; this is where I should be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you very well know. <sup>11</sup> Now if I am in the wrong and have committed something for which I deserve to die, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is

nothing to their charges against me, no one can turn me over to them. I appeal to the emperor.” <sup>12</sup> Then Festus, after he had conferred with his council, replied, “You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you will go.”

*Festus Consults King Agrippa*

<sup>13</sup> After several days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to welcome Festus.

**Psalm 5:7-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> But I, through the  
abundance of your  
steadfast love,  
will enter your house,  
I will bow down toward  
your holy temple  
in awe of you.  
<sup>8</sup> Lead me, O LORD, in your  
righteousness  
because of my enemies;  
make your way straight  
before me.  
<sup>9</sup> For there is no truth in  
their mouths;  
their hearts are  
destruction;  
their throats are open  
graves;

they flatter with their  
tongues.  
10 Make them bear their  
guilt, O God;  
let them fall by their own  
counsels;  
because of their many  
transgressions cast  
them out,  
for they have rebelled  
against you.  
11 But let all who take refuge  
in you rejoice;  
let them ever sing for  
joy.  
Spread your protection  
over them,  
so that those who love  
your name may exult in  
you.

12 For you bless the  
righteous, O LORD;  
you cover them with  
favor as with a shield.

### Proverbs 3:1–6 (NRSV)

*Admonition to Trust and  
Honor God*

1 My child, do not forget  
my teaching,  
but let your heart keep  
my commandments;  
2 for length of days and  
years of life

and abundant welfare  
they will give you.  
3 Do not let loyalty and  
faithfulness forsake  
you;  
bind them around your  
neck,  
write them on the tablet  
of your heart.  
4 So you will find favor and  
good repute  
in the sight of God and of  
people.  
5 Trust in the LORD with all  
your heart,  
and do not rely on your  
own insight.  
6 In all your ways  
acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight  
your paths.

## January 11



### 1 Chronicles 4:38-5:17 (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup> these mentioned by  
name were leaders in their  
families, and their clans  
increased greatly. <sup>39</sup> They

journeyed to the entrance of Gedor, to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks,<sup>40</sup> where they found rich, good pasture, and the land was very broad, quiet, and peaceful; for the former inhabitants there belonged to Ham.<sup>41</sup> These, registered by name, came in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, and attacked their tents and the Meunim who were found there, and exterminated them to this day, and settled in their place, because there was pasture there for their flocks.<sup>42</sup> And some of them, five hundred men of the Simeonites, went to Mount Seir, having as their leaders Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, sons of Ishi;<sup>43</sup> they destroyed the remnant of the Amalekites that had escaped, and they have lived there to this day.

*Descendants of Reuben*  
(Gen 46:8-9)

**5** The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel. (He was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed his birthright was given to the

sons of Joseph son of Israel, so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright;<sup>2</sup> though Judah became prominent among his brothers and a ruler came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph.)<sup>3</sup> The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.<sup>4</sup> The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,<sup>5</sup> Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son,<sup>6</sup> Beerah his son, whom King Tilgath-pilneser of Assyria carried away into exile; he was a chieftain of the Reubenites.<sup>7</sup> And his kindred by their families, when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,<sup>8</sup> and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-meon.<sup>9</sup> He also lived to the east as far as the beginning of the desert this side of the Euphrates, because their cattle had multiplied in the land of Gilead.<sup>10</sup> And in the days of Saul they made war on the Hagrites, who fell by their hand; and they lived in their

tents throughout all the region east of Gilead.

*Descendants of Gad*

<sup>11</sup>The sons of Gad lived beside them in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah: <sup>12</sup>Joel the chief, Shapham the second, Janai, and Shaphat in Bashan. <sup>13</sup>And their kindred according to their clans: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber, seven. <sup>14</sup>These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz; <sup>15</sup>Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni, was chief in their clan; <sup>16</sup>and they lived in Gilead, in Bashan and in its towns, and in all the pasture lands of Sharon to their limits. <sup>17</sup>All of these were enrolled by genealogies in the days of King Jotham of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam of Israel.

**Acts 25:14-27** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup>Since they were staying there several days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man here who was left in prison by Felix.

<sup>15</sup>When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me about him and asked for a sentence against him. <sup>16</sup>I told them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had met the accusers face to face and had been given an opportunity to make a defense against the charge. <sup>17</sup>So when they met here, I lost no time, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought. <sup>18</sup>When the accusers stood up, they did not charge him with any of the crimes that I was expecting. <sup>19</sup>Instead they had certain points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, but whom Paul asserted to be alive. <sup>20</sup>Since I was at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wished to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these charges. <sup>21</sup>But when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of his Imperial Majesty, I ordered him to be

held until I could send him to the emperor.”<sup>22</sup> Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear the man myself.” “Tomorrow,” he said, “you will hear him.”

*Paul Brought before Agrippa*

<sup>23</sup> So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then Festus gave the order and Paul was brought in.<sup>24</sup> And Festus said, “King Agrippa and all here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish community petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.”<sup>25</sup> But I found that he had done nothing deserving death; and when he appealed to his Imperial Majesty, I decided to send him.<sup>26</sup> But I have nothing definite to write to our sovereign about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write—<sup>27</sup> for it

seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner without indicating the charges against him.”

**Psalm 6:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Recovery from Grave Illness*

To the leader: with stringed instruments; according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

- 1 O LORD, do not rebuke me  
in your anger,  
or discipline me in your  
wrath.
- 2 Be gracious to me, O LORD,  
for I am languishing;  
O LORD, heal me, for my  
bones are shaking with  
terror.
- 3 My soul also is struck with  
terror,  
while you, O LORD—how  
long?
- 4 Turn, O LORD, save my life;  
deliver me for the sake  
of your steadfast love.
- 5 For in death there is no  
remembrance of you;  
in Sheol who can give  
you praise?

**Proverbs 3:7-8 (NRSV)**

- 7 Do not be wise in your  
own eyes;

fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

<sup>8</sup> It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body.

## January 12



### 1 Chronicles 5:18-6:30 (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had valiant warriors, who carried shield and sword, and drew the bow, expert in war, forty-four thousand seven hundred sixty, ready for service. <sup>19</sup> They made war on the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab; <sup>20</sup> and when they received help against them, the Hagrites and all who were with them were given into their hands, for they cried to God in the battle, and he granted their entreaty because they trusted in him.

<sup>21</sup> They captured their livestock: fifty thousand of

their camels, two hundred fifty thousand sheep, two thousand donkeys, and one hundred thousand captives.

<sup>22</sup> Many fell slain, because the war was of God. And they lived in their territory until the exile.

### *The Half-Tribe of Manasseh*

<sup>23</sup> The members of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land; they were very numerous from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon. <sup>24</sup> These were the heads of their clans: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty warriors, famous men, heads of their clans. <sup>25</sup> But they transgressed against the God of their ancestors, and prostituted themselves to the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them. <sup>26</sup> So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of King Pul of Assyria, the spirit of King Tilgath-pilneser of Assyria, and he carried them away, namely, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them



to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, to this day.

*Descendants of Levi*  
(Gen 46:11)

**6** The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. <sup>2</sup> The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. <sup>3</sup> The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. <sup>4</sup> Eleazar became the father of Phinehas, Phinehas of Abishua, <sup>5</sup> Abishua of Bukki, Bukki of Uzzi, <sup>6</sup> Uzzi of Zerachiah, Zerachiah of Meraioth, <sup>7</sup> Meraioth of Amariah, Amariah of Ahitub, <sup>8</sup> Ahitub of Zadok, Zadok of Ahimaaz, <sup>9</sup> Ahimaaz of Azariah, Azariah of Johanan, <sup>10</sup> and Johanan of Azariah (it was he who served as priest in the house that Solomon built in Jerusalem). <sup>11</sup> Azariah became the father of Amariah, Amariah of Ahitub, <sup>12</sup> Ahitub of Zadok, Zadok of Shallum, <sup>13</sup> Shallum of Hilkiyah, Hilkiyah of Azariah, <sup>14</sup> Azariah of Seraiah, Seraiah of Jehozadak; <sup>15</sup> and Jehozadak went into exile when the LORD sent Judah and

Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>16</sup> The sons of Levi:

Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.

<sup>17</sup> These are the names of the

sons of Gershom: Libni and

Shimei. <sup>18</sup> The sons of Kohath:

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and

Uzziel. <sup>19</sup> The sons of Merari:

Mahli and Mushi. These are

the clans of the Levites

according to their ancestry.

<sup>20</sup> Of Gershom: Libni his son,

Jahath his son, Zimmah his

son, <sup>21</sup> Joah his son, Iddo his

son, Zerah his son, Jeatherai

his son. <sup>22</sup> The sons of Kohath:

Amminadab his son, Korah his

son, Assir his son, <sup>23</sup> Elkanah

his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir

his son, <sup>24</sup> Tahath his son, Uriel

his son, Uzziyah his son, and

Shaul his son. <sup>25</sup> The sons of

Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth,

<sup>26</sup> Elkanah his son, Zophai his

son, Nahath his son, <sup>27</sup> Eliab his

son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah

his son. <sup>28</sup> The sons of Samuel:

Joel his firstborn, the second

Abijah. <sup>29</sup> The sons of Merari:

Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his

son, Uzzah his son, <sup>30</sup> Shimea

his son, Haggiah his son, and

Asaiah his son.

**Acts 26:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Paul Defends Himself  
before Agrippa*

Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand and began to defend himself:

<sup>2</sup> “I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews,  
<sup>3</sup> because you are especially familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews; therefore I beg of you to listen to me patiently.  
<sup>4</sup> “All the Jews know my way of life from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem.  
<sup>5</sup> They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I have belonged to the strictest sect of our religion and lived as a Pharisee. <sup>6</sup> And now I stand here on trial on account of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors, <sup>7</sup> a promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship day and night. It is for this hope, your

Excellency, that I am accused by Jews! <sup>8</sup> Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

**Psalms 6:6-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> I am weary with my moaning;  
every night I flood my bed with tears;  
I drench my couch with my weeping.  
<sup>7</sup> My eyes waste away because of grief;  
they grow weak because of all my foes.  
<sup>8</sup> Depart from me, all you workers of evil,  
for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.  
<sup>9</sup> The LORD has heard my supplication;  
the LORD accepts my prayer.  
<sup>10</sup> All my enemies shall be ashamed and struck with terror;  
they shall turn back, and in a moment be put to shame.

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Honor the LORD with your substance



and with the first fruits  
of all your produce;  
<sup>10</sup> then your barns will be  
filled with plenty, and  
your vats will be  
bursting with wine.

## January 13



### 1 Chronicles 6:31-81 (NRSV)

#### *Musicians Appointed by David*

<sup>31</sup>These are the men whom David put in charge of the service of song in the house of the LORD, after the ark came to rest there. <sup>32</sup>They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem; and they performed their service in due order. <sup>33</sup>These are the men who served; and their sons were: Of the Kohathites: Heman, the singer, son of Joel, son of Samuel, <sup>34</sup>son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah, <sup>35</sup>son of

Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai, <sup>36</sup>son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah, <sup>37</sup>son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, <sup>38</sup>son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel; <sup>39</sup>and his brother Asaph, who stood on his right, namely, Asaph son of Berechiah, son of Shimea, <sup>40</sup>son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchijah, <sup>41</sup>son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah, <sup>42</sup>son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei, <sup>43</sup>son of Jahath, son of Gershom, son of Levi. <sup>44</sup>On the left were their kindred the sons of Merari: Ethan son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch, <sup>45</sup>son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son of Hilkiyah, <sup>46</sup>son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer, <sup>47</sup>son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, son of Levi; <sup>48</sup>and their kindred the Levites were appointed for all the service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

<sup>49</sup>But Aaron and his sons made offerings on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, doing all the work of the most holy place, to

make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.<sup>50</sup> These are the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son,<sup>51</sup> Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,<sup>52</sup> Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son,<sup>53</sup> Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

*Settlements of the Levites*  
(Josh 21:1–42)

<sup>54</sup> These are their dwelling places according to their settlements within their borders: to the sons of Aaron of the families of Kohathites—for the lot fell to them first—<sup>55</sup> to them they gave Hebron in the land of Judah and its surrounding pasture lands,<sup>56</sup> but the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh.<sup>57</sup> To the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge: Hebron, Libnah with its pasture lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its pasture lands,<sup>58</sup> Hilan with its pasture lands, Debir with its pasture lands,<sup>59</sup> Ashan with its pasture lands, and Beth-shemesh with its pasture

lands.<sup>60</sup> From the tribe of Benjamin, Geba with its pasture lands, Alemeth with its pasture lands, and Anathoth with its pasture lands. All their towns throughout their families were thirteen.

<sup>61</sup> To the rest of the Kohathites were given by lot out of the family of the tribe, out of the half-tribe, the half of Manasseh, ten towns.<sup>62</sup> To the Gershomites according to their families were allotted thirteen towns out of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh in Bashan.<sup>63</sup> To the Merarites according to their families were allotted twelve towns out of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.<sup>64</sup> So the people of Israel gave the Levites the towns with their pasture lands.<sup>65</sup> They also gave them by lot out of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin these towns that are mentioned by name.

<sup>66</sup> And some of the families of the sons of Kohath had towns of their territory out of the tribe of Ephraim.<sup>67</sup> They were given the cities of refuge:

Shechem with its pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasture lands,<sup>68</sup> Jokmeam with its pasture lands, Beth-horon with its pasture lands,<sup>69</sup> Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands;<sup>70</sup> and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Aner with its pasture lands, and Bileam with its pasture lands, for the rest of the families of the Kohathites.

<sup>71</sup>To the Gershomites: out of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan with its pasture lands and Ashtaroth with its pasture lands;<sup>72</sup> and out of the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its pasture lands, Daberath with its pasture lands,<sup>73</sup> Ramoth with its pasture lands, and Anem with its pasture lands;<sup>74</sup> out of the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its pasture lands, Abdon with its pasture lands,<sup>75</sup> Hukok with its pasture lands, and Rehob with its pasture lands;<sup>76</sup> and out of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasture lands, Hammon with its pasture lands, and Kiriathaim with its pasture lands.<sup>77</sup> To the

rest of the Merarites out of the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono with its pasture lands, Tabor with its pasture lands,<sup>78</sup> and across the Jordan from Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the steppe with its pasture lands, Jahzah with its pasture lands,<sup>79</sup> Kedemoth with its pasture lands, and Mephaath with its pasture lands;<sup>80</sup> and out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasture lands, Mahanaim with its pasture lands,<sup>81</sup> Heshbon with its pasture lands, and Jazer with its pasture lands.

**Acts 26:9-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup>“Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>10</sup> And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death.<sup>11</sup> By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to

blaspheme; and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.

*Paul Tells of His Conversion*  
(Acts 9:1–19; 22:6–16)

<sup>12</sup> “With this in mind, I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, <sup>13</sup> when at midday along the road, your Excellency, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. <sup>14</sup> When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘**Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.**’ <sup>15</sup> I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ The Lord answered, ‘**I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.**’ <sup>16</sup> **But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you.** <sup>17</sup> **I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you** <sup>18</sup> **to open**

**their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’**

*Paul Tells of His Preaching*

<sup>19</sup> “After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, <sup>20</sup> but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. <sup>21</sup> For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. <sup>22</sup> To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: <sup>23</sup> that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

*Paul Appeals to*

*Agrippa to Believe*

<sup>24</sup> While he was making this defense, Festus exclaimed, “You are out of your mind, Paul! Too much learning is driving you insane!”

<sup>25</sup> But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth. <sup>26</sup> Indeed the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely; for I am certain that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this was not done in a corner. <sup>27</sup> King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.” <sup>28</sup> Agrippa said to Paul, “Are you so quickly persuading me to become a Christian?” <sup>29</sup> Paul replied, “Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that not only you but also all who are listening to me today might become such as I am—except for these chains.”

<sup>30</sup> Then the king got up, and with him the governor and Bernice and those who had been seated with them; <sup>31</sup> and as they were leaving, they said to one another, “This man is

doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment.”

<sup>32</sup> Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to the emperor.”

**Psalm 7:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Help against Persecutors*

A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush, a Benjaminite.

- 1 O LORD my God, in you I take refuge;  
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me,  
2 or like a lion they will tear me apart;  
they will drag me away, with no one to rescue.  
3 O LORD my God, if I have done this,  
if there is wrong in my hands,  
4 if I have repaid my ally with harm  
or plundered my foe without cause,  
5 then let the enemy pursue and overtake me,  
trample my life to the ground,  
and lay my soul in the dust. *Selah*

<sup>6</sup> Rise up, O LORD, in your  
anger;  
lift yourself up against  
the fury of my  
enemies;  
awake, O my God; you  
have appointed a  
judgment.

<sup>7</sup> Let the assembly of the  
peoples be gathered  
around you,  
and over it take your  
seat on high.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD judges the  
peoples;  
judge me, O LORD,  
according to my  
righteousness  
and according to the  
integrity that is in me.

<sup>9</sup> O let the evil of the wicked  
come to an end,  
but establish the  
righteous,  
you who test the minds  
and hearts,  
O righteous God.

**Proverbs 3:11–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> My child, do not despise  
the LORD's discipline  
or be weary of his  
reproof,

<sup>12</sup> for the LORD reproveth the  
one he loves,

as a father the son in  
whom he delights.

## January 14



### 1 Chronicles 7:1-40 (NRSV)

*Descendants of Issachar  
(Gen 46:13)*

**7** The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four. <sup>2</sup>The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their ancestral houses, namely of Tola, mighty warriors of their generations, their number in the days of David being twenty-two thousand six hundred. <sup>3</sup>The son of Uzzi: Izrahiah. And the sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah, five, all of them chiefs; <sup>4</sup>and along with them, by their generations, according to their ancestral houses, were units of the fighting force, thirty-six thousand, for they had many wives and sons. <sup>5</sup>Their kindred



belonging to all the families of Issachar were in all eighty-seven thousand mighty warriors, enrolled by genealogy.

*Descendants of Benjamin*  
(Gen 46:21)

<sup>6</sup> The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Jediael, three. <sup>7</sup> The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five, heads of ancestral houses, mighty warriors; and their enrollment by genealogies was twenty-two thousand thirty-four. <sup>8</sup> The sons of Becher: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Becher; <sup>9</sup> and their enrollment by genealogies, according to their generations, as heads of their ancestral houses, mighty warriors, was twenty thousand two hundred. <sup>10</sup> The sons of Jediael: Bilhan. And the sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. <sup>11</sup> All these were the sons of Jediael according to the heads of their ancestral houses, mighty warriors, seventeen thousand

two hundred, ready for service in war. <sup>12</sup> And Shuppim and Huppim were the sons of Ir, Hushim the son of Aher.

*Descendants of Naphtali*  
(Gen 46:24)

<sup>13</sup> The descendants of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, the descendants of Bilhah.

*Descendants of Manasseh*

<sup>14</sup> The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore; she bore Machir the father of Gilead. <sup>15</sup> And Machir took a wife for Huppim and for Shuppim. The name of his sister was Maacah. And the name of the second was Zelophehad; and Zelophehad had daughters. <sup>16</sup> Maacah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she named him Peresh; the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Rekem. <sup>17</sup> The son of Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead son of Machir, son of Manasseh. <sup>18</sup> And his sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. <sup>19</sup> The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

### *Descendants of Ephraim*

<sup>20</sup>The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, and Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son, <sup>21</sup>Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead. Now the people of Gath, who were born in the land, killed them, because they came down to raid their cattle. <sup>22</sup>And their father Ephraim mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. <sup>23</sup>Ephraim went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son; and he named him Beriah, because disaster had befallen his house. <sup>24</sup>His daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzen-sheerah. <sup>25</sup>Rephah was his son, Resheph his son, Telah his son, Tahan his son, <sup>26</sup>Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, <sup>27</sup>Nun his son, Joshua his son. <sup>28</sup>Their possessions and settlements were Bethel and its towns, and eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer and its towns, Shechem and its towns, as far as Ayyah and its towns; <sup>29</sup>also along the borders of the Manassites, Beth-shean and

its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, Dor and its towns. In these lived the sons of Joseph son of Israel.

### *Descendants of Asher*

*(Gen 46:17)*

<sup>30</sup>The sons of Asher:

Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. <sup>31</sup>The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith. <sup>32</sup>Heber became the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua. <sup>33</sup>The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These are the sons of Japhlet. <sup>34</sup>The sons of Shemer: Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram. <sup>35</sup>The sons of Helem his brother: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. <sup>36</sup>The sons of Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, <sup>37</sup>Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera. <sup>38</sup>The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara. <sup>39</sup>The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. <sup>40</sup>All of these were men of Asher, heads of ancestral houses, select mighty warriors, chief of the princes. Their number enrolled by genealogies, for

service in war, was twenty-six thousand men.

**Acts 27:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Paul Sails for Rome*

When it was decided that we were to sail for Italy, they transferred Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort, named Julius. <sup>2</sup> Embarking on a ship of Adramyttium that was about to set sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. <sup>3</sup> The next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul kindly, and allowed him to go to his friends to be cared for. <sup>4</sup> Putting out to sea from there, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. <sup>5</sup> After we had sailed across the sea that is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. <sup>6</sup> There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship bound for Italy and put us on board.

**Psalm 7:10-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> God is my shield,

who saves the upright in heart.

- <sup>11</sup> God is a righteous judge,  
and a God who has  
indignation every day.
- <sup>12</sup> If one does not repent,  
God will whet his  
sword;  
he has bent and strung  
his bow;  
<sup>13</sup> he has prepared his deadly  
weapons,  
making his arrows fiery  
shafts.
- <sup>14</sup> See how they conceive  
evil,  
and are pregnant with  
mischief,  
and bring forth lies.
- <sup>15</sup> They make a pit, digging it  
out,  
and fall into the hole that  
they have made.
- <sup>16</sup> Their mischief returns  
upon their own heads,  
and on their own heads  
their violence  
descends.
- <sup>17</sup> I will give to the LORD the  
thanks due to his  
righteousness,  
and sing praise to the  
name of the LORD, the  
Most High.

**Proverbs 3:13–15 (NRSV)**

*The True Wealth*

<sup>13</sup> Happy are those who find wisdom,

and those who get understanding,

<sup>14</sup> for her income is better than silver,  
and her revenue better than gold.

<sup>15</sup> She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

**January  
15**



**1 Chronicles 8:1-40 (NRSV)**

*Descendants of Benjamin  
(Gen 46:21)*

**8** Benjamin became the father of Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third, <sup>2</sup> Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. <sup>3</sup> And Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud, <sup>4</sup> Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, <sup>5</sup> Gera, Shephuphan, and Hiram. <sup>6</sup> These are the sons of

Ehud (they were heads of ancestral houses of the inhabitants of Geba, and they were carried into exile to Manahath): <sup>7</sup> Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera, that is, Heglam, who became the father of Uzza and Ahihud. <sup>8</sup> And Shaharaim had sons in the country of Moab after he had sent away his wives Hushim and Baara. <sup>9</sup> He had sons by his wife Hodesh: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, <sup>10</sup> Jeuz, Sachia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of ancestral houses. <sup>11</sup> He also had sons by Hushim: Abitub and Elpaal. <sup>12</sup> The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its towns, <sup>13</sup> and Beriah and Shema (they were heads of ancestral houses of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who put to flight the inhabitants of Gath); <sup>14</sup> and Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth. <sup>15</sup> Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, <sup>16</sup> Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah. <sup>17</sup> Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, <sup>18</sup> Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. <sup>19</sup> Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, <sup>20</sup> Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, <sup>21</sup> Adaiah, Beraiah, and

Shimrath were the sons of Shimei.<sup>22</sup> Ishpan, Eber, Eliel,<sup>23</sup> Abdon, Zichri, Hanan,<sup>24</sup> Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah,<sup>25</sup> Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak.<sup>26</sup> Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah,<sup>27</sup> Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham.<sup>28</sup> These were the heads of ancestral houses, according to their generations, chiefs. These lived in Jerusalem.

<sup>29</sup>Jeiel the father of Gibeon lived in Gibeon, and the name of his wife was Maacah.<sup>30</sup> His firstborn son: Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab,<sup>31</sup> Gedor, Ahio, Zecher,<sup>32</sup> and Mikloth, who became the father of Shimeah. Now these also lived opposite their kindred in Jerusalem, with their kindred.<sup>33</sup> Ner became the father of Kish, Kish of Saul, Saul of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-baal;<sup>34</sup> and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal became the father of Micah.<sup>35</sup> The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz.<sup>36</sup> Ahaz became the father of Jehoadah; and Jehoadah

became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; Zimri became the father of Moza.<sup>37</sup> Moza became the father of Binea; Raphah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.<sup>38</sup> Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; all these were the sons of Azel.<sup>39</sup> The sons of his brother Eshek: Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third.<sup>40</sup> The sons of Ulam were mighty warriors, archers, having many children and grandchildren, one hundred fifty. All these were Benjaminites.

#### **Acts 27:7-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup>We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind was against us, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone.<sup>8</sup> Sailing past it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

<sup>9</sup>Since much time had been lost and sailing was now dangerous, because even the Fast had already gone by, Paul

advised them, <sup>10</sup> saying, “Sirs, I can see that the voyage will be with danger and much heavy loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.”

<sup>11</sup> But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. <sup>12</sup> Since the harbor was not suitable for spending the winter, the majority was in favor of putting to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, where they could spend the winter. It was a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest.

### *The Storm at Sea*

<sup>13</sup> When a moderate south wind began to blow, they thought they could achieve their purpose; so they weighed anchor and began to sail past Crete, close to the shore. <sup>14</sup> But soon a violent wind, called the northeaster, rushed down from Crete.

<sup>15</sup> Since the ship was caught and could not be turned head-on into the wind, we gave way to it and were driven. <sup>16</sup> By running under the lee of a

small island called Cauda we were scarcely able to get the ship’s boat under control.

<sup>17</sup> After hoisting it up they took measures to undergird the ship; then, fearing that they would run on the Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and so were driven. <sup>18</sup> We were being pounded by the storm so violently that on the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard, <sup>19</sup> and on the third day with their own hands they threw the ship’s tackle overboard. <sup>20</sup> When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest raged, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

### **Psalm 8:1** (NRSV)

#### *Divine Majesty and Human Dignity*

To the leader: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your  
name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory  
above the heavens.

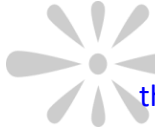
### **Proverbs 3:16–18** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Long life is in her right  
hand;

in her left hand are  
riches and honor.

<sup>17</sup> Her ways are ways of  
pleasantness,  
and all her paths are  
peace.

<sup>18</sup> She [wisdom] is a tree of  
life to those who lay  
hold of her;  
those who hold her fast  
are called happy.



## January 16



### 1 Chronicles 9:1-16 (NRSV)

**9** So all Israel was enrolled by  
genealogies; and these are  
written in the Book of the  
Kings of Israel. And Judah was  
taken into exile in Babylon  
because of their  
unfaithfulness. <sup>2</sup> Now the first  
to live again in their  
possessions in their towns  
were Israelites, priests,  
Levites, and temple servants.

### *Inhabitants of Jerusalem after the Exile*

<sup>3</sup> And some of the people  
of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim,  
and Manasseh lived in  
Jerusalem: <sup>4</sup> Uthai son of  
Ammihud, son of Omri, son of  
Imri, son of Bani, from the  
sons of Perez son of Judah.  
<sup>5</sup> And of the Shilonites: Asaiah  
the firstborn, and his sons. <sup>6</sup> Of  
the sons of Zerah: Jeuel and  
their kin, six hundred ninety.  
<sup>7</sup> Of the Benjaminites: Sallu  
son of Meshullam, son of  
Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah,  
<sup>8</sup> Ibneiah son of Jeroham, Elah  
son of Uzzi, son of Michri, and  
Meshullam son of Shephatiah,  
son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah;  
<sup>9</sup> and their kindred according  
to their generations, nine  
hundred fifty-six. All these  
were heads of families  
according to their ancestral  
houses.

### *Priestly Families*

<sup>10</sup> Of the priests: Jedaiah,  
Jehoiarib, Jachin, <sup>11</sup> and  
Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of  
Meshullam, son of Zadok, son  
of Meraioth, son of Ahitub,  
the chief officer of the house  
of God; <sup>12</sup> and Adaiah son of

Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malchijah, and Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer;<sup>13</sup> besides their kindred, heads of their ancestral houses, one thousand seven hundred sixty, qualified for the work of the service of the house of God.

#### *Levitical Families*

<sup>14</sup> Of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari;<sup>15</sup> and Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph;<sup>16</sup> and Obadiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

#### **Acts 27:21-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul then stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and thereby avoided this damage and loss.<sup>22</sup> I urge you now to keep up your courage,

for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.<sup>23</sup> For last night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship,<sup>24</sup> and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before the emperor; and indeed, God has granted safety to all those who are sailing with you.'<sup>25</sup> So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.<sup>26</sup> But we will have to run aground on some island."

<sup>27</sup> When the fourteenth night had come, as we were drifting across the sea of Adria, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land.<sup>28</sup> So they took soundings and found twenty fathoms; a little farther on they took soundings again and found fifteen fathoms.

<sup>29</sup> Fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come.<sup>30</sup> But when the sailors tried to escape from the ship and had lowered the boat into the sea, on the pretext of putting out anchors from the bow,<sup>31</sup> Paul



said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.”<sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and set it adrift.

**Psalm 8:2-9** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup> When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;

<sup>4</sup> what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

<sup>5</sup> Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup> You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet,

<sup>7</sup> all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

<sup>8</sup> the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

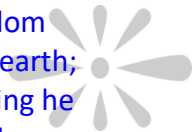
<sup>9</sup> O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**Proverbs 3:19–20** (NRSV)

*God’s Wisdom in Creation*

<sup>19</sup> The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens;

<sup>20</sup> by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.



**January 17**



**1 Chronicles 9:17-10:14** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> The gatekeepers were: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman; and their kindred

Shallum was the chief,  
<sup>18</sup>stationed previously in the  
king's gate on the east side.

These were the gatekeepers of  
the camp of the Levites.

<sup>19</sup>Shallum son of Kore, son of  
Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and  
his kindred of his ancestral  
house, the Korahites, were in  
charge of the work of the  
service, guardians of the  
thresholds of the tent, as their  
ancestors had been in charge  
of the camp of the LORD,  
guardians of the entrance.

<sup>20</sup>And Phinehas son of Eleazar  
was chief over them in former  
times; the LORD was with him.

<sup>21</sup>Zechariah son of  
Meshelemiah was gatekeeper  
at the entrance of the tent of  
meeting. <sup>22</sup>All these, who  
were chosen as gatekeepers at  
the thresholds, were two  
hundred twelve. They were  
enrolled by genealogies in  
their villages. David and the  
seer Samuel established them  
in their office of trust. <sup>23</sup>So  
they and their descendants  
were in charge of the gates of  
the house of the LORD, that is,  
the house of the tent, as  
guards. <sup>24</sup>The gatekeepers  
were on the four sides, east,

west, north, and south; <sup>25</sup>and  
their kindred who were in  
their villages were obliged to  
come in every seven days, in  
turn, to be with them; <sup>26</sup>for  
the four chief gatekeepers,  
who were Levites, were in  
charge of the chambers and  
the treasures of the house of  
God. <sup>27</sup>And they would spend  
the night near the house of  
God; for on them lay the duty  
of watching, and they had  
charge of opening it every  
morning.

<sup>28</sup>Some of them had  
charge of the utensils of  
service, for they were required  
to count them when they  
were brought in and taken  
out. <sup>29</sup>Others of them were  
appointed over the furniture,  
and over all the holy utensils,  
also over the choice flour, the  
wine, the oil, the incense, and  
the spices. <sup>30</sup>Others, of the  
sons of the priests, prepared  
the mixing of the spices, <sup>31</sup>and  
Mattithiah, one of the Levites,  
the firstborn of Shallum the  
Korahite, was in charge of  
making the flat cakes. <sup>32</sup>Also  
some of their kindred of the  
Kohathites had charge of the

rows of bread, to prepare them for each sabbath.

<sup>33</sup> Now these are the singers, the heads of ancestral houses of the Levites, living in the chambers of the temple free from other service, for they were on duty day and night. <sup>34</sup> These were heads of ancestral houses of the Levites, according to their generations; these leaders lived in Jerusalem.

#### *The Family of King Saul*

<sup>35</sup> In Gibeon lived the father of Gibeon, Jeiel, and the name of his wife was Maacah. <sup>36</sup> His firstborn son was Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, <sup>37</sup> Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth; <sup>38</sup> and Mikloth became the father of Shimeam; and these also lived opposite their kindred in Jerusalem, with their kindred. <sup>39</sup> Ner became the father of Kish, Kish of Saul, Saul of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-baal; <sup>40</sup> and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal became the father of Micah. <sup>41</sup> The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, and Ahaz;

<sup>42</sup> and Ahaz became the father of Jarah, and Jarah of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri became the father of Moza. <sup>43</sup> Moza became the father of Binea; and Rephaiah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. <sup>44</sup> Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; these were the sons of Azel.

#### *Death of Saul and His Sons*

*(1 Sam 31:1–13)*

**10** Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. <sup>2</sup> The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchishua, sons of Saul. <sup>3</sup> The battle pressed hard on Saul; and the archers found him, and he was wounded by the archers. <sup>4</sup> Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, so that these uncircumcised may not come and make sport of me." But his armor-bearer was unwilling,

for he was terrified. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it. <sup>5</sup> When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died. <sup>6</sup> Thus Saul died; he and his three sons and all his house died together. <sup>7</sup> When all the men of Israel who were in the valley saw that the army had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their towns and fled; and the Philistines came and occupied them.

<sup>8</sup> The next day when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. <sup>9</sup> They stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to carry the good news to their idols and to the people. <sup>10</sup> They put his armor in the temple of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon. <sup>11</sup> But when all Jabesh-gilead heard everything that the Philistines had done to Saul, <sup>12</sup> all the valiant warriors got up and took away the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons, and

brought them to Jabesh. Then they buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

<sup>13</sup> So Saul died for his unfaithfulness; he was unfaithful to the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD; moreover, he had consulted a medium, seeking guidance, <sup>14</sup> and did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse.

#### **Acts 27:33-44 (NRSV)**

<sup>33</sup> Just before daybreak, Paul urged all of them to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been in suspense and remaining without food, having eaten nothing.

<sup>34</sup> Therefore I urge you to take some food, for it will help you survive; for none of you will lose a hair from your heads."

<sup>35</sup> After he had said this, he took bread; and giving thanks to God in the presence of all, he broke it and began to eat.

<sup>36</sup> Then all of them were encouraged and took food for themselves. <sup>37</sup> (We were in all

two hundred seventy-six persons in the ship.)<sup>38</sup> After they had satisfied their hunger, they lightened the ship by throwing the wheat into the sea.

### *The Shipwreck*

<sup>39</sup> In the morning they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned to run the ship ashore, if they could.<sup>40</sup> So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they loosened the ropes that tied the steering-oars; then hoisting the foresail to the wind, they made for the beach.<sup>41</sup> But striking a reef, they ran the ship aground; the bow stuck and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the force of the waves.<sup>42</sup> The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, so that none might swim away and escape;<sup>43</sup> but the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land,<sup>44</sup> and the rest to

follow, some on planks and others on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

### **Psalm 9:1-8 (NRSV)**

#### *God's Power and Justice*

To the leader: according to Muthlabben. A Psalm of David.

- 1 I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart;  
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.
- 2 I will be glad and exult in you;  
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.
- 3 When my enemies turned back,  
they stumbled and perished before you.
- 4 For you have maintained my just cause;  
you have sat on the throne giving righteous judgment.
- 5 You have rebuked the nations, you have destroyed the wicked;  
you have blotted out their name forever and ever.
- 6 The enemies have vanished in everlasting ruins;

their cities you have  
rooted out;  
the very memory of  
them has perished.

7 **But the LORD sits  
enthroned forever,  
he has established his  
throne for judgment.**

8 **He judges the world with  
righteousness;  
he judges the peoples  
with equity.**

### **Proverbs 3:21–26 (NRSV)**

#### *The True Security*

21 My child, do not let these  
escape from your sight:  
keep sound wisdom and  
prudence,  
22 and they will be life for  
your soul  
and adornment for your  
neck.  
23 Then you will walk on your  
way securely  
and your foot will not  
stumble.  
24 If you sit down, you will  
not be afraid;  
when you lie down, your  
sleep will be sweet.  
25 Do not be afraid of sudden  
panic,  
or of the storm that  
strikes the wicked;

26 for the LORD will be your  
confidence  
and will keep your foot  
from being caught.

## **January 18**



### **1 Chronicles 11:1–25 (NRSV)**

#### *David Anointed King of All Israel (2 Sam 5:1–3)*

**11** Then all Israel gathered  
together to David at Hebron  
and said, “See, we are your  
bone and flesh.”<sup>2</sup> For some  
time now, even while Saul was  
king, it was you who  
commanded the army of  
Israel. The LORD your God said  
to you: It is you who shall be  
shepherd of my people Israel,  
you who shall be ruler over my  
people Israel.”<sup>3</sup> So all the  
elders of Israel came to the  
king at Hebron, and David  
made a covenant with them at  
Hebron before the LORD. And  
they anointed David king over

Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel.

*Jerusalem Captured*

(2 Sam 5:6–10)

<sup>4</sup> David and all Israel marched to Jerusalem, that is Jebus, where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. <sup>5</sup> The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, “You will not come in here.” Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, now the city of David. <sup>6</sup> David had said, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander.” And Joab son of Zeruah went up first, so he became chief. <sup>7</sup> David resided in the stronghold; therefore it was called the city of David. <sup>8</sup> He built the city all around, from the Millo in complete circuit; and Joab repaired the rest of the city. <sup>9</sup> And David became greater and greater, for the LORD of hosts was with him.

*David’s Mighty Men  
and Their Exploits*

(2 Sam 23:8–39)

<sup>10</sup> Now these are the chiefs of David’s warriors, who gave him strong support in his kingdom, together with all

Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel. <sup>11</sup> This is an account of David’s mighty warriors: Jashobeam, son of Hachmoni, was chief of the Three; he wielded his spear against three hundred whom he killed at one time.

<sup>12</sup> And next to him among the three warriors was Eleazar son of Dodo, the Ahohite.

<sup>13</sup> He was with David at Pasdammim when the Philistines were gathered there for battle. There was a plot of ground full of barley. Now the people had fled from the Philistines, <sup>14</sup> but he and David took their stand in the middle of the plot, defended it, and killed the Philistines; and the LORD saved them by a great victory.

<sup>15</sup> Three of the thirty chiefs went down to the rock to David at the cave of Adullam, while the army of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. <sup>16</sup> David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. <sup>17</sup> David said longingly, “O that someone would give me water

to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!"<sup>18</sup> Then the Three broke through the camp of the Philistines, and drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and they brought it to David. But David would not drink of it; he poured it out to the LORD,<sup>19</sup> and said, "My God forbid that I should do this. Can I drink the blood of these men? For at the risk of their lives they brought it." Therefore he would not drink it. The three warriors did these things.

<sup>20</sup> Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, was chief of the Thirty. With his spear he fought against three hundred and killed them, and won a name beside the Three.<sup>21</sup> He was the most renowned of the Thirty, and became their commander; but he did not attain to the Three.

<sup>22</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant man of Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he struck down two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen.

<sup>23</sup> And he killed an Egyptian, a

man of great stature, five cubits tall. The Egyptian had in his hand a spear like a weaver's beam; but Benaiah went against him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear.

<sup>24</sup> Such were the things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did, and he won a name beside the three warriors.<sup>25</sup> He was renowned among the Thirty, but he did not attain to the Three. And David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

#### **Acts 28:1-16 (NRSV)**

##### *Paul on the Island of Malta*

After we had reached safety, we then learned that the island was called Malta.

<sup>2</sup> The natives showed us unusual kindness. Since it had begun to rain and was cold, they kindled a fire and welcomed all of us around it.

<sup>3</sup> Paul had gathered a bundle of brushwood and was putting it on the fire, when a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand.

<sup>4</sup> When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one



another, "This man must be a murderer; though he has escaped from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live."

<sup>5</sup> He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. <sup>6</sup> They were expecting him to swell up or drop dead, but after they had waited a long time and saw that nothing unusual had happened to him, they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god.

<sup>7</sup> Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. <sup>8</sup> It so happened that the father of Publius lay sick in bed with fever and dysentery. Paul visited him and cured him by praying and putting his hands on him.

<sup>9</sup> After this happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured. <sup>10</sup> They bestowed many honors on us, and when we were about to sail, they put on board all the provisions we needed.

### *Paul Arrives at Rome*

<sup>11</sup> Three months later we set sail on a ship that had wintered at the island, an Alexandrian ship with the Twin Brothers as its figurehead.

<sup>12</sup> We put in at Syracuse and stayed there for three days; <sup>13</sup> then we weighed anchor and came to Rhegium. After one day there a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli.

<sup>14</sup> There we found believers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome. <sup>15</sup> The believers from there, when they heard of us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

<sup>16</sup> When we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

### **Psalm 9:9-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> The LORD is a stronghold  
for the oppressed,  
a stronghold in times of  
trouble.



- 10 And those who know your  
name put their trust in  
you,  
for you, O LORD, have not  
forsaken those who  
seek you.
- 11 Sing praises to the LORD,  
who dwells in Zion.  
Declare his deeds among  
the peoples.
- 12 For he who avenges blood  
is mindful of them;  
he does not forget the  
cry of the afflicted.

**Proverbs 3:27–32 (NRSV)**

- 27 Do not withhold good from  
those to whom it is  
due,  
when it is in your power  
to do it.
- 28 Do not say to your  
neighbor, “Go, and  
come again,  
tomorrow I will give it” —  
when you have it with  
you.
- 29 Do not plan harm against  
your neighbor  
who lives trustingly  
beside you.
- 30 Do not quarrel with  
anyone without cause,  
when no harm has been  
done to you.

- 31 Do not envy the violent  
and do not choose any of  
their ways;
- 32 for the perverse are an  
abomination to the  
LORD, but the upright  
are in his confidence.

**January  
19**



**1 Chronicles 11:16-12:18  
(NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup>The warriors of the  
armies were Asahel brother of  
Joab, Elhanan son of Dodo of  
Bethlehem, <sup>27</sup>Shammoth of  
Harod, Helez the Pelonite,  
<sup>28</sup>Ira son of Ikkes of Tekoa,  
Abiezer of Anathoth,  
<sup>29</sup>Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai  
the Ahohite, <sup>30</sup>Maharai of  
Netophah, Heled son of  
Baanah of Netophah, <sup>31</sup>Ithai  
son of Ribai of Gibeah of the  
Benjaminites, Benaiah of  
Pirathon, <sup>32</sup>Hurai of the wadis  
of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite,  
<sup>33</sup>Azmaveth of Baharum,  
Eliabba of Shaalbon,

<sup>34</sup> Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan son of Shagee the Hararite, <sup>35</sup> Ahiam son of Sachar the Hararite, Eliphai son of Ur, <sup>36</sup> Hephher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, <sup>37</sup> Hezro of Carmel, Naarai son of Ezbai, <sup>38</sup> Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar son of Hagri, <sup>39</sup> Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai of Beeroth, the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah, <sup>40</sup> Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, <sup>41</sup> Uriah the Hittite, Zabad son of Ahlai, <sup>42</sup> Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, a leader of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, <sup>43</sup> Hanan son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite, <sup>44</sup> Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotham the Aroerite, <sup>45</sup> Jediael son of Shimri, and his brother Joha the Tizite, <sup>46</sup> Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, <sup>47</sup> Eliel, and Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

*David's Followers in the  
Wilderness  
(1 Sam 22:1-2)*

**12** The following are those who came to David at Ziklag, while he could not move about freely because of Saul son of Kish; they were among the mighty warriors who helped him in war. <sup>2</sup> They were archers, and could shoot arrows and sling stones with either the right hand or the left; they were Benjaminites, Saul's kindred. <sup>3</sup> The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, both sons of Shemaah of Gibeath; also Jeziel and Pelet sons of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu of Anathoth, <sup>4</sup> Ishmaiah of Gibeon, a warrior among the Thirty and a leader over the Thirty; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad of Gederah, <sup>5</sup> Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah the Haruphite; <sup>6</sup> Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korahites; <sup>7</sup> and Joelah and Zebadiah, sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

<sup>8</sup> From the Gadites there went over to David at the stronghold in the wilderness mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and who

were swift as gazelles on the mountains: <sup>9</sup>Ezer the chief, Obadiah second, Eliab third, <sup>10</sup>Mishmannah fourth, Jeremiah fifth, <sup>11</sup>Attai sixth, Eliel seventh, <sup>12</sup>Johanah eighth, Elzabad ninth, <sup>13</sup>Jeremiah tenth, Machbannai eleventh. <sup>14</sup>These Gadites were officers of the army, the least equal to a hundred and the greatest to a thousand.

<sup>15</sup>These are the men who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it was overflowing all its banks, and put to flight all those in the valleys, to the east and to the west.

<sup>16</sup>Some Benjaminites and Judahites came to the stronghold to David. <sup>17</sup>David went out to meet them and said to them, "If you have come to me in friendship, to help me, then my heart will be knit to you; but if you have come to betray me to my adversaries, though my hands have done no wrong, then may the God of our ancestors see and give judgment."

<sup>18</sup>Then the spirit came upon Amasai, chief of the Thirty, and he said,

"We are yours, O David;  
and with you, O son of  
Jesse!

Peace, peace to you,  
and peace to the one  
who helps you!  
For your God is the one  
who helps you."

Then David received them,  
and made them officers of his  
troops.

**Acts 28:17-31** (NRSV)

*Paul and Jewish  
Leaders in Rome*

<sup>17</sup>Three days later he called together the local leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, he said to them, "Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors, yet I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. <sup>18</sup>When they had examined me, the Romans wanted to release me, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. <sup>19</sup>But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to the emperor—even though I had no charge to bring against my nation. <sup>20</sup>For this reason therefore I have

asked to see you and speak with you, since it is for the sake of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.”

<sup>21</sup> They replied, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken anything evil about you. <sup>22</sup> But we would like to hear from you what you think, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.”

*Paul Preaches in Rome*

*(Isa 6:9–10)*

<sup>23</sup> After they had set a day to meet with him, they came to him at his lodgings in great numbers. From morning until evening he explained the matter to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets.

<sup>24</sup> Some were convinced by what he had said, while others refused to believe. <sup>25</sup> So they disagreed with each other; and as they were leaving, Paul made one further statement: “The Holy Spirit was right in

saying to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah,

<sup>26</sup> ‘Go to this people and say, You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive.

<sup>27</sup> For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn— and I would heal them.’

<sup>28</sup> Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.”

<sup>30</sup> He lived there two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him, <sup>31</sup> proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

**Psalm 9:13-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD.

See what I suffer from  
 those who hate me;  
 you are the one who lifts  
 me up from the gates  
 of death,  
 14 so that I may recount all  
 your praises,  
 and, in the gates of  
 daughter Zion,  
 rejoice in your  
 deliverance.

15 The nations have sunk in  
 the pit that they made;  
 in the net that they hid  
 has their own foot  
 been caught.

16 The LORD has made himself  
 known, he has  
 executed judgment;  
 the wicked are snared in  
 the work of their own  
 hands. *Higgaion. Selah*

17 The wicked shall depart to  
 Sheol,  
 all the nations that  
 forget God.

18 For the needy shall not  
 always be forgotten,  
 nor the hope of the poor  
 perish forever.

**Proverbs 3:33–35 (NRSV)**

33 The LORD's curse is on the  
 house of the wicked,

but he blesses the abode  
 of the righteous.

34 Toward the scorners he is  
 scornful,  
 but to the humble he  
 shows favor.

35 The wise will inherit honor,  
 but stubborn fools,  
 disgrace.

**January  
 20**



**1 Chronicles 12:19-40 (NRSV)**

19 Some of the Manassites  
 deserted to David when he  
 came with the Philistines for  
 the battle against Saul. (Yet he  
 did not help them, for the  
 rulers of the Philistines took  
 counsel and sent him away,  
 saying, "He will desert to his  
 master Saul at the cost of our  
 heads.") 20 As he went to  
 Ziklag these Manassites  
 deserted to him: Adnah,  
 Jozabad, Jediael, Michael,  
 Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai,  
 chiefs of the thousands in  
 Manasseh. 21 They helped

David against the band of raiders, for they were all warriors and commanders in the army.<sup>22</sup> Indeed from day to day people kept coming to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.

*David's Army at Hebron*

<sup>23</sup> These are the numbers of the divisions of the armed troops who came to David in Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him, according to the word of the LORD.<sup>24</sup> The people of Judah bearing shield and spear numbered six thousand eight hundred armed troops.<sup>25</sup> Of the Simeonites, mighty warriors, seven thousand one hundred.<sup>26</sup> Of the Levites four thousand six hundred.<sup>27</sup> Jehoiada, leader of the house of Aaron, and with him three thousand seven hundred.<sup>28</sup> Zadok, a young warrior, and twenty-two commanders from his own ancestral house.<sup>29</sup> Of the Benjaminites, the kindred of Saul, three thousand, of whom the majority had continued to keep their allegiance to the house of Saul.<sup>30</sup> Of the

Ephraimites, twenty thousand eight hundred, mighty warriors, notables in their ancestral houses.<sup>31</sup> Of the half-tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand, who were expressly named to come and make David king.<sup>32</sup> Of Issachar, those who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, two hundred chiefs, and all their kindred under their command.<sup>33</sup> Of Zebulun, fifty thousand seasoned troops, equipped for battle with all the weapons of war, to help David with singleness of purpose.<sup>34</sup> Of Naphtali, a thousand commanders, with whom there were thirty-seven thousand armed with shield and spear.<sup>35</sup> Of the Danites, twenty-eight thousand six hundred equipped for battle.<sup>36</sup> Of Asher, forty thousand seasoned troops ready for battle.<sup>37</sup> Of the Reubenites and Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh from beyond the Jordan, one hundred twenty thousand armed with all the weapons of war.

<sup>38</sup> All these, warriors arrayed in battle order, came

to Hebron with full intent to make David king over all Israel; likewise all the rest of Israel were of a single mind to make David king. <sup>39</sup> They were there with David for three days, eating and drinking, for their kindred had provided for them. <sup>40</sup> And also their neighbors, from as far away as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, came bringing food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen—abundant provisions of meal, cakes of figs, clusters of raisins, wine, oil, oxen, and sheep, for there was joy in Israel.

**Romans 1:1-10 (NRSV)**

*Salutation*

**1** Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead,

Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

<sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Prayer of Thanksgiving*

<sup>8</sup> First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. <sup>9</sup> For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, <sup>10</sup> asking that by God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you.

**Psalm 9:19-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Rise up, O LORD! Do not let mortals prevail;  
let the nations be judged before you.



<sup>20</sup> Put them in fear, O LORD;  
let the nations know that  
they are only human.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 4:1–6** (NRSV)

*Parental Advice*

<sup>1</sup> Listen, children, to a  
father's instruction,  
and be attentive, that  
you may gain insight;  
<sup>2</sup> for I give you good  
precepts:  
do not forsake my  
teaching.  
<sup>3</sup> When I was a son with my  
father,  
tender, and my mother's  
favorite,  
<sup>4</sup> he taught me, and said to  
me,  
"Let your heart hold fast  
my words;  
keep my  
commandments, and  
live.  
<sup>5</sup> Get wisdom; get insight:  
do not forget, nor turn  
away  
from the words of my  
mouth.  
<sup>6</sup> Do not forsake her, and  
she will keep you;

love her, and she will guard  
you.

**January  
21**



**1 Chronicles 13:1–14:17** (NRSV)

*The Ark Brought  
from Kiriath-jearim  
(2 Sam 6:1–11)*

**13** David consulted with the  
commanders of the thousands  
and of the hundreds, with  
every leader. <sup>2</sup> David said to  
the whole assembly of Israel,  
"If it seems good to you, and if  
it is the will of the LORD our  
God, let us send abroad to our  
kindred who remain in all the  
land of Israel, including the  
priests and Levites in the cities  
that have pasture lands, that  
they may come together to us.  
<sup>3</sup> Then let us bring again the  
ark of our God to us; for we  
did not turn to it in the days of  
Saul." <sup>4</sup> The whole assembly  
agreed to do so, for the thing  
pleased all the people.

<sup>5</sup> So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. <sup>6</sup> And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, the LORD, who is enthroned on the cherubim, which is called by his name. <sup>7</sup> They carried the ark of God on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart. <sup>8</sup> David and all Israel were dancing before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets.

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen shook it. <sup>10</sup> The anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. <sup>11</sup> David was angry because the LORD had burst out against Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day.

<sup>12</sup> David was afraid of God that

day; he said, "How can I bring the ark of God into my care?"

<sup>13</sup> So David did not take the ark into his care into the city of David; he took it instead to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. <sup>14</sup> The ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house three months, and the LORD blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

*David Established at Jerusalem*  
(2 Sam 5:11–16)

**14** King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, and masons and carpenters to build a house for him. <sup>2</sup> David then perceived that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that his kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of his people Israel.

<sup>3</sup> David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David became the father of more sons and daughters. <sup>4</sup> These are the names of the children whom he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, and Nathan; Solomon, <sup>5</sup> Ibhar, Elishua, and Elpelet; <sup>6</sup> Nogah,

Nepheg, and Japhia;  
<sup>7</sup> Elishama, Beeliada, and  
Eliphelet.

*Defeat of the Philistines*  
(2 Sam 5:17–25)

<sup>8</sup> When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; and David heard of it and went out against them. <sup>9</sup> Now the Philistines had come and made a raid in the valley of Rephaim. <sup>10</sup> David inquired of God, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?” The LORD said to him, “Go up, and I will give them into your hand.” <sup>11</sup> So he went up to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. David said, “God has burst out against my enemies by my hand, like a bursting flood.” Therefore that place is called Baal-perazim. <sup>12</sup> They abandoned their gods there, and at David’s command they were burned.

<sup>13</sup> Once again the Philistines made a raid in the valley. <sup>14</sup> When David again inquired of God, God said to him, “You shall not go up after

them; go around and come on them opposite the balsam trees. <sup>15</sup> When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then go out to battle; for God has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.”

<sup>16</sup> David did as God had commanded him, and they struck down the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer.

<sup>17</sup> The fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him on all nations.

**Romans 1:11-17** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— <sup>12</sup> or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. <sup>13</sup> I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as I have among the rest of the Gentiles. <sup>14</sup> I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the

foolish <sup>15</sup>—hence my eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

*The Power of the Gospel*

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.”

**Psalm 10:1-6** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies*

<sup>1</sup> Why, O LORD, do you stand far off?  
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

<sup>2</sup> In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor—  
let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.

<sup>3</sup> For the wicked boast of the desires of their heart,

those greedy for gain curse and renounce the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> In the pride of their countenance the wicked say, “God will not seek it out”;  
all their thoughts are, “There is no God.”

<sup>5</sup> Their ways prosper at all times;  
your judgments are on high, out of their sight;  
as for their foes, they scoff at them.

<sup>6</sup> They think in their heart, “We shall not be moved;  
throughout all generations we shall not meet adversity.”

**January 22**



**1 Chronicles 15:1-29** (NRSV)

*The Ark Brought to Jerusalem*  
(2 Sam 6:12–16)

**15** David built houses for himself in the city of David,

and he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it.<sup>2</sup> Then David commanded that no one but the Levites were to carry the ark of God, for the LORD had chosen them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister to him forever.<sup>3</sup> David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it.<sup>4</sup> Then David gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites:<sup>5</sup> of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, with one hundred twenty of his kindred;<sup>6</sup> of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, with two hundred twenty of his kindred;<sup>7</sup> of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, with one hundred thirty of his kindred;<sup>8</sup> of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, with two hundred of his kindred;<sup>9</sup> of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, with eighty of his kindred;<sup>10</sup> of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, with one hundred twelve of his kindred.

<sup>11</sup> David summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah,

Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab.<sup>12</sup> He said to them, "You are the heads of families of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your kindred, so that you may bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it.

<sup>13</sup> Because you did not carry it the first time, the LORD our God burst out against us, because we did not give it proper care."<sup>14</sup> So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel.<sup>15</sup> And the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

<sup>16</sup> David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy.<sup>17</sup> So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; and of his kindred Asaph son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari, their kindred, Ethan son of Kushaiah;<sup>18</sup> and with them

their kindred of the second order, Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel. <sup>19</sup> The singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound bronze cymbals; <sup>20</sup> Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamothe; <sup>21</sup> but Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azariah were to lead with lyres according to the Sheminith. <sup>22</sup> Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, was to direct the music, for he understood it. <sup>23</sup> Berechiah and Elkanah were to be gatekeepers for the ark. <sup>24</sup> Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were to be gatekeepers for the ark.

<sup>25</sup> So David and the elders of Israel, and the commanders of the thousands, went to

bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. <sup>26</sup> And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. <sup>27</sup> David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a linen ephod. <sup>28</sup> So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres. <sup>29</sup> As the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing; and she despised him in her heart.

#### **Romans 1:18-20 (NRSV)**

##### *The Guilt of Humankind*

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against

all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse;

**Psalms 10:7-15** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Their mouths are filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under their tongues are mischief and iniquity.  
<sup>8</sup> They sit in ambush in the villages; in hiding places they murder the innocent. Their eyes stealthily watch for the helpless; they lurk in secret like a lion in its covert; they lurk that they may seize the poor; they seize the poor and drag them off in their net.  
<sup>10</sup> They stoop, they crouch,

and the helpless fall by their might.

<sup>11</sup> They think in their heart, "God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it."  
<sup>12</sup> Rise up, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.  
<sup>13</sup> Why do the wicked renounce God, and say in their hearts, "You will not call us to account"?  
<sup>14</sup> But you do see! Indeed you note trouble and grief, that you may take it into your hands;  
the helpless commit themselves to you; you have been the helper of the orphan.  
<sup>15</sup> Break the arm of the wicked and evildoers; seek out their wickedness until you find none.

**Proverbs 4:11-13** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness.



- <sup>12</sup> When you walk, your step  
will not be hampered;  
and if you run, you will  
not stumble.
- <sup>13</sup> Keep hold of instruction;  
do not let go;  
guard her, for she is your  
life.

## January 23



### 1 Chronicles 16:1-36 (NRSV)

*The Ark Placed in the Tent*  
(2 Sam 6:17–19)

**16** They brought in the ark of God, and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and they offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before God. <sup>2</sup> When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD; <sup>3</sup> and he distributed to every person in Israel—man and woman alike—to each a loaf of bread,

a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins.

<sup>4</sup> He appointed certain of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Asaph was the chief, and second to him Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with harps and lyres; Asaph was to sound the cymbals, <sup>6</sup> and the priests Benaiah and Jahaziel were to blow trumpets regularly, before the ark of the covenant of God.

*David's Psalm of Thanksgiving*  
(Ps 96:1–13; 105:1–15;  
106:1, 47–48)

<sup>7</sup> Then on that day David first appointed the singing of praises to the LORD by Asaph and his kindred.

<sup>8</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
call on his name,  
make known his deeds  
among the peoples.

<sup>9</sup> Sing to him, sing praises to  
him,  
tell of all his wonderful  
works.

<sup>10</sup> Glory in his holy name;



let the hearts of those  
who seek the LORD  
rejoice.  
11 Seek the LORD and his  
strength,  
seek his presence  
continually.  
12 Remember the wonderful  
works he has done,  
his miracles, and the  
judgments he uttered,  
13 O offspring of his servant  
Israel,  
children of Jacob, his  
chosen ones.  
14 He is the LORD our God;  
his judgments are in all  
the earth.  
15 Remember his covenant  
forever,  
the word that he  
commanded, for a  
thousand generations,  
16 the covenant that he made  
with Abraham,  
his sworn promise to  
Isaac,  
17 which he confirmed to  
Jacob as a statute,  
to Israel as an everlasting  
covenant,  
18 saying, "To you I will give  
the land of Canaan  
as your portion for an  
inheritance."

19 When they were few in  
number,  
of little account, and  
strangers in the land,  
20 wandering from nation to  
nation,  
from one kingdom to  
another people,  
21 he allowed no one to  
oppress them;  
he rebuked kings on  
their account,  
22 saying, "Do not touch my  
anointed ones;  
do my prophets no  
harm."  
23 Sing to the LORD, all the  
earth.  
Tell of his salvation from  
day to day.  
24 Declare his glory among  
the nations,  
his marvelous works  
among all the peoples.  
25 For great is the LORD, and  
greatly to be praised;  
he is to be revered above  
all gods.  
26 For all the gods of the  
peoples are idols,  
but the LORD made the  
heavens.  
27 Honor and majesty are  
before him;

strength and joy are in  
his place.

28 Ascribe to the LORD, O  
families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the LORD glory  
and strength.

29 Ascribe to the LORD the  
glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and  
come before him.  
Worship the LORD in holy  
splendor;

30 tremble before him, all  
the earth.  
The world is firmly  
established; it shall  
never be moved.

31 Let the heavens be glad,  
and let the earth  
rejoice,  
and let them say among  
the nations, "The LORD  
is king!"

32 Let the sea roar, and all  
that fills it;  
let the field exult, and  
everything in it.

33 Then shall the trees of the  
forest sing for joy  
before the LORD, for he  
comes to judge the  
earth.

34 O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good;

for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

35 Say also:  
"Save us, O God of our  
salvation,  
and gather and rescue us  
from among the  
nations,  
that we may give thanks to  
your holy name,  
and glory in your praise.

36 Blessed be the LORD, the  
God of Israel,  
from everlasting to  
everlasting."

Then all the people said  
"Amen!" and praised the LORD.

**Romans 1:21-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> for though they knew  
God, they did not honor him  
as God or give thanks to him,  
but they became futile in their  
thinking, and their senseless  
minds were darkened.

<sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they  
became fools; <sup>23</sup> and they  
exchanged the glory of the  
immortal God for images  
resembling a mortal human  
being or birds or four-footed  
animals or reptiles.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave  
them up in the lusts of their  
hearts to impurity, to the

degrading of their bodies among themselves,<sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

<sup>26</sup>For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural,<sup>27</sup> and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error.

<sup>28</sup>And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done.

<sup>29</sup>They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips,<sup>30</sup> slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents,<sup>31</sup> foolish,

faithless, heartless, ruthless.<sup>32</sup> They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die—yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them.

**Psalm 10:16** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> The LORD is king forever and ever;  
the nations shall perish from his land.

**Proverbs 4:14–19** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Do not enter the path of the wicked,  
and do not walk in the way of evildoers.

<sup>15</sup> Avoid it; do not go on it;  
turn away from it and pass on.

<sup>16</sup> For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong;  
they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble.

<sup>17</sup> For they eat the bread of wickedness  
and drink the wine of violence.

<sup>18</sup> But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,



which shines brighter  
and brighter until full  
day.

<sup>19</sup> The way of the wicked is  
like deep darkness;  
they do not know what  
they stumble over.

## January 24



### 1 Chronicles 16:37-17:15 (NRSV)

*Regular Worship Maintained*  
<sup>37</sup> David left Asaph and his  
kinsfolk there before the ark  
of the covenant of the LORD to  
minister regularly before the  
ark as each day required,  
<sup>38</sup> and also Obed-edom and his  
sixty-eight kinsfolk; while  
Obed-edom son of Jeduthun  
and Hosah were to be  
gatekeepers. <sup>39</sup> And he left the  
priest Zadok and his kindred  
the priests before the  
tabernacle of the LORD in the  
high place that was at Gibeon,  
<sup>40</sup> to offer burnt offerings to  
the LORD on the altar of burnt

offerings regularly, morning  
and evening, according to all  
that is written in the law of the  
LORD that he commanded  
Israel. <sup>41</sup> With them were  
Heman and Jeduthun, and the  
rest of those chosen and  
expressly named to render  
thanks to the LORD, for his  
steadfast love endures  
forever. <sup>42</sup> Heman and  
Jeduthun had with them  
trumpets and cymbals for the  
music, and instruments for  
sacred song. The sons of  
Jeduthun were appointed to  
the gate.

<sup>43</sup> Then all the people  
departed to their homes, and  
David went home to bless his  
household.

### *God's Covenant with David* (2 Sam 7:1-17)

**17** Now when David settled in  
his house, David said to the  
prophet Nathan, "I am living in  
a house of cedar, but the ark  
of the covenant of the LORD is  
under a tent." <sup>2</sup> Nathan said to  
David, "Do all that you have in  
mind, for God is with you."

<sup>3</sup> But that same night the  
word of the LORD came to  
Nathan, saying: <sup>4</sup> Go and tell

my servant David: Thus says the LORD: You shall not build me a house to live in.<sup>5</sup> For I have not lived in a house since the day I brought out Israel to this very day, but I have lived in a tent and a tabernacle.

<sup>6</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people, saying, Why have you not built me a house of cedar?

<sup>7</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people Israel;

<sup>8</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies before you; and I will make for you a name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.<sup>9</sup> I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall wear them down no more, as they did formerly,<sup>10</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over

my people Israel; and I will subdue all your enemies.

Moreover I declare to you that the LORD will build you a house.<sup>11</sup> When your days are fulfilled to go to be with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom.<sup>12</sup> He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever.<sup>13</sup> I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you,<sup>14</sup> but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.<sup>15</sup> In accordance with all these words and all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

## **Romans 2:1-11** (NRSV)

### *The Righteous Judgment of God*

**2** Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things.

<sup>2</sup> You say, “We know that God’s judgment on those who do such things is in accordance with truth.” <sup>3</sup> Do you imagine, whoever you are, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God? <sup>4</sup> Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? <sup>5</sup> But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. <sup>6</sup> For he will repay according to each one’s deeds: <sup>7</sup> to those who by patiently doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; <sup>8</sup> while for those who are self-seeking and who obey not the truth but wickedness, there will be wrath and fury. <sup>9</sup> There will be anguish and distress for everyone who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, <sup>10</sup> but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also

the Greek. <sup>11</sup> For God shows no partiality.

**Psalm 10:17-18** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> O LORD, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear  
<sup>18</sup> to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed, so that those from earth may strike terror no more.

**Proverbs 4:20–27** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> My child, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings.  
<sup>21</sup> Do not let them escape from your sight; keep them within your heart.  
<sup>22</sup> For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh.  
<sup>23</sup> Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.  
<sup>24</sup> Put away from you crooked speech,



and put devious talk far  
from you.  
<sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look directly  
forward,  
and your gaze be straight  
before you.  
<sup>26</sup> Keep straight the path of  
your feet,  
and all your ways will be  
sure.  
<sup>27</sup> Do not swerve to the right  
or to the left;  
turn your foot away from  
evil.

## January 25



### 1 Chronicles 17:16-18:17 (NRSV)

#### *David's Prayer* (2 Sam 7:18-29)

<sup>16</sup> Then King David went in  
and sat before the LORD, and  
said, "Who am I, O LORD God,  
and what is my house, that  
you have brought me thus far?  
<sup>17</sup> And even this was a small  
thing in your sight, O God; you  
have also spoken of your

servant's house for a great  
while to come. You regard me  
as someone of high rank, O  
LORD God! <sup>18</sup> And what more  
can David say to you for  
honoring your servant? You  
know your servant. <sup>19</sup> For your  
servant's sake, O LORD, and  
according to your own heart,  
you have done all these great  
deeds, making known all these  
great things. <sup>20</sup> There is no one  
like you, O LORD, and there is  
no God besides you, according  
to all that we have heard with  
our ears. <sup>21</sup> Who is like your  
people Israel, one nation on  
the earth whom God went to  
redeem to be his people,  
making for yourself a name for  
great and terrible things, in  
driving out nations before  
your people whom you  
redeemed from Egypt? <sup>22</sup> And  
you made your people Israel  
to be your people forever; and  
you, O LORD, became their  
God.

<sup>23</sup> "And now, O LORD, as for  
the word that you have  
spoken concerning your  
servant and concerning his  
house, let it be established  
forever, and do as you have  
promised. <sup>24</sup> Thus your name

will be established and magnified forever in the saying, ‘The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, is Israel’s God’; and the house of your servant David will be established in your presence. <sup>25</sup> For you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build a house for him; therefore your servant has found it possible to pray before you. <sup>26</sup> And now, O LORD, you are God, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; <sup>27</sup> therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you. For you, O LORD, have blessed and are blessed forever.”

*David’s Kingdom  
Established and Extended  
(2 Sam 8:1–14)*

**18** Some time afterward, David attacked the Philistines and subdued them; he took Gath and its villages from the Philistines.

<sup>2</sup> He defeated Moab, and the Moabites became subject to David and brought tribute.

<sup>3</sup> David also struck down King Hadadezer of Zobah,

toward Hamath, as he went to set up a monument at the river Euphrates. <sup>4</sup> David took from him one thousand chariots, seven thousand cavalry, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but left one hundred of them. <sup>5</sup> When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand Arameans. <sup>6</sup> Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus; and the Arameans became subject to David, and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. <sup>7</sup> David took the gold shields that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> From Tibhath and from Cun, cities of Hadadezer, David took a vast quantity of bronze; with it Solomon made the bronze sea and the pillars and the vessels of bronze.

<sup>9</sup> When King Tou of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of King Hadadezer of Zobah, <sup>10</sup> he sent his son Hadoram to King David, to greet him and to



congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him. Now Hadadezer had often been at war with Tou. He sent all sorts of articles of gold, of silver, and of bronze; <sup>11</sup> these also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he had carried off from all the nations, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.

<sup>12</sup> Abishai son of Zeruiah killed eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

<sup>13</sup> He put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became subject to David. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

#### *David's Administration*

*(2 Sam 8:15–18)*

<sup>14</sup> So David reigned over all Israel; and he administered justice and equity to all his people. <sup>15</sup> Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; <sup>16</sup> Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was secretary; <sup>17</sup> Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the

Pelethites; and David's sons were the chief officials in the service of the king.

#### **Romans 2:12-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

<sup>13</sup> For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

<sup>14</sup> When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. <sup>15</sup> They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them <sup>16</sup> on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

#### *The Jews and the Law*

<sup>17</sup> But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast of your relation to God

<sup>18</sup> and know his will and determine what is best because you are instructed in the law, <sup>19</sup> and if you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, <sup>20</sup> a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth, <sup>21</sup> you, then, that teach others, will you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You that forbid adultery, do you commit adultery? You that abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You that boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? <sup>24</sup> For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

**Psalms 11:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Song of Trust in God*

To the leader. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> In the LORD I take refuge;  
how can you say to me,  
"Flee like a bird to the mountains;  
<sup>2</sup> for look, the wicked bend the bow,  
they have fitted their arrow to the string,

to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart.

<sup>3</sup> If the foundations are destroyed,  
what can the righteous do?"

<sup>4</sup> The LORD is in his holy temple;  
the LORD's throne is in heaven.  
His eyes behold, his gaze examines humankind.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked,  
and his soul hates the lover of violence.

<sup>6</sup> On the wicked he will rain coals of fire and sulfur;  
a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup.

**Proverbs 5:1-6 (NRSV)**

*Warning against Impurity and Infidelity*

**5** My child, be attentive to my wisdom;  
incline your ear to my understanding,  
<sup>2</sup> so that you may hold on to prudence,  
and your lips may guard knowledge.



<sup>3</sup> For the lips of a loose woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil;  
<sup>4</sup> but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.  
<sup>5</sup> Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol.  
<sup>6</sup> She does not keep straight to the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it.

## January 26



**1 Chronicles 19:1-20:8** (NRSV)

*Defeat of the Ammonites  
and Arameans  
(2 Sam 10:1–19)*

**19** Some time afterward, King Nahash of the Ammonites died, and his son succeeded him. <sup>2</sup> David said, “I will deal loyally with Hanun son of Nahash, for his father dealt

loyally with me.” So David sent messengers to console him concerning his father. When David’s servants came to Hanun in the land of the Ammonites, to console him, <sup>3</sup> the officials of the Ammonites said to Hanun, “Do you think, because David has sent consolers to you, that he is honoring your father? Have not his servants come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?” <sup>4</sup> So Hanun seized David’s servants, shaved them, cut off their garments in the middle at their hips, and sent them away; <sup>5</sup> and they departed. When David was told about the men, he sent messengers to them, for they felt greatly humiliated. The king said, “Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return.”

<sup>6</sup> When the Ammonites saw that they had made themselves <sup>n</sup>odious to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent a thousand talents of silver to hire chariots and cavalry from Mesopotamia,

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<sup>n</sup> Def. to abhor

from Aram-maacah and from Zobah. <sup>7</sup> They hired thirty-two thousand chariots and the king of Maacah with his army, who came and camped before Medeba. And the Ammonites were mustered from their cities and came to battle.

<sup>8</sup> When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of the warriors. <sup>9</sup> The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the open country.

<sup>10</sup> When Joab saw that the line of battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel and arrayed them against the Arameans; <sup>11</sup> the rest of his troops he put in the charge of his brother Abishai, and they were arrayed against the Ammonites. <sup>12</sup> He said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will help you. <sup>13</sup> Be strong, and let us be courageous for our people and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems

good to him." <sup>14</sup> So Joab and the troops who were with him advanced toward the Arameans for battle; and they fled before him. <sup>15</sup> When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, Joab's brother, and entered the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

<sup>16</sup> But when the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the Euphrates, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their head. <sup>17</sup> When David was informed, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan, came to them, and drew up his forces against them. When David set the battle in array against the Arameans, they fought with him. <sup>18</sup> The Arameans fled before Israel; and David killed seven thousand Aramean charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers, and also killed Shophach the commander of their army.

<sup>19</sup> When the servants of Hadadezer saw that they had

been defeated by Israel, they made peace with David, and became subject to him. So the Arameans were not willing to help the Ammonites any more.

*Siege and Capture of Rabbah*  
(2 Sam 11:1; 12:26–31)

**20** In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, Joab led out the army, ravaged the country of the Ammonites, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. Joab attacked Rabbah, and overthrew it. <sup>2</sup> David took the crown of Milcom from his head; he found that it weighed a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought out the booty of the city, a very great amount. <sup>3</sup> He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and axes. Thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

*Exploits against the Philistines*  
(2 Sam 21:15–22)

<sup>4</sup> After this, war broke out with the Philistines at Gezer; then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, who was one of the descendants of the giants; and the Philistines were subdued. <sup>5</sup> Again there was war with the Philistines; and Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. <sup>6</sup> Again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he also was descended from the giants. <sup>7</sup> When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him. <sup>8</sup> These were descended from the giants in Gath; they fell by the hand of David and his servants.

**Romans 2:25-29** (NRSV)

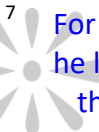
<sup>25</sup> Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. <sup>26</sup> So, if those who are uncircumcised keep

the requirements of the law,  
will not their uncircumcision  
be regarded as circumcision?

<sup>27</sup> Then those who are  
physically uncircumcised but  
keep the law will condemn  
you that have the written code  
and circumcision but break the  
law. <sup>28</sup> For a person is not a  
Jew who is one outwardly, nor  
is true circumcision something  
external and physical.

<sup>29</sup> Rather, a person is a Jew  
who is one inwardly, and real  
circumcision is a matter of the  
heart—it is spiritual and not  
literal. Such a person receives  
praise not from others but  
from God.

**Psalm 11:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> For the LORD is righteous;  
he loves righteous deeds;  
the upright shall behold  
his face.

**Proverbs 5:7–14** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> And now, my child, listen  
to me,  
and do not depart from  
the words of my  
mouth.

<sup>8</sup> Keep your way far from  
her,

and do not go near the  
door of her house;  
<sup>9</sup> or you will give your honor  
to others,  
and your years to the  
merciless,  
<sup>10</sup> and strangers will take  
their fill of your wealth,  
and your labors will go to  
the house of an alien;  
<sup>11</sup> and at the end of your life  
you will groan,  
when your flesh and  
body are consumed,  
<sup>12</sup> and you say, “Oh, how I  
hated discipline,  
and my heart despised  
reproof!  
<sup>13</sup> I did not listen to the voice  
of my teachers  
or incline my ear to my  
instructors.  
<sup>14</sup> Now I am at the point of  
utter ruin in the public  
assembly.”

# January 27



## 1 Chronicles 21:1-30 (NRSV)

*The Census and Plague*  
(2 Sam 24:1–17)

**21** Satan stood up against Israel, and incited David to count the people of Israel. <sup>2</sup> So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army, “Go, number Israel, from Beer-sheba to Dan, and bring me a report, so that I may know their number.” <sup>3</sup> But Joab said, “May the LORD increase the number of his people a hundredfold! Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord’s servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?” <sup>4</sup> But the king’s word prevailed against Joab. So Joab departed and went throughout all Israel, and came back to Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup> Joab gave the total count of the people to David. In all Israel there were one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and in Judah four hundred seventy thousand who drew the

sword. <sup>6</sup> But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king’s command was abhorrent to Joab.

<sup>7</sup> But God was displeased with this thing, and he struck Israel. <sup>8</sup> David said to God, “I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But now, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly.” <sup>9</sup> The LORD spoke to Gad, David’s seer, saying, <sup>10</sup> “Go and say to David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Three things I offer you; choose one of them, so that I may do it to you.’” <sup>11</sup> So Gad came to David and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Take your choice: <sup>12</sup> either three years of famine; or three months of devastation by your foes, while the sword of your enemies overtakes you; or three days of the sword of the LORD, pestilence on the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.’ Now decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me.” <sup>13</sup> Then David said to Gad, “I am in great distress; let me fall into

the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is very great; but let me not fall into human hands.”

<sup>14</sup> So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel; and seventy thousand persons fell in Israel. <sup>15</sup> And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; but when he was about to destroy it, the LORD took note and relented concerning the calamity; he said to the destroying angel, “Enough! Stay your hand.” The angel of the LORD was then standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. <sup>16</sup> David looked up and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces.

<sup>17</sup> And David said to God, “Was it not I who gave the command to count the people? It is I who have sinned and done very wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and against my father’s house; but do not let your people be plagued!”

### *David’s Altar and Sacrifice*

*(2 Sam 24:18–25)*

<sup>18</sup> Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to tell David that he should go up and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. <sup>19</sup> So David went up following Gad’s instructions, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD. <sup>20</sup> Ornan turned and saw the angel; and while his four sons who were with him hid themselves, Ornan continued to thresh wheat. <sup>21</sup> As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David; he went out from the threshing floor, and did obeisance to David with his face to the ground. <sup>22</sup> David said to Ornan, “Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the LORD—give it to me at its full price—so that the plague may be averted from the people.”

<sup>23</sup> Then Ornan said to David, “Take it; and let my lord the king do what seems good to him; see, I present the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing sledges for the wood, and the wheat for a grain offering. I give it all.”

<sup>24</sup> But King David said to



Ornan, “No; I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”<sup>25</sup> So David paid Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the site.

<sup>26</sup> David built there an altar to the LORD and presented burnt offerings and offerings of well-being. He called upon the LORD, and he answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering.<sup>27</sup> Then the LORD commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath.

*The Place Chosen  
for the Temple*

<sup>28</sup> At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he made his sacrifices there.

<sup>29</sup> For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon;<sup>30</sup> but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

**Romans 3:1-8 (NRSV)**

**3** Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision?<sup>2</sup> Much, in every way. For in the first place the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

<sup>3</sup> What if some were unfaithful? Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?<sup>4</sup> By no means! Although everyone is a liar, let God be proved true, as it is written,

“So that you may be justified in your words, and prevail in your judging.”

<sup>5</sup> But if our injustice serves to confirm the justice of God, what should we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.)<sup>6</sup> By no means! For then how could God judge the world?<sup>7</sup> But if through my falsehood God’s truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner?<sup>8</sup> And why not say (as some people slander us by saying that we say), “Let us do evil so that good may come”? Their condemnation is deserved!

**Psalm 12:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Help in Evil Times*

To the leader: according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

- 1 Help, O LORD, for there is no longer anyone who is godly;  
the faithful have disappeared from humankind.
- 2 They utter lies to each other;  
with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.
- 3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips,  
the tongue that makes great boasts,
- 4 those who say, "With our tongues we will prevail;  
our lips are our own—  
who is our master?"
- 5 "Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan,  
I will now rise up," says the LORD;  
"I will place them in the safety for which they long."



flowing water from your own well.

- 16 Should your springs be scattered abroad,  
streams of water in the streets?
- 17 Let them be for yourself alone,  
and not for sharing with strangers.
- 18 Let your fountain be blessed,  
and rejoice in the wife of your youth,  
a lovely deer, a graceful doe.
- May her breasts satisfy you at all times;  
may you be intoxicated always by her love.
- 20 Why should you be intoxicated, my son, by another woman  
and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?
- 21 For human ways are under the eyes of the LORD,  
and he examines all their paths.

**Proverbs 5:15–21 (NRSV)**

- 15 Drink water from your own cistern,

# January 28



## 1 Chronicles 22:1-19 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Then David said, “Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel.”

### *David Prepares to Build the Temple*

<sup>2</sup> David gave orders to gather together the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, and he set stonemasons to prepare dressed stones for building the house of God.

<sup>3</sup> David also provided great stores of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as bronze in quantities beyond weighing,

<sup>4</sup> and cedar logs without number—for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought great quantities of cedar to David.

<sup>5</sup> For David said, “My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorified throughout all lands; I will therefore make

preparation for it.” So David provided materials in great quantity before his death.

### *David’s Charge to Solomon and the Leaders*

<sup>6</sup> Then he called for his son Solomon and charged him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>7</sup> David said to Solomon, “My son, I had planned to build a house to the name of the LORD my God.

<sup>8</sup> But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood in my sight on the earth. <sup>9</sup> See, a son shall be born to you; he shall be a man of peace. I will give him peace from all his enemies on every side; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days.

<sup>10</sup> He shall build a house for my name. He shall be a son to me, and I will be a father to him, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever.’

<sup>11</sup> Now, my son, the LORD be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house

of the LORD your God, as he has spoken concerning you. <sup>12</sup> Only, may the LORD grant you discretion and understanding, so that when he gives you charge over Israel you may keep the law of the LORD your God. <sup>13</sup> Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or dismayed. <sup>14</sup> With great pains I have provided for the house of the LORD one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone too I have provided. To these you must add more. <sup>15</sup> You have an abundance of workers: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of artisans without number, skilled in working <sup>16</sup> gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Now begin the work, and the LORD be with you."

<sup>17</sup> David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon, saying, <sup>18</sup> "Is

not the LORD your God with you? Has he not given you peace on every side? For he has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD and his people. <sup>19</sup> Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God. Go and build the sanctuary of the LORD God so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD."

**Romans 3:9-22 (NRSV)**

*None Is Righteous*

*(Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-4)*

<sup>9</sup> What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all; for we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, <sup>10</sup> as it is written:

"There is no one who is righteous, not even one;


<sup>11</sup> there is no one who has understanding, there is no one who seeks God.

<sup>12</sup> All have turned aside, together they have become worthless;

there is no one who  
shows kindness,  
there is not even one.”  
13 “Their throats are opened  
graves;  
they use their tongues to  
deceive.”  
“The venom of vipers is  
under their lips.”  
14 “Their mouths are full of  
cursing and  
bitterness.”  
15 “Their feet are swift to  
shed blood;  
16 ruin and misery are in  
their paths,  
17 and the way of peace they  
have not known.”  
18 “There is no fear of God  
before their eyes.”

19 Now we know that  
whatever the law says, it  
speaks to those who are under  
the law, so that every mouth  
may be silenced, and the  
whole world may be held  
accountable to God. <sup>20</sup> For “no  
human being will be justified  
in his sight” by deeds  
prescribed by the law, for  
through the law comes the  
knowledge of sin.

*Righteousness through Faith*



<sup>21</sup> But now, apart from law,  
the righteousness of God has  
been disclosed, and is attested  
by the law and the prophets,  
<sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God  
through faith in Jesus Christ  
for all who believe. For there is  
no distinction,

**Psalm 12:6-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> The promises of the LORD  
are promises that are  
pure,  
silver refined in a furnace  
on the ground,  
purified seven times.  
<sup>7</sup> You, O LORD, will protect  
us;  
you will guard us from  
this generation forever.  
<sup>8</sup> On every side the wicked  
prowl,  
as vileness is exalted  
among humankind.

**Proverbs 5:22-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> The iniquities of the  
wicked ensnare them,  
and they are caught in  
the toils of their sin.  
<sup>23</sup> They die for lack of  
discipline,  
and because of their  
great folly they are  
lost.

# January 29



## 1 Chronicles 23:1-32 (NRSV)

### *Families of the Levites and Their Functions*

**23** When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.

<sup>2</sup> David assembled all the leaders of Israel and the priests and the Levites. <sup>3</sup> The Levites, thirty years old and upward, were counted, and the total was thirty-eight thousand. <sup>4</sup> “Twenty-four thousand of these,” David said, “shall have charge of the work in the house of the LORD, six thousand shall be officers and judges, <sup>5</sup> four thousand gatekeepers, and four thousand shall offer praises to the LORD with the instruments that I have made for praise.”

<sup>6</sup> And David organized them in divisions corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

<sup>7</sup> The sons of Gershon were Ladan and Shimei. <sup>8</sup> The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the chief, Zetham, and Joel, three. <sup>9</sup> The

sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, Haziël, and Haran, three.

These were the heads of families of Ladan. <sup>10</sup> And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei.

<sup>11</sup> Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second; but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they were enrolled as a single family.

<sup>12</sup> The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. <sup>13</sup> The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron was set apart to consecrate the most holy things, so that he and his sons forever should make offerings before the LORD, and minister to him and pronounce blessings in his name forever; <sup>14</sup> but as for Moses the man of God, his sons were to be reckoned among the tribe of Levi. <sup>15</sup> The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer. <sup>16</sup> The sons of Gershom: Shebuel the chief. <sup>17</sup> The sons of Eliezer: Rehabiah the chief; Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very numerous. <sup>18</sup> The sons of Izhar: Shelomith the chief. <sup>19</sup> The


sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.<sup>20</sup> The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief and Isshiah the second.

<sup>21</sup>The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish.

<sup>22</sup>Eleazar died having no sons, but only daughters; their kindred, the sons of Kish, married them.<sup>23</sup> The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

<sup>24</sup>These were the sons of Levi by their ancestral houses, the heads of families as they were enrolled according to the number of the names of the individuals from twenty years old and upward who were to do the work for the service of the house of the LORD.<sup>25</sup> For David said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people; and he resides in Jerusalem forever."<sup>26</sup> And so the Levites no longer need to carry the tabernacle or any of the things for its service"<sup>27</sup>—<sup>27</sup>for according to the last words of David these were the number of the Levites from twenty years old and

upward—<sup>28</sup> "but their duty shall be to assist the descendants of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, having the care of the courts and the chambers, the cleansing of all that is holy, and any work for the service of the house of God;<sup>29</sup> to assist also with the rows of bread, the choice flour for the grain offering, the wafers of unleavened bread, the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil, and all measures of quantity or size.<sup>30</sup> And they shall stand every morning, thanking and praising the LORD, and likewise at evening,<sup>31</sup> and whenever burnt offerings are offered to the LORD on sabbaths, new moons, and appointed festivals, according to the number required of them, regularly before the LORD.<sup>32</sup> Thus they shall keep charge of the tent of meeting and the sanctuary, and shall attend the descendants of Aaron, their kindred, for the service of the house of the LORD."



**Romans 3:23-31** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup> they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; <sup>26</sup> it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

<sup>27</sup> Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith.

<sup>28</sup> For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

<sup>29</sup> Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, <sup>30</sup> since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. <sup>31</sup> Do we then overthrow the law by this

faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

**Psalm 13:1-4** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?
- <sup>2</sup> How long must I bear pain in my soul,  
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?  
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
- <sup>3</sup> Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!  
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,
- <sup>4</sup> and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed";  
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

**Proverbs 6:1-5** (NRSV)

*Practical Admonitions*

- 6** My child, if you have given your pledge to your neighbor,  
if you have bound yourself to another,



<sup>2</sup> you are snared by the  
utterance of your lips,  
caught by the words of  
your mouth.  
<sup>3</sup> So do this, my child, and  
save yourself,  
for you have come into  
your neighbor's power:  
go, hurry, and plead with  
your neighbor.  
<sup>4</sup> Give your eyes no sleep  
and your eyelids no  
slumber;  
<sup>5</sup> save yourself like a gazelle  
from the hunter,  
like a bird from the hand  
of the fowler.

## January 30



### 1 Chronicles 24:1-31 (NRSV)

#### *Divisions of the Priests*

**24** The divisions of the  
descendants of Aaron were  
these. The sons of Aaron:  
Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and  
Ithamar. <sup>2</sup> But Nadab and  
Abihu died before their father,

and had no sons; so Eleazar  
and Ithamar became the  
priests. <sup>3</sup> Along with Zadok of  
the sons of Eleazar, and  
Ahimelech of the sons of  
Ithamar, David organized  
them according to the  
appointed duties in their  
service. <sup>4</sup> Since more chief men  
were found among the sons of  
Eleazar than among the sons  
of Ithamar, they organized  
them under sixteen heads of  
ancestral houses of the sons of  
Eleazar, and eight of the sons  
of Ithamar. <sup>5</sup> They organized  
them by lot, all alike, for there  
were officers of the sanctuary  
and officers of God among  
both the sons of Eleazar and  
the sons of Ithamar. <sup>6</sup> The  
scribe Shemaiah son of  
Nethanel, a Levite, recorded  
them in the presence of the  
king, and the officers, and  
Zadok the priest, and  
Ahimelech son of Abiathar,  
and the heads of ancestral  
houses of the priests and of  
the Levites; one ancestral  
house being chosen for  
Eleazar and one chosen for  
Ithamar.

<sup>7</sup> The first lot fell to  
Jehoiarib, the second to

Jedaiah, <sup>8</sup> the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, <sup>9</sup> the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, <sup>10</sup> the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, <sup>11</sup> the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, <sup>12</sup> the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, <sup>13</sup> the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, <sup>14</sup> the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, <sup>15</sup> the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez, <sup>16</sup> the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel, <sup>17</sup> the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, <sup>18</sup> the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. <sup>19</sup> These had as their appointed duty in their service to enter the house of the LORD according to the procedure established for them by their ancestor Aaron, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

#### *Other Levites*

<sup>20</sup> And of the rest of the sons of Levi: of the sons of Amram, Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah. <sup>21</sup> Of

Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, Isshiah the chief.

<sup>22</sup> Of the Izharites, Shelomoth; of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath. <sup>23</sup> The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth. <sup>24</sup> The sons of Uzziel, Micah; of the sons of Micah, Shamir. <sup>25</sup> The brother of Micah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah.

<sup>26</sup> The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Jaaziah: Beno. <sup>27</sup> The sons of Merari: of Jaaziah, Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. <sup>28</sup> Of Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons. <sup>29</sup> Of Kish, the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel. <sup>30</sup> The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites according to their ancestral houses.

<sup>31</sup> These also cast lots corresponding to their kindred, the descendants of Aaron, in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of ancestral houses of the priests and of the Levites, the chief as well as the youngest brother.

**Romans 4:1-10 (NRSV)**

*The Example of Abraham  
(Gen 17:10)*

**4** What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup> For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” <sup>4</sup> Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. <sup>5</sup> But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. <sup>6</sup> So also David speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works:

<sup>7</sup> “Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;  
<sup>8</sup> blessed is the one against whom the Lord will not reckon sin.”

<sup>9</sup> Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the

uncircumcised? We say, “Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.” <sup>10</sup> How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised.

**Psalm 13:5-6 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> But I trusted in your steadfast love;  
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup> I will sing to the LORD,  
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

**Proverbs 6:6–11 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Go to the ant, you lazybones;  
consider its ways, and be wise.

<sup>7</sup> Without having any chief or officer or ruler,

<sup>8</sup> it prepares its food in summer,  
and gathers its sustenance in harvest.

<sup>9</sup> How long will you lie there, O lazybones?  
When will you rise from your sleep?

<sup>10</sup> A little sleep, a little slumber,

a little folding of the hands to rest,  
<sup>11</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want, like an armed warrior.

## January 31



**1 Chronicles 25:1-26:11** (NRSV)

### *The Temple Musicians*

**25** David and the officers of the army also set apart for the service the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with lyres, harps, and cymbals. The list of those who did the work and of their duties was: <sup>2</sup>Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah, sons of Asaph, under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied under the direction of the king. <sup>3</sup>Of Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shimeih, Hashabiah,

and Mattithiah, six, under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with the lyre in thanksgiving and praise to the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Of Heman, the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, Mahazioth. <sup>5</sup>All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer, according to the promise of God to exalt him; for God had given Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. <sup>6</sup>They were all under the direction of their father for the music in the house of the LORD with cymbals, harps, and lyres for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the order of the king. <sup>7</sup>They and their kindred, who were trained in singing to the LORD, all of whom were skillful, numbered two hundred eighty-eight. <sup>8</sup>And they cast lots for their duties, small and great, teacher and pupil alike.

<sup>9</sup>The first lot fell for Asaph to Joseph; the second to

Gedaliah, to him and his brothers and his sons, twelve; <sup>10</sup> the third to Zaccur, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>11</sup> the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>12</sup> the fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>13</sup> the sixth to Bukkiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>14</sup> the seventh to Jesarelah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>15</sup> the eighth to Jeshaiiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>16</sup> the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>17</sup> the tenth to Shimei, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>18</sup> the eleventh to Azarel, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>19</sup> the twelfth to Hashabiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>20</sup> to the thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>21</sup> to the fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>22</sup> to the fifteenth, to Jeremoth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>23</sup> to the sixteenth, to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>24</sup> to the seventeenth, to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>25</sup> to the eighteenth, to

Hanani, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>26</sup> to the nineteenth, to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>27</sup> to the twentieth, to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>28</sup> to the twenty-first, to Hothir, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>29</sup> to the twenty-second, to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>30</sup> to the twenty-third, to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; <sup>31</sup> to the twenty-fourth, to Romamtizer, his sons and his brothers, twelve.

#### *The Gatekeepers*

**26** As for the divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph.

<sup>2</sup> Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, <sup>3</sup> Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh.

<sup>4</sup> Obed-edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sachar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, <sup>5</sup> Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh,

Peullethai the eighth; for God blessed him.<sup>6</sup> Also to his son Shemaiah sons were born who exercised authority in their ancestral houses, for they were men of great ability.

<sup>7</sup> The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad, whose brothers were able men, Elihu and Semachiah.

<sup>8</sup> All these, sons of Obed-edom with their sons and brothers, were able men qualified for the service; sixty-two of Obed-edom.<sup>9</sup> Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, able men, eighteen.<sup>10</sup> Hosah, of the sons of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief (for though he was not the firstborn, his father made him chief),<sup>11</sup> Hilkiyah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brothers of Hosah totaled thirteen.

**Romans 4:11-12** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> He [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. **The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and**

**who thus have righteousness reckoned to them,<sup>12</sup> and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.**

**Psalm 14:1-6** (NRSV)

*Denunciation of Godlessness*

*(Ps 53:1-6)*

To the leader. Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Fools say in their hearts,  
“There is no God.”  
They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is no one who does good.
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God.
- <sup>3</sup> They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse; there is no one who does good, no, not one.
- <sup>4</sup> Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread,

and do not call upon the  
LORD?

<sup>5</sup> There they shall be in great  
terror,  
for God is with the  
company of the  
righteous.

<sup>6</sup> You would confound the  
plans of the poor,  
but the LORD is their  
refuge.

**Proverbs 6:12–15 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> A scoundrel and a villain  
goes around with  
crooked speech,  
<sup>13</sup> winking the eyes, shuffling  
the feet,  
pointing the fingers,  
<sup>14</sup> with perverted mind  
devising evil,  
continually sowing  
discord;  
<sup>15</sup> on such a one calamity will  
descend suddenly;  
in a moment, damage  
beyond repair.

## February

### 1



**1 Chronicles 26:12-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> These divisions of the  
gatekeepers, corresponding to  
their leaders, had duties, just  
as their kindred did,  
ministering in the house of the  
LORD; <sup>13</sup> and they cast lots by  
ancestral houses, small and  
great alike, for their gates.

<sup>14</sup> The lot for the east fell to  
Shelemiah. They cast lots also  
for his son Zechariah, a  
prudent counselor, and his lot  
came out for the north.

<sup>15</sup> Obed-edom's came out for  
the south, and to his sons was  
allotted the storehouse. <sup>16</sup> For  
Shuppim and Hosah it came  
out for the west, at the gate of  
Shallecheth on the ascending  
road. Guard corresponded to  
guard. <sup>17</sup> On the east there  
were six Levites each day, on  
the north four each day, on  
the south four each day, as  
well as two and two at the  
storehouse; <sup>18</sup> and for the  
colonnade on the west there  
were four at the road and two  
at the colonnade. <sup>19</sup> These  
were the divisions of the

gatekeepers among the Korahites and the sons of Merari.

*The Treasurers, Officers,  
and Judges*

<sup>20</sup> And of the Levites, Ahijah had charge of the treasuries of the house of God and the treasuries of the dedicated gifts. <sup>21</sup> The sons of Ladan, the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, the heads of families belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli.

<sup>22</sup> The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and his brother Joel, were in charge of the treasuries of the house of the LORD. <sup>23</sup> Of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites: <sup>24</sup> Shebuel son of Gershom, son of Moses, was chief officer in charge of the treasuries. <sup>25</sup> His brothers: from Eliezer were his son Rehabiah, his son Jeshaiyah, his son Joram, his son Zichri, and his son Shelomoth. <sup>26</sup> This Shelomoth and his brothers were in charge of all the treasuries of the dedicated gifts that King David, and the heads of families, and the

officers of the thousands and the hundreds, and the commanders of the army, had dedicated. <sup>27</sup> From booty won in battles they dedicated gifts for the maintenance of the house of the LORD. <sup>28</sup> Also all that Samuel the seer, and Saul son of Kish, and Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah had dedicated—all dedicated gifts were in the care of Shelomoth and his brothers.

<sup>29</sup> Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were appointed to outside duties for Israel, as officers and judges. <sup>30</sup> Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brothers, one thousand seven hundred men of ability, had the oversight of Israel west of the Jordan for all the work of the LORD and for the service of the king. <sup>31</sup> Of the Hebronites, Jerijah was chief of the Hebronites. (In the fortieth year of David's reign search was made, of whatever genealogy or family, and men of great ability among them were found at Jazer in Gilead.) <sup>32</sup> King David appointed him and his brothers, two thousand seven hundred men



of ability, heads of families, to have the oversight of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites for everything pertaining to God and for the affairs of the king.

**Romans 4:13-17** (NRSV)

*God's Promise Realized  
through Faith*

<sup>13</sup> For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup> If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom

he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

**Psalm 14:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!  
When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,  
Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

**Proverbs 6:16–19** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> There are six things that the LORD hates,  
seven that are an abomination to him:  
<sup>17</sup> haughty eyes, a lying tongue,  
and hands that shed innocent blood,  
<sup>18</sup> a heart that devises wicked plans,  
feet that hurry to run to evil,  
<sup>19</sup> a lying witness who testifies falsely, and  
one who sows discord in a family.

# February

## 2



### 1 Chronicles 27:1-34 (NRSV)

#### *The Military Divisions*

**27** This is the list of the people of Israel, the heads of families, the commanders of the thousands and the hundreds, and their officers who served the king in all matters concerning the divisions that came and went, month after month throughout the year, each division numbering twenty-four thousand:

<sup>2</sup> Jashobeam son of Zabdiel was in charge of the first division in the first month; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>3</sup> He was a descendant of Perez, and was chief of all the commanders of the army for the first month.

<sup>4</sup> Dodai the Ahohite was in charge of the division of the second month; Mikloth was the chief officer of his division. In his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>5</sup> The third commander, for the third month, was Benaiah son of the

priest Jehoiada, as chief; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>6</sup> This is the Benaiah who was a mighty man of the Thirty and in command of the Thirty; his son Ammizabad was in charge of his division.

<sup>7</sup> Asahel brother of Joab was fourth, for the fourth month, and his son Zebadiah after him; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>8</sup> The fifth commander, for the fifth month, was Shamhuth, the Izrahite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>9</sup> Sixth, for the sixth month, was Ira son of Ikkesheh the Tekoite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>10</sup> Seventh, for the seventh month, was Helez the Pelonite, of the Ephraimites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>11</sup> Eighth, for the eighth month, was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zerahites; in his division were twenty-four thousand.

<sup>12</sup> Ninth, for the ninth month, was Abiezer of Anathoth, a Benjaminite; in his division were twenty-four thousand.

<sup>13</sup> Tenth, for the tenth month, was Maharai of Netophah, of the Zerahites; in his division

were twenty-four thousand.

<sup>14</sup> Eleventh, for the eleventh month, was Benaiah of Pirathon, of the Ephraimites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. <sup>15</sup> Twelfth, for the twelfth month, was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; in his division were twenty-four thousand.

### *Leaders of Tribes*

<sup>16</sup> Over the tribes of Israel, for the Reubenites, Eliezer son of Zichri was chief officer; for the Simeonites, Shephatiah son of Maacah; <sup>17</sup> for Levi, Hashabiah son of Kemuel; for Aaron, Zadok; <sup>18</sup> for Judah, Elihu, one of David's brothers; for Issachar, Omri son of Michael; <sup>19</sup> for Zebulun, Ishmaiah son of Obadiah; for Naphtali, Jerimoth son of Azriel; <sup>20</sup> for the Ephraimites, Hoshea son of Azaziah; for the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel son of Pedaiah; <sup>21</sup> for the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo son of Zechariah; for Benjamin, Jaasiel son of Abner; <sup>22</sup> for Dan, Azarel son of Jeroham. These were the leaders of the tribes of Israel.

<sup>23</sup> David did not count those

below twenty years of age, for the LORD had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars of heaven. <sup>24</sup> Joab son of Zeruiah began to count them, but did not finish; yet wrath came upon Israel for this, and the number was not entered into the account of the Annals of King David.

### *Other Civic Officials*

<sup>25</sup> Over the king's treasuries was Azmaveth son of Adiel. Over the treasuries in the country, in the cities, in the villages and in the towers, was Jonathan son of Uzziah. <sup>26</sup> Over those who did the work of the field, tilling the soil, was Ezri son of Chelub. <sup>27</sup> Over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite. Over the produce of the vineyards for the wine cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite. <sup>28</sup> Over the olive and sycamore trees in the Shephelah was Baal-hanan the Gederite. Over the stores of oil was Joash. <sup>29</sup> Over the herds that pastured in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite. Over the herds in the valleys was Shaphat son of Adlai. <sup>30</sup> Over the camels was Obil the

Ishmaelite. Over the donkeys was Jehdeiah the Meronothite. Over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagrite.<sup>31</sup> All these were stewards of King David's property.

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counselor, being a man of understanding and a scribe; Jehiel son of Hachmoni attended the king's sons.

<sup>33</sup> Ahithophel was the king's counselor, and Hushai the Archite was the king's friend.

<sup>34</sup> After Ahithophel came Jehoiada son of Benaiah, and Abiathar. Joab was commander of the king's army.

### **Romans 4:18-5:5** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be."<sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.<sup>20</sup> No distrust made him waver concerning

the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,<sup>21</sup> being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.<sup>22</sup> Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness."<sup>23</sup> Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone,<sup>24</sup> but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,<sup>25</sup> who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

### *Results of Justification*

**5** Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.<sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,<sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,<sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint us,

because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

**Psalms 15:1-5** (NRSV)

*Who Shall Abide in God's Sanctuary?*

A Psalm of David.

1 O LORD, who may abide in your tent?  
Who may dwell on your holy hill?

2 Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart;

3 who do not slander with their tongue, and do no evil to their friends, nor take up a reproach against their neighbors;

4 in whose eyes the wicked are despised, but who honor those who fear the LORD; who stand by their oath even to their hurt;

5 who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be moved.

**Proverbs 6:20-26** (NRSV)

20 My child, keep your father's commandment, and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

21 Bind them upon your heart always; tie them around your neck.

22 When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you.

23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,

24 to preserve you from the wife of another, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.

25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart, and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes;

<sup>26</sup> for a prostitute's fee is only a loaf of bread, but the wife of another stalks a man's very life.

## February 3



### 1 Chronicles 28:1-21 (NRSV)

#### *Solomon Instructed to Build the Temple*

**28** David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of the thousands, the commanders of the hundreds, the stewards of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty warriors, and all the warriors. <sup>2</sup> Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had planned to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the

LORD, for the footstool of our God; and I made preparations for building. <sup>3</sup> But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for my name, for you are a warrior and have shed blood.' <sup>4</sup> Yet the LORD God of Israel chose me from all my ancestral house to be king over Israel forever; for he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took delight in making me king over all Israel. <sup>5</sup> And of all my sons, for the LORD has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. <sup>6</sup> He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be a son to me, and I will be a father to him. <sup>7</sup> I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues resolute in keeping my commandments and my ordinances, as he is today.' <sup>8</sup> Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and search out all the commandments of the LORD

your God; that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever.

<sup>9</sup>“And you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve him with single mind and willing heart; for the LORD searches every mind, and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will abandon you forever.

<sup>10</sup>Take heed now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong, and act.”

<sup>11</sup>Then David gave his son Solomon the plan of the vestibule of the temple, and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner chambers, and of the room for the mercy seat; <sup>12</sup>and the plan of all that he had in mind: for the courts of the house of the LORD, all the surrounding chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for dedicated gifts; <sup>13</sup>for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, and all the work of the service in

the house of the LORD; for all the vessels for the service in the house of the LORD, <sup>14</sup>the weight of gold for all golden vessels for each service, the weight of silver vessels for each service, <sup>15</sup>the weight of the golden lampstands and their lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand and its lamps, the weight of silver for a lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each in the service, <sup>16</sup>the weight of gold for each table for the rows of bread, the silver for the silver tables, <sup>17</sup>and pure gold for the forks, the basins, and the cups; for the golden bowls and the weight of each; for the silver bowls and the weight of each; <sup>18</sup>for the altar of incense made of refined gold, and its weight; also his plan for the golden chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

<sup>19</sup>“All this, in writing at the LORD’s direction, he made clear to me—the plan of all the works.”

<sup>20</sup>David said further to his son Solomon, “Be strong and of good courage, and act. Do

not be afraid or dismayed; for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished. <sup>21</sup> Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and with you in all the work will be every volunteer who has skill for any kind of service; also the officers and all the people will be wholly at your command.”

**Romans 5:6-11 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son,

much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup> But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

**Psalm 16:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Song of Trust and Security in God*

A Miktam of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.  
<sup>2</sup> I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;  
I have no good apart from you.”  
<sup>3</sup> As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,  
in whom is all my delight.  
<sup>4</sup> Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;  
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out  
or take their names upon my lips.

**Proverbs 6:27–35 (NRSV)**

- <sup>27</sup> Can fire be carried in the bosom  
without burning one’s clothes?



28 Or can one walk on hot  
coals  
without scorching the  
feet?  
29 So is he who sleeps with  
his neighbor's wife;  
no one who touches her  
will go unpunished.  
30 Thieves are not despised  
who steal only  
to satisfy their appetite  
when they are hungry.  
31 Yet if they are caught, they  
will pay sevenfold;  
they will forfeit all the  
goods of their house.  
32 But he who commits  
adultery has no sense;  
he who does it destroys  
himself.  
33 He will get wounds and  
dishonor,  
and his disgrace will not  
be wiped away.  
34 For jealousy arouses a  
husband's fury,  
and he shows no  
restraint when he  
takes revenge.  
35 He will accept no  
compensation, and  
refuses a bribe no  
matter how great.

## February 4



**1 Chronicles 29:1-30** (NRSV)

### *Offerings for Building the Temple*

**29** King David said to the whole assembly, "My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great; for the temple will not be for mortals but for the LORD God. <sup>2</sup> So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones, and marble in abundance. <sup>3</sup> Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house

of my God: <sup>4</sup> three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the house, <sup>5</sup> and for all the work to be done by artisans, gold for the things of gold and silver for the things of silver. Who then will offer willingly, consecrating themselves today to the LORD?"

<sup>6</sup> Then the leaders of ancestral houses made their freewill offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and the officers over the king's work.

<sup>7</sup> They gave for the service of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and one hundred thousand talents of iron.

<sup>8</sup> Whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD, into the care of Jehiel the Gershonite.

<sup>9</sup> Then the people rejoiced because these had given willingly, for with single mind they had offered freely to the

LORD; King David also rejoiced greatly.

*David's Praise to God*

<sup>10</sup> Then David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly; David said: "Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, forever and ever. <sup>11</sup> Yours, O LORD, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. <sup>12</sup> Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all.

<sup>13</sup> And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.

<sup>14</sup> "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. <sup>15</sup> For we are aliens and transients before you, as were all our ancestors; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and

there is no hope. <sup>16</sup> O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own. <sup>17</sup> I know, my God, that you search the heart, and take pleasure in uprightness; in the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you. <sup>18</sup> O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our ancestors, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you. <sup>19</sup> Grant to my son Solomon that with single mind he may keep your commandments, your decrees, and your statutes, performing all of them, and that he may build the temple for which I have made provision.”

<sup>20</sup> Then David said to the whole assembly, “Bless the LORD your God.” And all the assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before

the LORD and the king. <sup>21</sup> On the next day they offered sacrifices and burnt offerings to the LORD, a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their libations, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel; <sup>22</sup> and they ate and drank before the LORD on that day with great joy.

*Solomon Anointed King*  
(1 Kings 1:38–40; 2:12)

They made David’s son Solomon king a second time; they anointed him as the LORD’s prince, and Zadok as priest. <sup>23</sup> Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD, succeeding his father David as king; he prospered, and all Israel obeyed him. <sup>24</sup> All the leaders and the mighty warriors, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon. <sup>25</sup> The LORD highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

*Summary of David's Reign*

<sup>26</sup> Thus David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. <sup>27</sup> The period that he reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. <sup>28</sup> He died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor; and his son Solomon succeeded him.

<sup>29</sup> Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the records of the seer Samuel, and in the records of the prophet Nathan, and in the records of the seer Gad, <sup>30</sup> with accounts of all his rule and his might and of the events that befell him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the earth.

**Romans 5:12-21 (NRSV)**

*Adam and Christ*

*(Gen 3:1-19)*

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— <sup>13</sup> sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Yet death exercised dominion from

Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

<sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup> And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup> If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup> For just as by the one

man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

<sup>20</sup> But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup> **so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Psalm 16:5-8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;  
you hold my lot.  
<sup>6</sup> The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
I have a goodly heritage.  
<sup>7</sup> I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.  
<sup>8</sup> I keep the LORD always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

**Proverbs 7:1-5** (NRSV)

*The False Attractions of Adultery*

<sup>1</sup> My child, keep my words and store up my commandments with you;  
<sup>2</sup> keep my commandments and live,  
keep my teachings as the apple of your eye;  
<sup>3</sup> bind them on your fingers, write them on the tablet of your heart.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"  
and call insight your intimate friend,  
<sup>5</sup> that they may keep you from the loose woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words.

# February

## 5



### 2 Chronicles 1:1-2:10 (NRSV)

#### *Solomon Requests Wisdom* (1 Kings 3:1–15)

**1** Solomon son of David established himself in his kingdom; the LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

<sup>2</sup> Solomon summoned all Israel, the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, the judges, and all the leaders of all Israel, the heads of families. <sup>3</sup> Then Solomon, and the whole assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for God's tent of meeting, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness, was there.

<sup>4</sup> (But David had brought the ark of God up from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.) <sup>5</sup> Moreover the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, had made, was there in front of the tabernacle of the LORD. And

Solomon and the assembly inquired at it. <sup>6</sup> Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

<sup>7</sup> That night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask what I should give you." <sup>8</sup> Solomon said to God, "You have shown great and steadfast love to my father David, and have made me succeed him as king. <sup>9</sup> O LORD God, let your promise to my father David now be fulfilled, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. <sup>10</sup> Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of yours?" <sup>11</sup> God answered Solomon, "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked for possessions, wealth, honor, or the life of those who hate you, and have not even asked for long life, but have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may rule my people over whom I have made you king,

<sup>12</sup> wisdom and knowledge are granted to you. I will also give you riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had who were before you, and none after you shall have the like.” <sup>13</sup> So Solomon came from the high place at Gibeon, from the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he reigned over Israel.

*Solomon's Military and Commercial Activity*

*(1 Kings 10:26–29; 2 Chr 9:25–28)*

<sup>14</sup> Solomon gathered together chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. <sup>15</sup> The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. <sup>16</sup> Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and Kue; the king's traders received them from Kue at the prevailing price. <sup>17</sup> They imported from Egypt, and then exported, a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty; so through

them these were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

*Preparations for Building the Temple*

**2** Solomon decided to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal palace for himself. <sup>2</sup> Solomon conscripted seventy thousand laborers and eighty thousand stonecutters in the hill country, with three thousand six hundred to oversee them.

*Alliance with Hiram of Tyre*  
*(1 Kings 5:1–18)*

<sup>3</sup> Solomon sent word to King Hiram of Tyre: “Once you dealt with my father David and sent him cedar to build himself a house to live in. <sup>4</sup> I am now about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God and dedicate it to him for offering fragrant incense before him, and for the regular offering of the rows of bread, and for burnt offerings morning and evening, (on the sabbaths and the new moons and the appointed festivals of the LORD our God, as ordained forever for Israel. <sup>5</sup> The house that I

am about to build will be great, for our God is greater than other gods. <sup>6</sup> But who is able to build him a house, since heaven, even highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I to build a house for him, except as a place to make offerings before him? <sup>7</sup> So now send me an artisan skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue fabrics, trained also in engraving, to join the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David provided. <sup>8</sup> Send me also cedar, cypress, and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting Lebanon timber. My servants will work with your servants <sup>9</sup> to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the house I am about to build will be great and wonderful. <sup>10</sup> I will provide for your servants, those who cut the timber, twenty thousand cors of crushed wheat, twenty thousand cors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.”

## **Romans 6:1-14** (NRSV)

### *Dying and Rising with Christ*

**6** What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup> For whoever has died is freed from sin. <sup>8</sup> But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup> The death he died, he died to sin,



once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. <sup>13</sup> No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness.

<sup>14</sup> For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

**Psalms 16:9-11** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad,  
and my soul rejoices;  
my body also rests  
secure.

<sup>10</sup> For you do not give me up  
to Sheol,  
or let your faithful one  
see the Pit.

<sup>11</sup> You show me the path of  
life.

In your presence there is  
fullness of joy;

in your right hand are  
pleasures forevermore.

**Proverbs 7:6-23** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> For at the window of my  
house  
I looked out through my  
lattice,

<sup>7</sup> and I saw among the  
simple ones,  
I observed among the  
youths,  
a young man without  
sense,

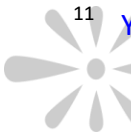
<sup>8</sup> passing along the street  
near her corner,  
taking the road to her  
house

<sup>9</sup> in the twilight, in the  
evening,  
at the time of night and  
darkness.

<sup>10</sup> Then a woman comes  
toward him,  
decked out like a  
prostitute, wily of  
heart.

<sup>11</sup> She is loud and wayward;  
her feet do not stay at  
home;

<sup>12</sup> now in the street, now in  
the squares,  
and at every corner she  
lies in wait.



13 She seizes him and kisses  
him,  
and with impudent face  
she says to him:  
14 "I had to offer sacrifices,  
and today I have paid my  
vows;  
15 so now I have come out to  
meet you,  
to seek you eagerly, and I  
have found you!  
16 I have decked my couch  
with coverings,  
colored spreads of  
Egyptian linen;  
17 I have perfumed my bed  
with myrrh,  
aloes, and cinnamon.  
18 Come, let us take our fill of  
love until morning;  
let us delight ourselves  
with love.  
19 For my husband is not at  
home;  
he has gone on a long  
journey.  
20 He took a bag of money  
with him;  
he will not come home  
until full moon."  
21 With much seductive  
speech she persuades  
him;  
with her smooth talk she  
compels him.

22 Right away he follows her,  
and goes like an ox to  
the slaughter,  
or bounds like a stag  
toward the trap  
23 until an arrow pierces its  
entrails.  
He is like a bird rushing  
into a snare,  
not knowing that it will  
cost him his life.

## February

### 6



### 2 Chronicles 2:11-3:17 (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Then King Hiram of Tyre answered in a letter that he sent to Solomon, "Because the LORD loves his people he has made you king over them."

<sup>12</sup> Hiram also said, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with discretion and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD, and a royal palace for himself.

<sup>13</sup> “I have dispatched Hiram-abi, a skilled artisan, endowed with understanding,  
<sup>14</sup> the son of one of the Danite women, his father a Tyrian. He is trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood, and in purple, blue, and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be assigned him, with your artisans, the artisans of my lord, your father David.

<sup>15</sup> Now, as for the wheat, barley, oil, and wine, of which my lord has spoken, let him send them to his servants.

<sup>16</sup> We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon, and bring it to you as rafts by sea to Joppa; you will take it up to Jerusalem.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Solomon took a census of all the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, after the census that his father David had taken; and there were found to be one hundred fifty-three thousand six hundred. <sup>18</sup> Seventy thousand of them he assigned as laborers, eighty thousand as stonecutters in the hill country, and three thousand

six hundred as overseers to make the people work.

*Solomon Builds the Temple*  
(1 Kings 6:1–22)

**3** Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had designated, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. <sup>2</sup> He began to build on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign. <sup>3</sup> These are Solomon’s measurements for building the house of God: the length, in cubits of the old standard, was sixty cubits, and the width twenty cubits. <sup>4</sup> The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits long, across the width of the house; and its height was one hundred twenty cubits. He overlaid it on the inside with pure gold. <sup>5</sup> The nave he lined with cypress, covered it with fine gold, and made palms and chains on it. <sup>6</sup> He adorned the house with settings of precious stones. The gold was gold from Parvaim. <sup>7</sup> So he lined the house with gold—its beams,

its thresholds, its walls, and its doors; and he carved cherubim on the walls.

<sup>8</sup> He made the most holy place; its length, corresponding to the width of the house, was twenty cubits, and its width was twenty cubits; he overlaid it with six hundred talents of fine gold.

<sup>9</sup> The weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. He overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

<sup>10</sup> In the most holy place he made two carved cherubim and overlaid them with gold.

<sup>11</sup> The wings of the cherubim together extended twenty cubits: one wing of the one, five cubits long, touched the wall of the house, and its other wing, five cubits long, touched the wing of the other cherub; <sup>12</sup> and of this cherub, one wing, five cubits long, touched the wall of the house, and the other wing, also five cubits long, was joined to the wing of the first cherub. <sup>13</sup> The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits; the cherubim stood on their feet, facing the nave. <sup>14</sup> And Solomon made the curtain of

blue and purple and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and worked cherubim into it.

<sup>15</sup> In front of the house he made two pillars thirty-five cubits high, with a capital of five cubits on the top of each.

<sup>16</sup> He made encircling chains and put them on the tops of the pillars; and he made one hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains. <sup>17</sup> He set up the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right, the other on the left; the one on the right he called Jachin, and the one on the left, Boaz.

### **Romans 6:15-23 (NRSV)**

#### *Slaves of Righteousness*

<sup>15</sup> What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching

to which you were entrusted,  
<sup>18</sup>and that you, having been  
set free from sin, have  
become slaves of  
righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am speaking  
in human terms because of  
your natural limitations. For  
just as you once presented  
your members as slaves to  
impurity and to greater and  
greater iniquity, so now  
present your members as  
slaves to righteousness for  
sanctification.

<sup>20</sup>When you were slaves of  
sin, you were free in regard to  
righteousness. <sup>21</sup>So what  
advantage did you then get  
from the things of which you  
now are ashamed? The end of  
those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But  
now that you have been freed  
from sin and enslaved to God,  
the advantage you get is  
sanctification. The end is  
eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of  
sin is death, but the free gift of  
God is eternal life in Christ  
Jesus our Lord.

**Psalms 17:1-5** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from  
Persecutors*

A Prayer of David.

<sup>1</sup> Hear a just cause, O LORD;  
attend to my cry;

give ear to my prayer  
from lips free of deceit.

<sup>2</sup> From you let my  
vindication come;  
let your eyes see the  
right.

<sup>3</sup> If you try my heart, if you  
visit me by night,  
if you test me, you will  
find no wickedness in  
me;  
my mouth does not  
transgress.

<sup>4</sup> As for what others do, by  
the word of your lips  
I have avoided the ways  
of the violent.

<sup>5</sup> My steps have held fast to  
your paths;  
my feet have not slipped.

**Proverbs 7:24–27** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> And now, my children,  
listen to me,  
and be attentive to the  
words of my mouth.

<sup>25</sup> Do not let your hearts turn  
aside to her ways;  
do not stray into her  
paths.

<sup>26</sup> for many are those she has  
laid low,  
and numerous are her  
victims.

<sup>27</sup> Her house is the way to  
Sheol,  
going down to the  
chambers of death.

## February 7



### 2 Chronicles 4:1-22 (NRSV)

#### *Furnishings of the Temple* (1 Kings 6:23–38; 7:13–51)

**4** He made an altar of bronze, twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and ten cubits high. <sup>2</sup> Then he made the molten sea; it was round, ten cubits from rim to rim, and five cubits high. A line of thirty cubits would encircle it completely. <sup>3</sup> Under it were panels all around, each of ten cubits, surrounding the sea; there were two rows of panels, cast when it was cast. <sup>4</sup> It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; the sea was set on them. The hindquarters of each were

toward the inside. <sup>5</sup> Its thickness was a handbreadth; its rim was made like the rim of a cup, like the flower of a lily; it held three thousand baths. <sup>6</sup> He also made ten basins in which to wash, and set five on the right side, and five on the left. In these they were to rinse what was used for the burnt offering. The sea was for the priests to wash in.

<sup>7</sup> He made ten golden lampstands as prescribed, and set them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north. <sup>8</sup> He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. And he made one hundred basins of gold. <sup>9</sup> He made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court; he overlaid their doors with bronze. <sup>10</sup> He set the sea at the southeast corner of the house.

<sup>11</sup> And Hiram made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. Thus Hiram finished the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of God: <sup>12</sup> the two pillars, the bowls, and the two capitals on the top of the pillars; and the two

latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars; <sup>13</sup> the four hundred pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars. <sup>14</sup> He made the stands, the basins on the stands, <sup>15</sup> the one sea, and the twelve oxen underneath it. <sup>16</sup> The pots, the shovels, the forks, and all the equipment for these Hiram-abi made of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD. <sup>17</sup> In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. <sup>18</sup> Solomon made all these things in great quantities, so that the weight of the bronze was not determined.

<sup>19</sup> So Solomon made all the things that were in the house of God: the golden altar, the tables for the bread of the Presence, <sup>20</sup> the lampstands and their lamps of pure gold to burn before the inner sanctuary, as prescribed; <sup>21</sup> the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of purest gold; <sup>22</sup> the

snuffers, basins, ladles, and firepans, of pure gold. As for the entrance to the temple: the inner doors to the most holy place and the doors of the nave of the temple were of gold.

### **Romans 7:1-4 (NRSV)**

#### *An Analogy from Marriage*

**7** Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only during that person’s lifetime? <sup>2</sup> Thus a married woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. <sup>3</sup> Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man, she is not an adulteress.

<sup>4</sup> In the same way, my friends, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order

that we may bear fruit for  
God.

**Psalms 17:6-15** (NRSV)

6 I call upon you, for you will  
answer me, O God;  
incline your ear to me,  
hear my words.  
7 Wondrously show your  
steadfast love,  
O savior of those who  
seek refuge  
from their adversaries at  
your right hand.  
8 Guard me as the apple of  
the eye;  
hide me in the shadow of  
your wings,  
9 from the wicked who  
despoil me,  
my deadly enemies who  
surround me.  
10 They close their hearts to  
pity;  
with their mouths they  
speak arrogantly.  
11 They track me down; now  
they surround me;  
they set their eyes to  
cast me to the ground.  
12 They are like a lion eager  
to tear,  
like a young lion lurking  
in ambush.

13 Rise up, O LORD, confront  
them, overthrow  
them!  
By your sword deliver my  
life from the wicked,  
14 from mortals—by your  
hand, O LORD—  
from mortals whose  
portion in life is in this  
world.  
May their bellies be filled  
with what you have  
stored up for them;  
may their children have  
more than enough;  
may they leave  
something over to  
their little ones.  
15 As for me, I shall behold  
your face in  
righteousness;  
when I awake I shall be  
satisfied, beholding  
your likeness.

**Proverbs 8:1-11** (NRSV)

*The Gifts of Wisdom*  
1 Does not wisdom call,  
and does not  
understanding raise  
her voice?  
2 On the heights, beside the  
way,



at the crossroads she  
takes her stand;  
3 beside the gates in front of  
the town,  
at the entrance of the  
portals she cries out:  
4 “To you, O people, I call,  
and my cry is to all that  
live.  
5 O simple ones, learn  
prudence;  
acquire intelligence, you  
who lack it.  
6 Hear, for I will speak noble  
things,  
and from my lips will  
come what is right;  
7 for my mouth will utter  
truth;  
wickedness is an  
abomination to my  
lips.  
8 All the words of my mouth  
are righteous;  
there is nothing twisted  
or crooked in them.  
9 They are all straight to one  
who understands  
and right to those who  
find knowledge.

10 Take my instruction  
instead of silver,  
and knowledge rather  
than choice gold;  
11 for wisdom is better than  
jewels,  
and all that you may  
desire cannot compare  
with her.

## February 8



### 2 Chronicles 5:1-6:11 (NRSV)

5 Thus all the work that  
Solomon did for the house of  
the LORD was finished.  
Solomon brought in the things  
that his father David had  
dedicated, and stored the  
silver, the gold, and all the  
vessels in the treasuries of the  
house of God.

### *The Ark Brought into the Temple* (1 Kings 8:1–11)

2 Then Solomon assembled  
the elders of Israel and all the

heads of the tribes, the leaders of the ancestral houses of the people of Israel, in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. <sup>3</sup> And all the Israelites assembled before the king at the festival that is in the seventh month. <sup>4</sup> And all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites carried the ark. <sup>5</sup> So they brought up the ark, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. <sup>6</sup> King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be numbered or counted. <sup>7</sup> Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the most holy place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. <sup>8</sup> For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles. <sup>9</sup> The poles were

so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the holy place in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside; they are there to this day. <sup>10</sup> There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel after they came out of Egypt.

<sup>11</sup> Now when the priests came out of the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to their divisions), <sup>12</sup> all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kindred, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with one hundred twenty priests who were trumpeters. <sup>13</sup> It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD,

“For he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever,”  
the house, the house of the  
LORD, was filled with a cloud,  
<sup>14</sup>so that the priests could not  
stand to minister because of  
the cloud; for the glory of the  
LORD filled the house of God.

*Dedication of the Temple*  
(1 Kings 8:12–21)

**6** Then Solomon said, “The  
LORD has said that he would  
reside in thick darkness. <sup>2</sup>I  
have built you an exalted  
house, a place for you to  
reside in forever.”

<sup>3</sup>Then the king turned  
around and blessed all the  
assembly of Israel, while all  
the assembly of Israel stood.  
<sup>4</sup>And he said, “Blessed be the  
LORD, the God of Israel, who  
with his hand has fulfilled  
what he promised with his  
mouth to my father David,  
saying, <sup>5</sup>‘Since the day that I  
brought my people out of the  
land of Egypt, I have not  
chosen a city from any of the  
tribes of Israel in which to  
build a house, so that my  
name might be there, and I  
chose no one as ruler over my  
people Israel; <sup>6</sup>but I have

chosen Jerusalem in order that  
my name may be there, and I  
have chosen David to be over  
my people Israel.’ <sup>7</sup>My father  
David had it in mind to build a  
house for the name of the  
LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>8</sup>But  
the LORD said to my father  
David, ‘You did well to  
consider building a house for  
my name; <sup>9</sup>nevertheless you  
shall not build the house, but  
your son who shall be born to  
you shall build the house for  
my name.’ <sup>10</sup>Now the LORD has  
fulfilled his promise that he  
made; for I have succeeded  
my father David, and sit on the  
throne of Israel, as the LORD  
promised, and have built the  
house for the name of the  
LORD, the God of Israel.  
<sup>11</sup>There I have set the ark, in  
which is the covenant of the  
LORD that he made with the  
people of Israel.”

**Romans 7:5-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup>While we were living in  
the flesh, our sinful passions,  
aroused by the law, were at  
work in our members to bear  
fruit for death. <sup>6</sup>But now we  
are discharged from the law,  
dead to that which held us

captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

*The Law and Sin*

<sup>7</sup> What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” <sup>8</sup> But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. <sup>9</sup> I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived <sup>10</sup> and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. <sup>11</sup> For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. <sup>12</sup> So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

<sup>13</sup> Did what is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order

that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

**Psalm 18:1-3** (NRSV)

*Royal Thanksgiving for Victory*  
(2 Sam 22:1–51)

To the leader. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who addressed the words of this song to the LORD on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said:

- <sup>1</sup> I love you, O LORD, my strength.
- <sup>2</sup> The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- <sup>3</sup> I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, so I shall be saved from my enemies.

**Proverbs 8:12–13** (NRSV)

- <sup>12</sup> I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I attain knowledge and discretion.
- <sup>13</sup> The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.



Pride and arrogance and  
the way of evil  
and perverted speech I  
hate.

## February 9



### 2 Chronicles 6:12-42 (NRSV)

#### *Solomon's Prayer of Dedication*

(1 Kings 8:22-53)

<sup>12</sup> Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands. <sup>13</sup> Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court; and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven. <sup>14</sup> He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant in steadfast love with your

servants who walk before you with all their heart— <sup>15</sup> you who have kept for your servant, my father David, what you promised to him. Indeed, you promised with your mouth and this day have fulfilled with your hand.

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant, my father David, that which you promised him, saying, 'There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children keep to their way, to walk in my law as you have walked before me.'

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant David.

<sup>18</sup> "But will God indeed reside with mortals on earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built! <sup>19</sup> Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O LORD my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you. <sup>20</sup> May your eyes be open day and night toward this house, the

place where you promised to set your name, and may you heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. <sup>21</sup> And hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; may you hear from heaven your dwelling place; hear and forgive.

<sup>22</sup> “If someone sins against another and is required to take an oath and comes and swears before your altar in this house, <sup>23</sup> may you hear from heaven, and act, and judge your servants, repaying the guilty by bringing their conduct on their own head, and vindicating those who are in the right by rewarding them in accordance with their righteousness.

<sup>24</sup> “When your people Israel, having sinned against you, are defeated before an enemy but turn again to you, confess your name, pray and plead with you in this house, <sup>25</sup> may you hear from heaven, and forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them again to the land that you gave

to them and to their ancestors.

<sup>26</sup> “When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, and then they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin, because you punish them, <sup>27</sup> may you hear in heaven, forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send down rain upon your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

<sup>28</sup> “If there is famine in the land, if there is plague, blight, mildew, locust, or caterpillar; if their enemies besiege them in any of the settlements of the lands; whatever suffering, whatever sickness there is; <sup>29</sup> whatever prayer, whatever plea from any individual or from all your people Israel, all knowing their own suffering and their own sorrows so that they stretch out their hands toward this house; <sup>30</sup> may you hear from heaven, your dwelling place, forgive, and render to all whose heart you know, according to all their

ways, for only you know the human heart.<sup>31</sup> Thus may they fear you and walk in your ways all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our ancestors.

<sup>32</sup> “Likewise when foreigners, who are not of your people Israel, come from a distant land because of your great name, and your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house,<sup>33</sup> may you hear from heaven your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigners ask of you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.

<sup>34</sup> “If your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to you toward this city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name,<sup>35</sup> then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause.

<sup>36</sup> “If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried away captive to a land far or near;<sup>37</sup> then if they come to their senses in the land to which they have been taken captive, and repent, and plead with you in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned, and have done wrong; we have acted wickedly’;<sup>38</sup> if they repent with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity, to which they were taken captive, and pray toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, the city that you have chosen, and the house that I have built for your name,<sup>39</sup> then hear from heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their pleas, maintain their cause and forgive your people who have sinned against you.<sup>40</sup> Now, O my God, let your eyes be open and your ears attentive to prayer from this place.

<sup>41</sup> “Now rise up, O LORD God, and go to your resting place,

you and the ark of your  
might.

Let your priests, O LORD  
God, be clothed with  
salvation,  
and let your faithful  
rejoice in your  
goodness.

<sup>42</sup> O LORD God, do not reject  
your anointed one.  
Remember your  
steadfast love for your  
servant David."

**Romans 7:14-25 (NRSV)**

*The Inner Conflict*

<sup>14</sup> For we know that the  
law is spiritual; but I am of the  
flesh, sold into slavery under  
sin. <sup>15</sup> I do not understand my  
own actions. For I do not do  
what I want, but I do the very  
thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Now if I do  
what I do not want, I agree  
that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> But in  
fact it is no longer I that do it,  
but sin that dwells within me.  
<sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing  
good dwells within me, that is,  
in my flesh. I can will what is  
right, but I cannot do it. <sup>19</sup> For I  
do not do the good I want, but  
the evil I do not want is what I  
do. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not  
want, it is no longer I that do

it, but sin that dwells within  
me.

<sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law  
that when I want to do what is  
good, evil lies close at hand.  
<sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of  
God in my inmost self, <sup>23</sup> but I  
see in my members another  
law at war with the law of my  
mind, making me captive to  
the law of sin that dwells in  
my members. <sup>24</sup> Wretched  
man that I am! Who will  
rescue me from this body of  
death? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God  
through Jesus Christ our Lord!  
So then, with my mind I am a  
slave to the law of God, but  
with my flesh I am a slave to  
the law of sin.

**Psalm 18:4-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The cords of death  
encompassed me;  
the torrents of perdition  
assailed me;  
<sup>5</sup> the cords of Sheol  
entangled me;  
the snares of death  
confronted me.  
<sup>6</sup> In my distress I called upon  
the LORD;  
to my God I cried for  
help.

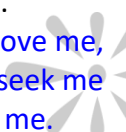


From his temple he heard  
my voice,  
and my cry to him  
reached his ears.  
7 Then the earth reeled and  
rocked;  
the foundations also of  
the mountains  
trembled  
and quaked, because he  
was angry.  
8 Smoke went up from his  
nostrils,  
and devouring fire from  
his mouth;  
glowing coals flamed  
forth from him.  
9 He bowed the heavens,  
and came down;  
thick darkness was under  
his feet.  
10 He rode on a cherub, and  
flew;  
he came swiftly upon the  
wings of the wind.  
11 He made darkness his  
covering around him,  
his canopy thick clouds  
dark with water.  
12 Out of the brightness  
before him  
there broke through his  
clouds  
hailstones and coals of  
fire.

13 The LORD also thundered in  
the heavens,  
and the Most High  
uttered his voice.  
14 And he sent out his  
arrows, and scattered  
them;  
he flashed forth  
lightnings, and routed  
them.  
15 Then the channels of the  
sea were seen,  
and the foundations of  
the world were laid  
bare  
at your rebuke, O LORD,  
at the blast of the breath  
of your nostrils.

**Proverbs 8:14–26 (NRSV)**

14 I [wisdom] have good  
advice and sound  
wisdom;  
I have insight, I have  
strength.  
15 By me kings reign,  
and rulers decree what is  
just;  
16 by me rulers rule,  
and nobles, all who  
govern rightly.  
17 I love those who love me,  
and those who seek me  
diligently find me.



18 Riches and honor are with  
me,  
enduring wealth and  
prosperity.  
19 My fruit is better than  
gold, even fine gold,  
and my yield than choice  
silver.  
20 I walk in the way of  
righteousness,  
along the paths of  
justice,  
21 endowing with wealth  
those who love me,  
and filling their  
treasuries.

*Wisdom's Part in Creation*  
(Cp Jn 1:1–3)

22 The LORD created me at the  
beginning of his work,  
the first of his acts of  
long ago.  
23 Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the  
beginning of the earth.  
24 When there were no  
depths I was brought  
forth,  
when there were no  
springs abounding with  
water.  
25 Before the mountains had  
been shaped,

before the hills, I was  
brought forth—  
26 when he had not yet made  
earth and fields,  
or the world's first bits of  
soil.

## February 10



### 2 Chronicles 7:1-8:10 (NRSV)

*Solomon Dedicates the Temple*  
(1 Kings 8:62–66)

**7** When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>The priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. <sup>3</sup>When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying,

“For he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>4</sup> Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD. <sup>5</sup> King Solomon offered as a sacrifice twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. <sup>6</sup> The priests stood at their posts; the Levites also, with the instruments for music to the LORD that King David had made for giving thanks to the LORD—for his steadfast love endures forever—whenever David offered praises by their ministry. Opposite them the priests sounded trumpets; and all Israel stood.

<sup>7</sup> Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the offerings of well-being because the bronze altar Solomon had made could not hold the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat parts.

<sup>8</sup> At that time Solomon held the festival for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly; for they had observed the dedication of the altar seven days and the festival seven days. <sup>10</sup> On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their homes, joyful and in good spirits because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David and to Solomon and to his people Israel.

<sup>11</sup> Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king’s house; all that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the LORD and in his own house he successfully accomplished.

*God’s Second  
Appearance to Solomon  
(1 Kings 9:1–9)*

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: “I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. <sup>13</sup> When I shut up the

heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people,<sup>14</sup> if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

<sup>15</sup> Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. <sup>16</sup> For now I have chosen and consecrated this house so that my name may be there forever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time. <sup>17</sup> As for you, if you walk before me, as your father David walked, doing according to all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my ordinances,<sup>18</sup> then I will establish your royal throne, as I made covenant with your father David saying, 'You shall never lack a successor to rule over Israel.'

<sup>19</sup> "But if you turn aside and forsake my statutes and my commandments that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and

worship them,<sup>20</sup> then I will pluck you up from the land that I have given you; and this house, which I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

<sup>21</sup> And regarding this house, now exalted, everyone passing by will be astonished, and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this house?' <sup>22</sup> Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the LORD the God of their ancestors who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore he has brought all this calamity upon them.' "

*Various Activities of Solomon*  
(1 Kings 9:10–28)

**8** At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house,<sup>2</sup> Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram had given to him, and settled the people of Israel in them.

<sup>3</sup> Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and captured it. <sup>4</sup> He built Tadmor in the

wilderness and all the storage towns that he built in Hamath.

<sup>5</sup> He also built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon, fortified cities, with walls, gates, and bars, <sup>6</sup> and Baalath, as well as all Solomon's storage towns, and all the towns for his chariots, the towns for his cavalry, and whatever Solomon desired to build, in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. <sup>7</sup> All the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel, <sup>8</sup> from their descendants who were still left in the land, whom the people of Israel had not destroyed—these Solomon conscripted for forced labor, as is still the case today. <sup>9</sup> But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves for his work; they were soldiers, and his officers, the commanders of his chariotry and cavalry. <sup>10</sup> These were the chief officers of King Solomon, two hundred fifty of them, who exercised authority over the people.

## **Romans 8:1-8 (NRSV)**

### *Life in the Spirit*

**8** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup> For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup> For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup> For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, <sup>8</sup> and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

**Psalms 18:16-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> He reached down from on high, he took me; he drew me out of mighty waters.

<sup>17</sup> He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from those who hated me; for they were too mighty for me.

<sup>18</sup> They confronted me in the day of my calamity; but the LORD was my support.

<sup>19</sup> He brought me out into a broad place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

<sup>20</sup> The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.

<sup>21</sup> For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

<sup>22</sup> For all his ordinances were before me, and his statutes I did not put away from me.

<sup>23</sup> I was blameless before him, and I kept myself from guilt.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

**Proverbs 8:27-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,

<sup>28</sup> when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep,

<sup>29</sup> when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth,

<sup>30</sup> then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always,

<sup>31</sup> rejoicing in his inhabited  
world  
and delighting in the  
human race.  
<sup>32</sup> “And now, my children,  
listen to me:  
happy are those who  
keep my ways.

## February 11



### 2 Chronicles 8:11-9:12 (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Solomon brought Pharaoh’s daughter from the city of David to the house that he had built for her, for he said, “My wife shall not live in the house of King David of Israel, for the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy.”

<sup>12</sup> Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD that he had built in front of the vestibule, <sup>13</sup> as the duty of each day required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for

the sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual festivals—the festival of unleavened bread, the festival of weeks, and the festival of booths. <sup>14</sup> According to the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry alongside the priests as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers in their divisions for the several gates; for so David the man of God had commanded. <sup>15</sup> They did not turn away from what the king had commanded the priests and Levites regarding anything at all, or regarding the treasuries.

<sup>16</sup> Thus all the work of Solomon was accomplished from the day the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid until the house of the LORD was finished completely.

<sup>17</sup> Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and Elath on the shore of the sea, in the land of Edom. <sup>18</sup> Hiram sent him, in the care of his servants, ships and servants familiar with the sea. They went to Ophir,

together with the servants of Solomon, and imported from there four hundred fifty talents of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

*Visit of the Queen of Sheba*  
(1 Kings 10:1–13)

**9** When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions, having a very great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she discussed with him all that was on her mind.<sup>2</sup> Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from Solomon that he could not explain to her.<sup>3</sup> When the queen of Sheba had observed the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built,<sup>4</sup> the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his valets, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit left in her.

<sup>5</sup> So she said to the king, “The report was true that I heard in my own land of your accomplishments and of your wisdom,<sup>6</sup> but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes saw it. Not even half of the greatness of your wisdom had been told to me; you far surpass the report that I had heard.<sup>7</sup> Happy are your people! Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom!<sup>8</sup> Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the LORD your God. Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and righteousness.”<sup>9</sup> Then she gave the king one hundred twenty talents of gold, a very great quantity of spices, and precious stones: there were no spices such as those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

<sup>10</sup> Moreover the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir brought alnum



wood and precious stones.

<sup>11</sup> From the alnum wood, the king made steps for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers; there never was seen the like of them before in the land of Judah.

<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile King Solomon granted the queen of Sheba every desire that she expressed, well beyond what she had brought to the king. Then she returned to her own land, with her servants.

**Romans 8:9-11 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

**Psalm 18:25--36 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> With the loyal you show yourself loyal;  
with the blameless you show yourself blameless;  
<sup>26</sup> with the pure you show yourself pure;  
and with the crooked you show yourself perverse.  
<sup>27</sup> For you deliver a humble people,  
but the haughty eyes you bring down.  
<sup>28</sup> It is you who light my lamp;  
the LORD, my God, lights up my darkness.  
<sup>29</sup> By you I can crush a troop,  
and by my God I can leap over a wall.  
<sup>30</sup> This God—his way is perfect;  
the promise of the LORD proves true;  
he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.  
<sup>31</sup> For who is God except the LORD?  
And who is a rock besides our God?—  
<sup>32</sup> the God who girded me with strength,  
and made my way safe.

33 He made my feet like the  
feet of a deer,  
and set me secure on the  
heights.

34 He trains my hands for  
war,  
so that my arms can  
bend a bow of bronze.

35 You have given me the  
shield of your  
salvation,  
and your right hand has  
supported me;  
your help has made me  
great.

36 You gave me a wide place  
for my steps under me,  
and my feet did not slip.

**Proverbs 8:33–36 (NRSV)**

33 Hear instruction and be  
wise,  
and do not neglect it.

34 Happy is the one who  
listens to me,  
watching daily at my  
gates,  
waiting beside my doors.

35 For whoever finds me finds  
life  
and obtains favor from  
the LORD;

36 but those who miss me  
injure themselves;

all who hate me love  
death.”

**February  
12**



**2 Chronicles 9:13–10:19 (NRSV)**

*Solomon's Great Wealth*  
(1 Kings 10:14–29; 2 Chr 1:14–17)

<sup>13</sup>The weight of gold that  
came to Solomon in one year  
was six hundred sixty-six  
talents of gold, <sup>14</sup>besides that  
which the traders and  
merchants brought; and all the  
kings of Arabia and the  
governors of the land brought  
gold and silver to Solomon.

<sup>15</sup>King Solomon made two  
hundred large shields of  
beaten gold; six hundred  
shekels of beaten gold went  
into each large shield. <sup>16</sup>He  
made three hundred shields of  
beaten gold; three hundred  
shekels of gold went into each  
shield; and the king put them  
in the House of the Forest of  
Lebanon. <sup>17</sup>The king also  
made a great ivory throne, and

overlaid it with pure gold.

<sup>18</sup>The throne had six steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on each side of the seat were arm rests and two lions standing beside the arm rests, <sup>19</sup>while twelve lions were standing, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like of it was never made in any kingdom. <sup>20</sup>All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. <sup>21</sup>For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

<sup>22</sup>Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

<sup>23</sup>All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. <sup>24</sup>Every one of them brought a present, objects of silver and gold, garments,

weaponry, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

<sup>25</sup>Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. <sup>26</sup>He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt. <sup>27</sup>The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. <sup>28</sup>Horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

### *Death of Solomon*

*(1 Kings 11:41–43)*

<sup>29</sup>Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not written in the history of the prophet Nathan, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of the seer Iddo concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat? <sup>30</sup>Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. <sup>31</sup>Solomon slept with his ancestors and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him.

*The Revolt against Rehoboam*

*(1 Kings 12:1–19)*

**10** Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. <sup>2</sup> When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it (for he was in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. <sup>3</sup> They sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all Israel came and said to Rehoboam, <sup>4</sup> “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you.”

<sup>5</sup> He said to them, “Come to me again in three days.” So the people went away.

<sup>6</sup> Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the older men who had attended his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?” <sup>7</sup> They answered him, “If you will be kind to this people and please them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.” <sup>8</sup> But he rejected the advice that the older men gave him, and consulted the

young men who had grown up with him and now attended him. <sup>9</sup> He said to them, “What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?’” <sup>10</sup> The young men who had grown up with him said to him, “Thus should you speak to the people who said to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must lighten it for us’; tell them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins. <sup>11</sup> Now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’ ”

<sup>12</sup> So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had said, “Come to me again the third day.” <sup>13</sup> The king answered them harshly. King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the older men; <sup>14</sup> he spoke to them in accordance with the advice of the young men, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with

scorpions.” <sup>15</sup> So the king did not listen to the people, because it was a turn of affairs brought about by God so that the LORD might fulfill his word, which he had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

<sup>16</sup> When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king,

“What share do we have in David?

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

Each of you to your tents, O Israel!

Look now to your own house, O David.”

So all Israel departed to their tents. <sup>17</sup> But Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who were living in the cities of Judah. <sup>18</sup> When King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, the people of Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. <sup>19</sup> So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

**Romans 8:12-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— <sup>13</sup> for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” <sup>16</sup> it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

*Future Glory*

<sup>18</sup> I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; <sup>20</sup> for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the

one who subjected it, in hope  
<sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will  
be set free from its bondage  
to decay and will obtain the  
freedom of the glory of the  
children of God. <sup>22</sup> We know  
that the whole creation has  
been groaning in labor pains  
until now; <sup>23</sup> and not only the  
creation, but we ourselves,  
who have the first fruits of the  
Spirit, groan inwardly while we  
wait for adoption, the  
redemption of our bodies.  
<sup>24</sup> For in hope we were saved.  
Now hope that is seen is not  
hope. For who hopes for what  
is seen? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for  
what we do not see, we wait  
for it with patience.

**Psalms 18:37-45 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> I pursued my enemies and  
overtook them;  
and did not turn back  
until they were  
consumed.  
<sup>38</sup> I struck them down, so  
that they were not able  
to rise;  
they fell under my feet.  
<sup>39</sup> For you girded me with  
strength for the battle;  
you made my assailants  
sink under me.

<sup>40</sup> You made my enemies  
turn their backs to me,  
and those who hated me  
I destroyed.  
<sup>41</sup> They cried for help, but  
there was no one to  
save them;  
they cried to the LORD,  
but he did not answer  
them.  
<sup>42</sup> I beat them fine, like dust  
before the wind;  
I cast them out like the  
mire of the streets.  
<sup>43</sup> You delivered me from  
strife with the peoples;  
you made me head of  
the nations;  
people whom I had not  
known served me.  
<sup>44</sup> As soon as they heard of  
me they obeyed me;  
foreigners came cringing  
to me.  
<sup>45</sup> Foreigners lost heart,  
and came trembling out  
of their strongholds.

**Proverbs 9:1-6 (NRSV)**  
*Wisdom's Feast*

**9** Wisdom has built her  
house,  
she has hewn her seven  
pillars.

<sup>2</sup> She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table.

<sup>3</sup> She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls from the highest places in the town,

<sup>4</sup> “You that are simple, turn in here!”  
To those without sense she says,

<sup>5</sup> “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.

<sup>6</sup> Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.”

chosen troops of the house of Judah and Benjamin to fight against Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam. <sup>2</sup> But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God: <sup>3</sup> Say to King Rehoboam of Judah, son of Solomon, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, <sup>4</sup> “Thus says the LORD: You shall not go up or fight against your kindred. Let everyone return home, for this thing is from me.” So they heeded the word of the LORD and turned back from the expedition against Jeroboam. <sup>5</sup> Rehoboam resided in Jerusalem, and he built cities for defense in Judah. <sup>6</sup> He built up Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, <sup>7</sup> Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam, <sup>8</sup> Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, <sup>9</sup> Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, <sup>10</sup> Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, fortified cities that are in Judah and in Benjamin. <sup>11</sup> He made the fortresses strong, and put commanders in them, and stores of food, oil, and wine. <sup>12</sup> He also put large shields and spears in all the cities, and made them very strong. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

## February 13



### 2 Chronicles 11:1-12:16 (NRSV)

*Judah and Benjamin Fortified*  
(1 Kings 12:20–24)

**11** When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled one hundred eighty thousand

*Priests and Levites  
Support Rehoboam  
(1 Kings 14:21–24)*

<sup>13</sup> The priests and the Levites who were in all Israel presented themselves to him from all their territories. <sup>14</sup> The Levites had left their common lands and their holdings and had come to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons had prevented them from serving as priests of the LORD, <sup>15</sup> and had appointed his own priests for the high places, and for the goat-demons, and for the calves that he had made. <sup>16</sup> Those who had set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came after them from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their ancestors. <sup>17</sup> They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they made Rehoboam son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon.

*Rehoboam's Marriages*

<sup>18</sup> Rehoboam took as his wife Mahalath daughter of

Jerimoth son of David, and of Abihail daughter of Eliab son of Jesse. <sup>19</sup> She bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.

<sup>20</sup> After her he took Maacah daughter of Absalom, who bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. <sup>21</sup> Rehoboam loved Maacah daughter of Absalom more than all his other wives and concubines (he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and became the father of twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters).

<sup>22</sup> Rehoboam appointed Abijah son of Maacah as chief prince among his brothers, for he intended to make him king.

<sup>23</sup> He dealt wisely, and distributed some of his sons through all the districts of Judah and Benjamin, in all the fortified cities; he gave them abundant provisions, and found many wives for them.

*Egypt Attacks Judah  
(1 Kings 14:25–28)*

**12** When the rule of Rehoboam was established and he grew strong, he abandoned the law of the LORD, he and all Israel with him. <sup>2</sup> In the fifth year of King



Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem<sup>3</sup> with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand cavalry. A countless army came with him from Egypt—Libyans, Sukkiim, and Ethiopians.<sup>4</sup> He took the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> Then the prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and to the officers of Judah, who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, “Thus says the LORD: You abandoned me, so I have abandoned you to the hand of Shishak.”<sup>6</sup> Then the officers of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, “The LORD is in the right.”<sup>7</sup> When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying: “They have humbled themselves; I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance, and my wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.”<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless they shall be his servants, so that they may know the difference

between serving me and serving the kingdoms of other lands.”

<sup>9</sup> So King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s house; he took everything. He also took away the shields of gold that Solomon had made;<sup>10</sup> but King Rehoboam made in place of them shields of bronze, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king’s house.<sup>11</sup> Whenever the king went into the house of the LORD, the guard would come along bearing them, and would then bring them back to the guardroom.<sup>12</sup> Because he humbled himself the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to destroy them completely; moreover, conditions were good in Judah.

### *Death of Rehoboam*

*(1 Kings 14:21–22, 29–31)*

<sup>13</sup> So King Rehoboam established himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to

reign; he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. <sup>14</sup> He did evil, for he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of the prophet Shemaiah and of the seer Iddo, recorded by genealogy? There were continual wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. <sup>16</sup> Rehoboam slept with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David; and his son Abijah succeeded him.

**Romans 8:26-34 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

<sup>28</sup> We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

*God's Love in Christ Jesus*

<sup>31</sup> What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

**Psalm 18:46-50 (NRSV)**

46 The LORD lives! Blessed be  
my rock,  
and exalted be the God  
of my salvation,  
47 the God who gave me  
vengeance  
and subdued peoples  
under me;  
48 who delivered me from my  
enemies;  
indeed, you exalted me  
above my adversaries;  
you delivered me from  
the violent.  
49 For this I will extol you, O  
LORD, among the  
nations,  
and sing praises to your  
name.  
50 Great triumphs he gives to  
his king,  
and shows steadfast love  
to his anointed,  
to David and his  
descendants forever.

**Proverbs 9:7–8 (NRSV)**

*General Maxims*

7 Whoever corrects a scoffer  
wins abuse;  
whoever rebukes the  
wicked gets hurt.  
8 A scoffer who is rebuked  
will only hate you;

the wise, when rebuked, will  
love you.

**February  
14**



**2 Chronicles 13:1–22 (NRSV)**

*Abijah Reigns over Judah  
(1 Kings 15:1–8)*

**13** In the eighteenth year of  
King Jeroboam, Abijah began  
to reign over Judah. <sup>2</sup> He  
reigned for three years in  
Jerusalem. His mother’s name  
was Micaiah daughter of Uriel  
of Gibeah.

Now there was war  
between Abijah and  
Jeroboam. <sup>3</sup> Abijah engaged in  
battle, having an army of  
valiant warriors, four hundred  
thousand picked men; and  
Jeroboam drew up his line of  
battle against him with eight  
hundred thousand picked  
mighty warriors. <sup>4</sup> Then Abijah  
stood on the slope of Mount  
Zemaraim that is in the hill  
country of Ephraim, and said,  
“Listen to me, Jeroboam and

all Israel! <sup>5</sup> Do you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? <sup>6</sup> Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, a servant of Solomon son of David, rose up and rebelled against his lord; <sup>7</sup> and certain worthless scoundrels gathered around him and defied Rehoboam son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and irresolute and could not withstand them.

<sup>8</sup> “And now you think that you can withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and have with you the golden calves that Jeroboam made as gods for you. <sup>9</sup> Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the descendants of Aaron, and the Levites, and made priests for yourselves like the peoples of other lands? Whoever comes to be consecrated with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest of what are no gods. <sup>10</sup> But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not abandoned him. We have

priests ministering to the LORD who are descendants of Aaron, and Levites for their service. <sup>11</sup> They offer to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt offerings and fragrant incense, set out the rows of bread on the table of pure gold, and care for the golden lampstand so that its lamps may burn every evening; for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, but you have abandoned him. <sup>12</sup> See, God is with us at our head, and his priests have their battle trumpets to sound the call to battle against you. O Israelites, do not fight against the LORD, the God of your ancestors; for you cannot succeed.”

<sup>13</sup> Jeroboam had sent an ambush around to come on them from behind; thus his troops were in front of Judah, and the ambush was behind them. <sup>14</sup> When Judah turned, the battle was in front of them and behind them. They cried out to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets. <sup>15</sup> Then the people of Judah raised the battle shout. And when the people of Judah

shouted, God defeated Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. <sup>16</sup>The Israelites fled before Judah, and God gave them into their hands. <sup>17</sup>Abijah and his army defeated them with great slaughter; five hundred thousand picked men of Israel fell slain. <sup>18</sup>Thus the Israelites were subdued at that time, and the people of Judah prevailed, because they relied on the LORD, the God of their ancestors. <sup>19</sup>Abijah pursued Jeroboam, and took cities from him: Bethel with its villages and Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its villages. <sup>20</sup>Jeroboam did not recover his power in the days of Abijah; the LORD struck him down, and he died. <sup>21</sup>But Abijah grew strong. He took fourteen wives, and became the father of twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. <sup>22</sup>The rest of the acts of Abijah, his behavior and his deeds, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.

**Romans 8:35-39** (NRSV)

<sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will

hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

<sup>36</sup>As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

<sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Psalm 19:1-6** (NRSV)

*God's Glory in Creation and the Law*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
- <sup>2</sup> Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are  
there words;  
their voice is not heard;  
<sup>4</sup> yet their voice goes out  
through all the earth,  
and their words to the  
end of the world.  
In the heavens he has set a  
tent for the sun,  
<sup>5</sup> which comes out like a  
bridegroom from his  
wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man  
runs its course with  
joy.  
<sup>6</sup> Its rising is from the end of  
the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end  
of them;  
and nothing is hid from  
its heat.

**Proverbs 9:9–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Give instruction to the  
wise, and they will  
become wiser still;  
teach the righteous and  
they will gain in  
learning.

<sup>10</sup> **The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom,  
and the knowledge of  
the Holy One is insight.**

## February 15



**2 Chronicles 14:1-15:8(NRSV)**

*Asa Reigns  
(1 Kings 15:9–15)*

**14** So Abijah slept with his  
ancestors, and they buried  
him in the city of David. His  
son Asa succeeded him. In his  
days the land had rest for ten  
years. <sup>2</sup> Asa did what was  
good and right in the sight of  
the LORD his God. <sup>3</sup> He took  
away the foreign altars and  
the high places, broke down  
the pillars, hewed down the  
sacred poles, <sup>4</sup> and  
commanded Judah to seek the  
LORD, the God of their  
ancestors, and to keep the law  
and the commandment. <sup>5</sup> He  
also removed from all the  
cities of Judah the high places  
and the incense altars. And  
the kingdom had rest under  
him. <sup>6</sup> He built fortified cities in  
Judah while the land had rest.  
He had no war in those years,  
for the LORD gave him peace.  
<sup>7</sup> He said to Judah, “Let us  
build these cities, and  
surround them with walls and  
towers, gates and bars; the

land is still ours because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side.” So they built and prospered. <sup>8</sup> Asa had an army of three hundred thousand from Judah, armed with large shields and spears, and two hundred eighty thousand troops from Benjamin who carried shields and drew bows; all these were mighty warriors.

*Ethiopian Invasion Repulsed*

<sup>9</sup> Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. <sup>10</sup> Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up their lines of battle in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. <sup>11</sup> Asa cried to the LORD his God, “O LORD, there is no difference for you between helping the mighty and the weak. Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O LORD, you are our God; let no mortal prevail against you.” <sup>12</sup> So the LORD defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah,

and the Ethiopians fled. <sup>13</sup> Asa and the army with him pursued them as far as Gerar, and the Ethiopians fell until no one remained alive; for they were broken before the LORD and his army. The people of Judah carried away a great quantity of booty. <sup>14</sup> They defeated all the cities around Gerar, for the fear of the LORD was on them. They plundered all the cities; for there was much plunder in them. <sup>15</sup> They also attacked the tents of those who had livestock, and carried away sheep and goats in abundance, and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

**15** The spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded. <sup>2</sup> He went out to meet Asa and said to him, “Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The LORD is with you, while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you. <sup>3</sup> For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law; <sup>4</sup> but when in their distress they

turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them. <sup>5</sup> In those times it was not safe for anyone to go or come, for great disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. <sup>6</sup> They were broken in pieces, nation against nation and city against city, for God troubled them with every sort of distress. <sup>7</sup> But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded.”

<sup>8</sup> When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns that he had taken in the hill country of Ephraim. He repaired the altar of the LORD that was in front of the vestibule of the house of the LORD.

**Romans 9:1-10 (NRSV)**

*God's Election of Israel*  
(Gen 25:19–23)

**9** I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit— <sup>2</sup> I have great


sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. <sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; <sup>5</sup> to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>6</sup> It is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all Israelites truly belong to Israel, <sup>7</sup> and not all of Abraham's children are his true descendants; but “It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you.” <sup>8</sup> This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as descendants. <sup>9</sup> For this is what the promise said, “About this time I will return and Sarah shall have a son.” <sup>10</sup> Nor is that all; something similar happened to Rebecca when



she had conceived children by one husband, our ancestor Isaac.

**Psalms 19:7-14 (NRSV)**



<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
the decrees of the LORD are sure,  
making wise the simple;  
<sup>8</sup> the precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the LORD is clear,  
enlightening the eyes;  
<sup>9</sup> the fear of the LORD is pure,  
enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the LORD are true  
and righteous altogether.  
<sup>10</sup> More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey,  
and drippings of the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup> Moreover by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.  
<sup>12</sup> But who can detect their errors?

Clear me from hidden faults.

<sup>13</sup> Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.  
<sup>14</sup> Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

**Proverbs 9:11-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> For by me your days will be multiplied,  
and years will be added to your life.  
<sup>12</sup> If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;  
if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

# February 16



## 2 Chronicles 15:9-16:14 (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> He gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were residing as aliens with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. <sup>10</sup> They were gathered at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. <sup>11</sup> They sacrificed to the LORD on that day, from the booty that they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

<sup>12</sup> They entered into a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and with all their soul. <sup>13</sup> Whoever would not seek the LORD, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether young or old, man or woman. <sup>14</sup> They took an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with horns.

<sup>15</sup> All Judah rejoiced over the oath; for they had sworn with

all their heart, and had sought him with their whole desire, and he was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around.

<sup>16</sup> King Asa even removed his mother Maacah from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. Asa cut down her image, crushed it, and burned it at the Wadi Kidron. <sup>17</sup> But the high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was true all his days. <sup>18</sup> He brought into the house of God the votive gifts of his father and his own votive gifts—silver, gold, and utensils. <sup>19</sup> And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

### *Alliance with Aram*

#### *Condemned*

*(1 Kings 15:16–22)*

**16** In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, King Baasha of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, to prevent anyone from going out or coming into the territory of King Asa of Judah.

<sup>2</sup> Then Asa took silver and gold

from the treasures of the house of the LORD and the king's house, and sent them to King Ben-hadad of Aram, who resided in Damascus, saying,<sup>3</sup> "Let there be an alliance between me and you, like that between my father and your father; I am sending to you silver and gold; go, break your alliance with King Baasha of Israel, so that he may withdraw from me."<sup>4</sup> Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. They conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store-cities of Naphtali.<sup>5</sup> When Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah, and let his work cease.<sup>6</sup> Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built up Geba and Mizpah.

<sup>7</sup> At that time the seer Hanani came to King Asa of Judah, and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Aram, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Aram has

escaped you.<sup>8</sup> Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with exceedingly many chariots and cavalry? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand."<sup>9</sup> For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to him. You have done foolishly in this; for from now on you will have wars."<sup>10</sup> Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in the stocks, in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties on some of the people at the same time.

*Asa's Disease and Death*  
(1 Kings 15:23–24)

<sup>11</sup> The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.<sup>12</sup> In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe; yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians.<sup>13</sup> Then Asa slept with his ancestors, dying in the forty-first year of his reign.<sup>14</sup> They buried him in the

tomb that he had hewn out for himself in the city of David. They laid him on a bier that had been filled with various kinds of spices prepared by the perfumer's art; and they made a very great fire in his honor.

**Romans 9:11-24** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Even before they had been born or had done anything good or bad (so that God's purpose of election might continue, <sup>12</sup> not by works but by his call) she [Rebecca] was told, "The elder shall serve the younger." <sup>13</sup> As it is written,

"I have loved Jacob,  
but I have hated Esau."

<sup>14</sup> What then are we to say? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! <sup>15</sup> For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on  
whom I have mercy,  
and I will have  
compassion on whom I  
have compassion."

<sup>16</sup> So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy. <sup>17</sup> For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for the

very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." <sup>18</sup> So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.

*God's Wrath and Mercy*

<sup>19</sup> You will say to me then, "Why then does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" <sup>20</sup> But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God? Will what is molded say to the one who molds it, "Why have you made me like this?" <sup>21</sup> Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use?

<sup>22</sup> What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; <sup>23</sup> and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—

<sup>24</sup> including us whom he has

called, not from the Jews only  
but also from the Gentiles?

**Psalms 20:1-6** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Victory*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- 1 The LORD answer you in the  
day of trouble!  
The name of the God of  
Jacob protect you!
- 2 May he send you help  
from the sanctuary,  
and give you support  
from Zion.
- 3 May he remember all your  
offerings,  
and regard with favor  
your burnt sacrifices.  
*Selah*
- 4 May he grant you your  
heart's desire,  
and fulfill all your plans.
- 5 May we shout for joy over  
your victory,  
and in the name of our  
God set up our  
banners.  
May the LORD fulfill all your  
petitions.
- 6 Now I know that the LORD  
will help his anointed;  
he will answer him from  
his holy heaven  
with mighty victories by  
his right hand.

**Proverbs 9:13-18** (NRSV)

*Folly's Invitation and Promise*

- 13 The foolish woman is loud;  
she is ignorant and  
knows nothing.
- 14 She sits at the door of her  
house,  
on a seat at the high  
places of the town,  
calling to those who pass  
by,
- 15 who are going straight  
on their way,
- 16 "You who are simple, turn  
in here!"  
And to those without  
sense she says,
- 17 "Stolen water is sweet,  
and bread eaten in  
secret is pleasant."
- 18 But they do not know that  
the dead are there,  
that her guests are in the  
depths of Sheol.

# February 17



## 2 Chronicles 17:1-19 (NRSV)

### *Jehoshaphat's Reign*

**17** His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him, and strengthened himself against Israel. <sup>2</sup> He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had taken. <sup>3</sup> The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father; he did not seek the Baals, <sup>4</sup> but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the ways of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. All Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. <sup>6</sup> His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD; and furthermore he removed the high places and the sacred poles from Judah.

<sup>7</sup> In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-

hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. <sup>8</sup> With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah; and with these Levites, the priests Elishama and Jehoram. <sup>9</sup> They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; they went around through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

<sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, and they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. <sup>11</sup> Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and silver for tribute; and the Arabs also brought him seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred male goats.

<sup>12</sup> Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater. He built fortresses and storage cities in Judah.

<sup>13</sup> He carried out great works in the cities of Judah. He had soldiers, mighty warriors, in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> This was the

muster of them by ancestral houses: Of Judah, the commanders of the thousands: Adnah the commander, with three hundred thousand mighty warriors,<sup>15</sup> and next to him Jehohanan the commander, with two hundred eighty thousand,<sup>16</sup> and next to him Amasiah son of Zichri, a volunteer for the service of the LORD, with two hundred thousand mighty warriors.<sup>17</sup> Of Benjamin: Eliada, a mighty warrior, with two hundred thousand armed with bow and shield,<sup>18</sup> and next to him Jehozabad with one hundred eighty thousand armed for war.<sup>19</sup> These were in the service of the king, besides those whom the king had placed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

**Romans 9:25-33** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> As indeed he says in Hosea,  
“Those who were not my  
people I will call ‘my  
people,’  
and her who was not  
beloved I will call  
‘beloved.’ ”

<sup>26</sup> “And in the very place  
where it was said to  
them, ‘You are not my  
people,’  
there they shall be called  
children of the living  
God.”

<sup>27</sup> And Isaiah cries out  
concerning Israel, “Though the  
number of the children of  
Israel were like the sand of the  
sea, only a remnant of them  
will be saved;<sup>28</sup> for the Lord  
will execute his sentence on  
the earth quickly and  
decisively.”<sup>29</sup> And as Isaiah  
predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had  
not left survivors to us,  
we would have fared like  
Sodom  
and been made like  
Gomorrah.”

*Israel’s Unbelief*

<sup>30</sup> What then are we to  
say? Gentiles, who did not  
strive for righteousness, have  
attained it, that is,  
righteousness through faith;  
<sup>31</sup> but Israel, who did strive for  
the righteousness that is  
based on the law, did not  
succeed in fulfilling that law.  
<sup>32</sup> Why not? Because they did

not strive for it on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,<sup>33</sup> as it is written,

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make people stumble, a rock that will make them fall, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

**Psalms 20:7-9 (NRSV)**

- <sup>7</sup> Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our pride is in the name of the LORD our God.
- <sup>8</sup> They will collapse and fall, but we shall rise and stand upright.
- <sup>9</sup> Give victory to the king, O LORD; answer us when we call.

**Proverbs 10:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Wise Sayings of Solomon*

- <sup>1</sup> The proverbs of Solomon. A wise child makes a glad father, but a foolish child is a mother’s grief.

- <sup>2</sup> Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death.

**February  
18**



**2 Chronicles 18:1-34 (NRSV)**

*Micaiah Predicts Failure  
(1 Kings 22:1–28)*

**18** Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; and he made a marriage alliance with Ahab. <sup>2</sup> After some years he went down to Ahab in Samaria. Ahab slaughtered an abundance of sheep and oxen for him and for the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead. <sup>3</sup> King Ahab of Israel said to King Jehoshaphat of Judah, “Will you go with me to Ramoth-gilead?” He answered him, “I am with you, my people are your people. We will be with you in the war.”



<sup>4</sup> But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the LORD."

<sup>5</sup> Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred of them, and said to them, "Shall we go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?" They said, "Go up; for God will give it into the hand of the king." <sup>6</sup> But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no other prophet of the LORD here of whom we may inquire?"

<sup>7</sup> The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one other by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies anything favorable about me, but only disaster."

Jehoshaphat said, "Let the king not say such a thing."

<sup>8</sup> Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah." <sup>9</sup> Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes; and they were sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all

the prophets were prophesying before them.

<sup>10</sup> Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are destroyed." <sup>11</sup> All the prophets were prophesying the same and saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

<sup>12</sup> The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably." <sup>13</sup> But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, whatever my God says, that I will speak."

<sup>14</sup> When he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" He answered, "Go up and triumph; they will be given into your hand."

<sup>15</sup> But the king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of

the LORD?” <sup>16</sup> Then Micaiah said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd; and the LORD said, ‘These have no master; let each one go home in peace.’ ” <sup>17</sup> The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything favorable about me, but only disaster?”

<sup>18</sup> Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing to the right and to the left of him. <sup>19</sup> And the LORD said, ‘Who will entice King Ahab of Israel, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ Then one said one thing, and another said another, <sup>20</sup> until a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ The LORD asked him, ‘How?’

<sup>21</sup> He replied, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then the LORD said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.’ <sup>22</sup> So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your

prophets; the LORD has decreed disaster for you.”

<sup>23</sup> Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up to Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?”

<sup>24</sup> Micaiah replied, “You will find out on that day when you go in to hide in an inner chamber.” <sup>25</sup> The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son; <sup>26</sup> and say, ‘Thus says the king: Put this fellow in prison, and feed him on reduced rations of bread and water until I return in peace.’ ” <sup>27</sup> Micaiah said, “If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Hear, you peoples, all of you!”

*Defeat and Death of Ahab*  
(1 Kings 22:29–40)

<sup>28</sup> So the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. <sup>29</sup> The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes.” So the king of Israel disguised

himself, and they went into battle.<sup>30</sup> Now the king of Aram had commanded the captains of his chariots, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel."

<sup>31</sup> When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is the king of Israel." So they turned to fight against him; and Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him. God drew them away from him,<sup>32</sup> for when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.<sup>33</sup> But a certain man drew his bow and unknowingly struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate; so he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around, and carry me out of the battle, for I am wounded."<sup>34</sup> The battle grew hot that day, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot facing the Arameans until evening; then at sunset he died.

**Romans 10:1-13** (NRSV)

**10** Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to

God for them is that they may be saved.<sup>2</sup> I can testify that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened.<sup>3</sup> For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to God's righteousness.<sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

*Salvation Is for All*

<sup>5</sup> Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them."<sup>6</sup> But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down)<sup>7</sup> "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).<sup>8</sup> But what does it say?

"The word is near you,  
on your lips and in your  
heart"

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);<sup>9</sup> **because if you confess with your lips that**



Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.<sup>10</sup>

For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

<sup>11</sup>The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame."<sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. <sup>13</sup> For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

### **Psalm 21:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for Victory*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> In your strength the king rejoices, O LORD, and in your help how greatly he exults!

<sup>2</sup> You have given him his heart's desire, and have not withheld the request of his lips.

*Selah*

<sup>3</sup> For you meet him with rich blessings; you set a crown of fine gold on his head.

<sup>4</sup> He asked you for life; you gave it to him—

length of days forever and ever.

<sup>5</sup> His glory is great through your help; splendor and majesty you bestow on him.

<sup>6</sup> You bestow on him blessings forever; you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

<sup>7</sup> For the king trusts in the LORD, and through the steadfast love of the Most High he shall not be moved.

### **Proverbs 10:3-4 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> The LORD does not let the righteous go hungry, but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.

<sup>4</sup> A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

# February 19



## 2 Chronicles 19:1-11 (NRSV)

**19** King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> Jehu son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, wrath has gone out against you from the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, some good is found in you, for you destroyed the sacred poles out of the land, and have set your heart to seek God.”

### *The Reforms of Jehoshaphat*

<sup>4</sup> Jehoshaphat resided at Jerusalem; then he went out again among the people, from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their ancestors. <sup>5</sup> He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, <sup>6</sup> and said to the judges, “Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of

human beings but on the LORD’s behalf; he is with you in giving judgment. <sup>7</sup> Now, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care what you do, for there is no perversion of justice with the LORD our God, or partiality, or taking of bribes.”

<sup>8</sup> Moreover in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed certain Levites and priests and heads of families of Israel, to give judgment for the LORD and to decide disputed cases. They had their seat at Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> He charged them: “This is how you shall act: in the fear of the LORD, in faithfulness, and with your whole heart; <sup>10</sup> whenever a case comes to you from your kindred who live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, law or commandment, statutes or ordinances, then you shall instruct them, so that they may not incur guilt before the LORD and wrath may not come on you and your kindred. Do so, and you will not incur guilt. <sup>11</sup> See, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the governor of the

house of Judah, in all the king's matters; and the Levites will serve you as officers. Deal courageously, and may the LORD be with the good!"

**Romans 10:14-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?

<sup>15</sup> And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" <sup>16</sup> But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" <sup>17</sup> So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

<sup>18</sup> But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

<sup>19</sup> Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says,

"I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry."

<sup>20</sup> Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,

"I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me."

<sup>21</sup> But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

**Psalms 21:8-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you.

<sup>9</sup> You will make them like a fiery furnace when you appear. The LORD will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them.

<sup>10</sup> You will destroy their offspring from the earth,

and their children from  
among humankind.  
<sup>11</sup> If they plan evil against  
you,  
if they devise mischief,  
they will not succeed.  
<sup>12</sup> For you will put them to  
flight;  
you will aim at their  
faces with your bows.  
<sup>13</sup> Be exalted, O LORD, in your  
strength!  
We will sing and praise  
your power.

**Proverbs 10:5** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> A child who gathers in  
summer is prudent, but  
a child who sleeps in  
harvest brings shame.

**February  
20**



**2 Chronicles 20:1-37** (NRSV)

*Invasion from the East*

**20** After this the Moabites  
and Ammonites, and with  
them some of the Meunites,

came against Jehoshaphat for  
battle. <sup>2</sup> Messengers came and  
told Jehoshaphat, “A great  
multitude is coming against  
you from Edom, from beyond  
the sea; already they are at  
Hazazon-tamar” (that is, En-  
gedi). <sup>3</sup> Jehoshaphat was  
afraid; he set himself to seek  
the LORD, and proclaimed a  
fast throughout all Judah.  
<sup>4</sup> Judah assembled to seek help  
from the LORD; from all the  
towns of Judah they came to  
seek the LORD.

*Jehoshaphat’s  
Prayer and Victory*

<sup>5</sup> Jehoshaphat stood in the  
assembly of Judah and  
Jerusalem, in the house of the  
LORD, before the new court,  
<sup>6</sup> and said, “O LORD, God of our  
ancestors, are you not God in  
heaven? Do you not rule over  
all the kingdoms of the  
nations? In your hand are  
power and might, so that no  
one is able to withstand you.  
<sup>7</sup> Did you not, O our God, drive  
out the inhabitants of this land  
before your people Israel, and  
give it forever to the  
descendants of your friend  
Abraham? <sup>8</sup> They have lived in

it, and in it have built you a sanctuary for your name, saying, <sup>9</sup> ‘If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house, and before you, for your name is in this house, and cry to you in our distress, and you will hear and save.’ <sup>10</sup> See now, the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, and whom they avoided and did not destroy— <sup>11</sup> they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession that you have given us to inherit. <sup>12</sup> O our God, will you not execute judgment upon them? For we are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. <sup>14</sup> Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the middle of the


assembly. <sup>15</sup> He said, “Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you: ‘Do not fear or be dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God’s.’ <sup>16</sup> Tomorrow go down against them; they will come up by the ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the valley, before the wilderness of Jeruel. <sup>17</sup> This battle is not for you to fight; take your position, stand still, and see the victory of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you.”

<sup>18</sup> Then Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. <sup>19</sup> And the Levites, of the Kohathites and the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

<sup>20</sup> They rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat



stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God and you will be established; believe his prophets." <sup>21</sup> When he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy splendor, as they went before the army, saying,



**"Give thanks to the LORD,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever."**

<sup>22</sup> As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed. <sup>23</sup> For the Ammonites and Moab attacked the inhabitants of Mount Seir, destroying them utterly; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

<sup>24</sup> When Judah came to the watchtower of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; they were corpses lying on the ground; no one had escaped. <sup>25</sup> When Jehoshaphat and his people

came to take the booty from them, they found livestock in great numbers, goods, clothing, and precious things, which they took for themselves until they could carry no more. They spent three days taking the booty, because of its abundance.

<sup>26</sup> On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore that place has been called the Valley of Beracah to this day.

<sup>27</sup> Then all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat at their head, returned to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had enabled them to rejoice over their enemies. <sup>28</sup> They came to Jerusalem, with harps and lyres and trumpets, to the house of the LORD. <sup>29</sup> The fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. <sup>30</sup> And the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

*The End of  
Jehoshaphat's Reign  
(1 Kings 22:41–50)*

<sup>31</sup> So Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. <sup>32</sup> He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. <sup>33</sup> Yet the high places were not removed; the people had not yet set their hearts upon the God of their ancestors.

<sup>34</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from first to last, are written in the Annals of Jehu son of Hanani, which are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

<sup>35</sup> After this King Jehoshaphat of Judah joined with King Ahaziah of Israel, who did wickedly. <sup>36</sup> He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish; they built the ships in Ezion-geber. <sup>37</sup> Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy what you

have made." And the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

**Romans 11:1-12** (NRSV)

*Israel's Rejection Is Not Final  
(Cp Ps 69:22–23; Isa 29:10)*

**11** I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? <sup>3</sup> "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left, and they are seeking my life." <sup>4</sup> But what is the divine reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." <sup>5</sup> So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. <sup>6</sup> But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

<sup>7</sup> What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the

rest were hardened, <sup>8</sup> as it is written,

“God gave them a sluggish spirit,  
eyes that would not see  
and ears that would not hear,  
down to this very day.”

<sup>9</sup> And David says,  
“Let their table become a  
snare and a trap,  
a stumbling block and a  
retribution for them;  
<sup>10</sup> let their eyes be darkened  
so that they cannot see,  
and keep their backs  
forever bent.”

*The Salvation of the Gentiles*

<sup>11</sup> So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their stumbling salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. <sup>12</sup> Now if their stumbling means riches for the world, and if their defeat means riches for Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

**Psalm 22:1-18** (NRSV)

*Plea for Deliverance from  
Suffering and Hostility*

To the leader: according to The Deer of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why  
have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from  
helping me, from the  
words of my groaning?  
<sup>2</sup> O my God, I cry by day, but  
you do not answer;  
and by night, but find no  
rest.  
<sup>3</sup> Yet you are holy,  
enthroned on the praises  
of Israel.  
<sup>4</sup> In you our ancestors  
trusted;  
they trusted, and you  
delivered them.  
<sup>5</sup> To you they cried, and  
were saved;  
in you they trusted, and  
were not put to shame.  
<sup>6</sup> But I am a worm, and not  
human;  
scorned by others, and  
despised by the  
people.  
<sup>7</sup> All who see me mock at  
me;  
they make mouths at  
me, they shake their  
heads;  
<sup>8</sup> “Commit your cause to the  
LORD; let him deliver—  
let him rescue the one in  
whom he delights!”

9 Yet it was you who took  
me from the womb;  
you kept me safe on my  
mother's breast.  
10 On you I was cast from my  
birth,  
and since my mother  
bore me you have  
been my God.  
11 Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near  
and there is no one to  
help.  
12 Many bulls encircle me,  
strong bulls of Bashan  
surround me;  
13 they open wide their  
mouths at me,  
like a ravening and  
roaring lion.  
14 I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out  
of joint;  
my heart is like wax;  
it is melted within my  
breast;  
15 my mouth is dried up like a  
potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to  
my jaws;  
you lay me in the dust of  
death.  
16 For dogs are all around  
me;

a company of evildoers  
encircles me.  
My hands and feet have  
shriveled;  
17 I can count all my bones.  
They stare and gloat over  
me;  
18 they divide my clothes  
among themselves,  
and for my clothing they  
cast lots.

**Proverbs 10:6-7 (NRSV)**

6 Blessings are on the head  
of the righteous,  
but the mouth of the  
wicked conceals  
violence.  
7 The memory of the  
righteous is a blessing,  
but the name of the  
wicked will rot.

# February 21



## 2 Chronicles 21:1-20 (NRSV)

### *Jehoram's Reign*

(1 Kings 22:50; 2 Kings 8:16–19)

**21** Jehoshaphat slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David; his son Jehoram succeeded him. <sup>2</sup> He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of King Jehoshaphat of Judah. <sup>3</sup> Their father gave them many gifts, of silver, gold, and valuable possessions, together with fortified cities in Judah; but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the firstborn. <sup>4</sup> When Jehoram had ascended the throne of his father and was established, he put all his brothers to the sword, and also some of the officials of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab

had done; for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. <sup>7</sup> Yet the LORD would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David, and since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his descendants forever.

### *Revolt of Edom*

(2 Kings 8:20–22)

<sup>8</sup> In his days Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own. <sup>9</sup> Then Jehoram crossed over with his commanders and all his chariots. He set out by night and attacked the Edomites, who had surrounded him and his chariot commanders. <sup>10</sup> So Edom has been in revolt against the rule of Judah to this day. At that time Libnah also revolted against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD, the God of his ancestors.

### *Elijah's Letter*

<sup>11</sup> Moreover he made high places in the hill country of Judah, and led the inhabitants of Jerusalem into unfaithfulness, and made

Judah go astray. <sup>12</sup> A letter came to him from the prophet Elijah, saying: "Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or in the ways of King Asa of Judah, <sup>13</sup> but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into unfaithfulness, as the house of Ahab led Israel into unfaithfulness, and because you also have killed your brothers, members of your father's house, who were better than yourself, <sup>14</sup> see, the LORD will bring a great plague on your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions, <sup>15</sup> and you yourself will have a severe sickness with a disease of your bowels, until your bowels come out, day after day, because of the disease."

<sup>16</sup> The LORD aroused against Jehoram the anger of the Philistines and of the Arabs who are near the Ethiopians. <sup>17</sup> They came up against Judah, invaded it, and carried away all the possessions they found

that belonged to the king's house, along with his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest son.

*Disease and Death of Jehoram*  
(2 Kings 8:23–24)

<sup>18</sup> After all this the LORD struck him in his bowels with an incurable disease. <sup>19</sup> In course of time, at the end of two years, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great agony. His people made no fire in his honor, like the fires made for his ancestors. <sup>20</sup> He was thirty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. He departed with no one's regret. They buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

**Romans 11:13-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry <sup>14</sup> in order to make my own people jealous, and thus save some of them. <sup>15</sup> For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their

acceptance be but life from the dead! <sup>16</sup> If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; and if the root is holy, then the branches also are holy.

<sup>17</sup> But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the rich root of the olive tree, <sup>18</sup> do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember that it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you. <sup>19</sup> You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

<sup>20</sup> That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. <sup>21</sup> For if God did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you.

**Psalms 22:19-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> But you, O LORD, do not be far away!  
O my help, come quickly to my aid!  
<sup>20</sup> Deliver my soul from the sword,

my life from the power of the dog!

<sup>21</sup> Save me from the mouth of the lion!  
From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.

<sup>22</sup> I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

<sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;  
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

<sup>24</sup> For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted;  
he did not hide his face from me,  
but heard when I cried to him.

**Proverbs 10:8-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> The wise of heart will heed commandments,  
but a babbling fool will come to ruin.  
<sup>9</sup> Whoever walks in integrity walks securely,

but whoever follows  
perverse ways will be  
found out.

## February 22



**2 Chronicles 22:1-23:21** (NRSV)

### *Ahaziah's Reign*

*(2 Kings 8:25–29; 9:14–16, 27–29)*

**22** The inhabitants of Jerusalem made his youngest son Ahaziah king as his successor; for the troops who came with the Arabs to the camp had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram reigned as king of Judah.<sup>2</sup> Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri.<sup>3</sup> He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor in doing wickedly.<sup>4</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as the house of Ahab had done; for after

the death of his father they were his counselors, to his ruin.<sup>5</sup> He even followed their advice, and went with Jehoram son of King Ahab of Israel to make war against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram,<sup>6</sup> and he returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that he had received at Ramah, when he fought King Hazael of Aram. And Ahaziah son of King Jehoram of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

<sup>7</sup> But it was ordained by God that the downfall of Ahaziah should come about through his going to visit Joram. For when he came there he went out with Jehoram to meet Jehu son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to destroy the house of Ahab.<sup>8</sup> When Jehu was executing judgment on the house of Ahab, he met the officials of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers, who attended Ahaziah, and he killed them.<sup>9</sup> He searched for Ahaziah, who was captured while hiding in Samaria and



was brought to Jehu, and put to death. They buried him, for they said, “He is the grandson of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart.” And the house of Ahaziah had no one able to rule the kingdom.

*Athaliah Seizes the Throne*  
(2 Kings 11:1–8)

<sup>10</sup> Now when Athaliah, Ahaziah’s mother, saw that her son was dead, she set about to destroy all the royal family of the house of Judah. <sup>11</sup> But Jehoshabeath, the king’s daughter, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king’s children who were about to be killed; she put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus Jehoshabeath, daughter of King Jehoram and wife of the priest Jehoiada—because she was a sister of Ahaziah—hid him from Athaliah, so that she did not kill him; <sup>12</sup> he remained with them six years, hidden in the house of God, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

**23** But in the seventh year Jehoiada took courage, and

entered into a compact with the commanders of the hundreds, Azariah son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zichri. <sup>2</sup> They went around through Judah and gathered the Levites from all the towns of Judah, and the heads of families of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> Then the whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. Jehoiada said to them, “Here is the king’s son! Let him reign, as the LORD promised concerning the sons of David. <sup>4</sup> This is what you are to do: one-third of you, priests and Levites, who come on duty on the sabbath, shall be gatekeepers, <sup>5</sup> one-third shall be at the king’s house, and one-third at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> Do not let anyone enter the house of the LORD except the priests and ministering Levites; they may enter, for they are holy, but all the other people shall observe the instructions of the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> The Levites shall surround the king, each with his weapons in his hand; and whoever enters the house shall be killed. Stay with the king in his comings and goings.”

*Joash Crowned King*  
(2 Kings 11:9–12)

<sup>8</sup> The Levites and all Judah did according to all that the priest Jehoiada commanded; each brought his men, who were to come on duty on the sabbath, with those who were to go off duty on the sabbath; for the priest Jehoiada did not dismiss the divisions. <sup>9</sup> The priest Jehoiada delivered to the captains the spears and the large and small shields that had been King David’s, which were in the house of God; <sup>10</sup> and he set all the people as a guard for the king, everyone with weapon in hand, from the south side of the house to the north side of the house, around the altar and the house. <sup>11</sup> Then he brought out the king’s son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant; they proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada and his sons

anointed him; and they shouted, “Long live the king!”

*Athaliah Murdered*  
(2 Kings 11:13–20)

<sup>12</sup> When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she went into the house of the LORD to the people; <sup>13</sup> and when she looked, there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the captains and the trumpeters beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and the singers with their musical instruments leading in the celebration. Athaliah tore her clothes, and cried, “Treason! Treason!” <sup>14</sup> Then the priest Jehoiada brought out the captains who were set over the army, saying to them, “Bring her out between the ranks; anyone who follows her is to be put to the sword.” For the priest said, “Do not put her to death in the house of the LORD.” <sup>15</sup> So they laid hands on her; she went into the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king’s house, and there they put her to death.

<sup>16</sup> Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king that they should be the LORD's people. <sup>17</sup> Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and tore it down; his altars and his images they broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars. <sup>18</sup> Jehoiada assigned the care of the house of the LORD to the levitical priests whom David had organized to be in charge of the house of the LORD, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, according to the order of David. <sup>19</sup> He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD so that no one should enter who was in any way unclean. <sup>20</sup> And he took the captains, the nobles, the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, marching through the upper gate to the king's house. They set the king on the royal throne. <sup>21</sup> So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city

was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword.

**Romans 11:22-36 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. <sup>23</sup> And even those of Israel, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. <sup>24</sup> For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

*All Israel Will Be Saved*

<sup>25</sup> So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup> And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written,

“Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.”

<sup>27</sup> “And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”

<sup>28</sup> As regards the gospel they are enemies of God for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; <sup>29</sup> for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup> Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

<sup>32</sup> For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

<sup>33</sup> O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

<sup>34</sup> “For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?”

<sup>35</sup> “Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?”

<sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

### **Psalm 22:25-26 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

<sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your hearts live forever!

### **Proverbs 10:10 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> Whoever winks the eye causes trouble, but the one who rebukes boldly makes peace.

# February 23



## 2 Chronicles 24:1-27 (NRSV)

*Joash Repairs the Temple*  
(2 Kings 11:21–12:16)

**24** Joash was seven years old when he began to reign; he reigned forty years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. <sup>2</sup> Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of the priest Jehoiada. <sup>3</sup> Jehoiada got two wives for him, and he became the father of sons and daughters. <sup>4</sup> Some time afterward Joash decided to restore the house of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> He assembled the priests and the Levites and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah and gather money from all Israel to repair the house of your God, year by year; and see that you act quickly." But the Levites did not act quickly. <sup>6</sup> So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief, and said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax levied by Moses, the servant of the

LORD, on the congregation of Israel for the tent of the covenant?" <sup>7</sup> For the children of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had even used all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD for the Baals.

<sup>8</sup> So the king gave command, and they made a chest, and set it outside the gate of the house of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> A proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring in for the LORD the tax that Moses the servant of God laid on Israel in the wilderness. <sup>10</sup> All the leaders and all the people rejoiced and brought their tax and dropped it into the chest until it was full. <sup>11</sup> Whenever the chest was brought to the king's officers by the Levites, when they saw that there was a large amount of money in it, the king's secretary and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest and take it and return it to its place. So they did day after day, and collected money in abundance. <sup>12</sup> The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who

had charge of the work of the house of the LORD, and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the house of the LORD, and also workers in iron and bronze to repair the house of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> So those who were engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward at their hands, and they restored the house of God to its proper condition and strengthened it. <sup>14</sup> When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and with it were made utensils for the house of the LORD, utensils for the service and for the burnt offerings, and ladles, and vessels of gold and silver. They offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD regularly all the days of Jehoiada.

#### *Apostasy of Joash*

<sup>15</sup> But Jehoiada grew old and full of days, and died; he was one hundred thirty years old at his death. <sup>16</sup> And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and for God and his house.

<sup>17</sup> Now after the death of Jehoiada the officials of Judah came and did obeisance to the king; then the king listened to them. <sup>18</sup> They abandoned the house of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and served the sacred poles and the idols. And wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs. <sup>19</sup> Yet he sent prophets among them to bring them back to the LORD; they testified against them, but they would not listen.

<sup>20</sup> Then the spirit of God took possession of Zechariah son of the priest Jehoiada; he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus says God: Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has also forsaken you." <sup>21</sup> But they conspired against him, and by command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the LORD. <sup>22</sup> King Joash did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had shown him, but killed his son. As he

was dying, he said, “May the LORD see and avenge!”

*Death of Joash*

*(2 Kings 12:19–21)*

<sup>23</sup> At the end of the year the army of Aram came up against Joash. They came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the officials of the people from among them, and sent all the booty they took to the king of Damascus.

<sup>24</sup> Although the army of Aram had come with few men, the LORD delivered into their hand a very great army, because they had abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors. Thus they executed judgment on Joash.

<sup>25</sup> When they had withdrawn, leaving him severely wounded, his servants conspired against him because of the blood of the son of the priest Jehoiada, and they killed him on his bed. So he died; and they buried him in the city of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. <sup>26</sup> Those who conspired against him were Zabad son of Shimeath the Ammonite, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabite.

<sup>27</sup> Accounts of his sons, and of the many oracles against him, and of the rebuilding of the house of God are written in the Commentary on the Book of the Kings. And his son Amaziah succeeded him.

**Romans 12:1-8 (NRSV)**

*The New Life in Christ*

**12** I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. <sup>3</sup> For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body

in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

<sup>6</sup> We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup> ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

**Psalms 22:27-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.

<sup>28</sup> For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.

<sup>29</sup> To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.

<sup>30</sup> Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,

<sup>31</sup> and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

**Proverbs 10:11-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

<sup>12</sup> Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.

**February  
24**



**2 Chronicles 25:1-28 (NRSV)**

*Reign of Amaziah  
(2 Kings 14:1-6)*

**25** Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the sight



of the LORD, yet not with a true heart. <sup>3</sup> As soon as the royal power was firmly in his hand he killed his servants who had murdered his father the king. <sup>4</sup> But he did not put their children to death, according to what is written in the law, in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, “The parents shall not be put to death for the children, or the children be put to death for the parents; but all shall be put to death for their own sins.”

*Slaughter of the Edomites*  
(2 Kings 14:7)

<sup>5</sup> Amaziah assembled the people of Judah, and set them by ancestral houses under commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin. He mustered those twenty years old and upward, and found that they were three hundred thousand picked troops fit for war, able to handle spear and shield. <sup>6</sup> He also hired one hundred thousand mighty warriors from Israel for one hundred talents of silver. <sup>7</sup> But a man of God came to him and said, “O king, do not let the

army of Israel go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel—all these Ephraimites. <sup>8</sup> Rather, go by yourself and act; be strong in battle, or God will fling you down before the enemy; for God has power to help or to overthrow.” <sup>9</sup> Amaziah said to the man of God, “But what shall we do about the hundred talents that I have given to the army of Israel?” The man of God answered, “The LORD is able to give you much more than this.” <sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah discharged the army that had come to him from Ephraim, letting them go home again. But they became very angry with Judah, and returned home in fierce anger.

<sup>11</sup> Amaziah took courage, and led out his people; he went to the Valley of Salt, and struck down ten thousand men of Seir. <sup>12</sup> The people of Judah captured another ten thousand alive, took them to the top of Sela, and threw them down from the top of Sela, so that all of them were dashed to pieces. <sup>13</sup> But the men of the army whom Amaziah sent back, not letting them go with him to battle,

fell on the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon; they killed three thousand people in them, and took much booty.

<sup>14</sup> Now after Amaziah came from the slaughter of the Edomites, he brought the gods of the people of Seir, set them up as his gods, and worshiped them, making offerings to them. <sup>15</sup> The LORD was angry with Amaziah and sent to him a prophet, who said to him, “Why have you resorted to a people’s gods who could not deliver their own people from your hand?” <sup>16</sup> But as he was speaking the king said to him, “Have we made you a royal counselor? Stop! Why should you be put to death?” So the prophet stopped, but said, “I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my advice.”

### *Israel Defeats Judah*

*(2 Kings 14:8–14)*

<sup>17</sup> Then King Amaziah of Judah took counsel and sent to King Joash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu of Israel, saying, “Come, let us look one another in the face.” <sup>18</sup> King

Joash of Israel sent word to King Amaziah of Judah, “A thornbush on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son for a wife’; but a wild animal of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thornbush.

<sup>19</sup> You say, ‘See, I have defeated Edom,’ and your heart has lifted you up in boastfulness. Now stay at home; why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?”

<sup>20</sup> But Amaziah would not listen—it was God’s doing, in order to hand them over, because they had sought the gods of Edom. <sup>21</sup> So King Joash of Israel went up; he and King Amaziah of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. <sup>22</sup> Judah was defeated by Israel; everyone fled home. <sup>23</sup> King Joash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah, son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh; he brought him to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits. <sup>24</sup> He seized all

the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God, and Obed-edom with them; he seized also the treasuries of the king's house, also hostages; then he returned to Samaria.

### *Death of Amaziah*

*(2 Kings 14:17–20)*

<sup>25</sup> King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of King Joash son of Jehoahaz of Israel. <sup>26</sup> Now the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, from first to last, are they not written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel? <sup>27</sup> From the time that Amaziah turned away from the LORD they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. <sup>28</sup> They brought him back on horses; he was buried with his ancestors in the city of David.

### **Romans 12:9-21 (NRSV)**

#### *Marks of the True Christian*

<sup>9</sup> Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup> love one another with mutual affection; outdo

one another in showing honor.

<sup>11</sup> Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

<sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

<sup>20</sup> No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Psalms 23:1-6** (NRSV)

*The Divine Shepherd*

A Psalm of David.

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;  
3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.  
4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.  
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

**Proverbs 10:13-14** (NRSV)

- 13 On the lips of one who has understanding wisdom is found, but a rod is for the back of one who lacks sense.  
14 The wise lay up knowledge, but the babbling of a fool brings ruin near.

**February 25**



**2 Chronicles 26:1-27:9** (NRSV)

*Reign of Uzziah*

(2 Kings 14:21–22; 15:1–3)

- 26** Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. <sup>2</sup> He rebuilt Eloth and restored it to Judah, after the king slept with his ancestors. <sup>3</sup> Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> He did what was right in the sight

of the LORD, just as his father Amaziah had done.<sup>5</sup> He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.

<sup>6</sup> He went out and made war against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; he built cities in the territory of Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines.<sup>7</sup> God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabs who lived in Gurbaal, and against the Meunites.<sup>8</sup> The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread even to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong.

<sup>9</sup> Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the Angle, and fortified them.<sup>10</sup> He built towers in the wilderness and hewed out many cisterns, for he had large herds, both in the Shephelah and in the plain, and he had farmers and vinedressers in the hills and in the fertile

lands, for he loved the soil.

<sup>11</sup> Moreover Uzziah had an army of soldiers, fit for war, in divisions according to the numbers in the muster made by the secretary Jeiel and the officer Maaseiah, under the direction of Hananiah, one of the king's commanders.<sup>12</sup> The whole number of the heads of ancestral houses of mighty warriors was two thousand six hundred.<sup>13</sup> Under their command was an army of three hundred seven thousand five hundred, who could make war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.<sup>14</sup> Uzziah provided for all the army the shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, and stones for slinging.<sup>15</sup> In Jerusalem he set up machines, invented by skilled workers, on the towers and the corners for shooting arrows and large stones. And his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped until he became strong.

*Pride and Apostasy*  
(2 Kings 15:4–7)

<sup>16</sup> But when he had become strong he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was

false to the LORD his God, and entered the temple of the LORD to make offering on the altar of incense.<sup>17</sup> But the priest Azariah went in after him, with eighty priests of the LORD who were men of valor;<sup>18</sup> they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to make offering to the LORD, but for the priests the descendants of Aaron, who are consecrated to make offering. Go out of the sanctuary; for you have done wrong, and it will bring you no honor from the LORD God.”<sup>19</sup> Then Uzziah was angry. Now he had a censer in his hand to make offering, and when he became angry with the priests a leprous disease broke out on his forehead, in the presence of the priests in the house of the LORD, by the altar of incense.<sup>20</sup> When the chief priest Azariah, and all the priests, looked at him, he was leprous in his forehead. They hurried him out, and he himself hurried to get out, because the LORD had struck him.<sup>21</sup> King Uzziah was leprous to the day of his death, and being leprous lived in a

separate house, for he was excluded from the house of the LORD. His son Jotham was in charge of the palace of the king, governing the people of the land.

<sup>22</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz wrote.<sup>23</sup> Uzziah slept with his ancestors; they buried him near his ancestors in the burial field that belonged to the kings, for they said, “He is leprous.” His son Jotham succeeded him.

*Reign of Jotham*  
(2 Kings 15:32–38)

**27** Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Jerushah daughter of Zadok.<sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD just as his father Uzziah had done—only he did not invade the temple of the LORD. But the people still followed corrupt practices.<sup>3</sup> He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD, and did extensive building on the wall of Ophel.<sup>4</sup> Moreover he built cities in

the hill country of Judah, and forts and towers on the wooded hills. <sup>5</sup> He fought with the king of the Ammonites and prevailed against them. The Ammonites gave him that year one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand cors of wheat and ten thousand of barley. The Ammonites paid him the same amount in the second and the third years. <sup>6</sup> So Jotham became strong because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God. <sup>7</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars and his ways, are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. <sup>8</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> Jotham slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David; and his son Ahaz succeeded him.

**Romans 13:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Being Subject to Authorities*

**13** Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by

God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; <sup>4</sup> for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup> Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. <sup>6</sup> For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Pay to all what is due them—taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.

**Psalm 24:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Entrance into the Temple*  
Of David. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,

the world, and those  
who live in it;  
<sup>2</sup> for he has founded it on  
the seas,  
and established it on the  
rivers.

**Proverbs 10:15–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> The wealth of the rich is  
their fortress;  
the poverty of the poor  
is their ruin.  
<sup>16</sup> The wage of the righteous  
leads to life,  
the gain of the wicked to  
sin.

**February  
26**



**2 Chronicles 28:1-27 (NRSV)**

*Reign of Ahaz  
(2 Kings 16:1–4)*

**28** Ahaz was twenty years old  
when he began to reign; he  
reigned sixteen years in  
Jerusalem. He did not do what  
was right in the sight of the  
LORD, as his ancestor David  
had done, <sup>2</sup> but he walked in

the ways of the kings of Israel.  
He even made cast images for  
the Baals; <sup>3</sup> and he made  
offerings in the valley of the  
son of Hinnom, and made his  
sons pass through fire,  
according to the abominable  
practices of the nations whom  
the LORD drove out before the  
people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> He sacrificed  
and made offerings on the  
high places, on the hills, and  
under every green tree.

*Aram and Israel Defeat Judah  
(2 Kings 16:5–6; Isa 7:1)*

<sup>5</sup> Therefore the LORD his  
God gave him into the hand of  
the king of Aram, who  
defeated him and took captive  
a great number of his people  
and brought them to  
Damascus. He was also given  
into the hand of the king of  
Israel, who defeated him with  
great slaughter. <sup>6</sup> Pekah son of  
Remaliah killed one hundred  
twenty thousand in Judah in  
one day, all of them valiant  
warriors, because they had  
abandoned the LORD, the God  
of their ancestors. <sup>7</sup> And Zichri,  
a mighty warrior of Ephraim,  
killed the king's son Maaseiah,  
Azrikam the commander of



the palace, and Elkanah the next in authority to the king.

*Intervention of Oded*

<sup>8</sup>The people of Israel took captive two hundred thousand of their kin, women, sons, and daughters; they also took much booty from them and brought the booty to Samaria.

<sup>9</sup>But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded; he went out to meet the army that came to Samaria, and said to them, "Because the LORD, the God of your ancestors, was angry with Judah, he gave them into your hand, but you have killed them in a rage that has reached up to heaven. <sup>10</sup>Now you intend to subjugate the people of Judah and Jerusalem, male and female, as your slaves. But what have you except sins against the LORD your God? <sup>11</sup>Now hear me, and send back the captives whom you have taken from your kindred, for the fierce wrath of the LORD is upon you." <sup>12</sup>Moreover, certain chiefs of the Ephraimites, Azariah son of Johanan, Berechiah son of

Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, stood up against those who were coming from the war, <sup>13</sup>and said to them, "You shall not bring the captives in here, for you propose to bring on us guilt against the LORD in addition to our present sins and guilt. For our guilt is already great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel."

<sup>14</sup>So the warriors left the captives and the booty before the officials and all the assembly. <sup>15</sup>Then those who were mentioned by name got up and took the captives, and with the booty they clothed all that were naked among them; they clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink, and anointed them; and carrying all the feeble among them on donkeys, they brought them to their kindred at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

*Assyria Refuses to Help Judah*  
(2 Kings 16:7–9)

<sup>16</sup>At that time King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help. <sup>17</sup>For the Edomites had again invaded and defeated

Judah, and carried away captives.<sup>18</sup> And the Philistines had made raids on the cities in the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah, and had taken Bethshemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they settled there.<sup>19</sup> For the LORD brought Judah low because of King Ahaz of Israel, for he had behaved without restraint in Judah and had been faithless to the LORD.<sup>20</sup> So King Tilgath-pilneser of Assyria came against him, and oppressed him instead of strengthening him.<sup>21</sup> For Ahaz plundered the house of the LORD and the houses of the king and of the officials, and gave tribute to the king of Assyria; but it did not help him.

### *Apostasy and Death of Ahaz*

*(2 Kings 16:12–20)*

<sup>22</sup> In the time of his distress he became yet more faithless to the LORD—this same King Ahaz.<sup>23</sup> For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, which had defeated him, and said, “Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them so that they

may help me.” But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.<sup>24</sup> Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, and cut in pieces the utensils of the house of God. He shut up the doors of the house of the LORD and made himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem.<sup>25</sup> In every city of Judah he made high places to make offerings to other gods, provoking to anger the LORD, the God of his ancestors.<sup>26</sup> Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.<sup>27</sup> Ahaz slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem; but they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah succeeded him.

### **Romans 13:8-14** (NRSV)

*Love for One Another*

*(Cp Mk 12:31; Jas 2:8)*

<sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.<sup>9</sup> The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not

steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”<sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

### *An Urgent Appeal*

<sup>11</sup> Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup> the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; <sup>13</sup> let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

<sup>14</sup> Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

### **Psalms 24:3-6** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?

- <sup>4</sup> Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.
- <sup>5</sup> They will receive blessing from the LORD, and vindication from the God of their salvation.
- <sup>6</sup> Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. *Selah*

### **Proverbs 10:17** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but one who rejects a rebuke goes astray.

## February 27



### **2 Chronicles 29:1-17** (NRSV)

*Reign of Hezekiah*  
(2 Kings 18:1–3)

**29** Hezekiah began to reign when he was twenty-five years old; he reigned twenty-nine

years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. <sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his ancestor David had done.

### *The Temple Cleansed*

<sup>3</sup> In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. <sup>4</sup> He brought in the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the square on the east. <sup>5</sup> He said to them, "Listen to me, Levites! Sanctify yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD, the God of your ancestors, and carry out the filth from the holy place. <sup>6</sup> For our ancestors have been unfaithful and have done what was evil in the sight of the LORD our God; they have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the dwelling of the LORD, and turned their backs. <sup>7</sup> They also shut the doors of the vestibule and put out the lamps, and have not offered incense or made burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. <sup>8</sup> Therefore the wrath of the

LORD came upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes. <sup>9</sup> Our fathers have fallen by the sword and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. <sup>10</sup> Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, so that his fierce anger may turn away from us. <sup>11</sup> My sons, do not now be negligent, for the LORD has chosen you to stand in his presence to minister to him, and to be his ministers and make offerings to him."

<sup>12</sup> Then the Levites arose, Mahath son of Amasai, and Joel son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites; and of the sons of Merari, Kish son of Abdi, and Azariah son of Jehallelel; and of the Gershonites, Joah son of Zimmah, and Eden son of Joah; <sup>13</sup> and of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeuel; and of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; <sup>14</sup> and of the sons of Heman, Jehuel and Shimei; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah

and Uzziel. <sup>15</sup> They gathered their brothers, sanctified themselves, and went in as the king had commanded, by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD. <sup>16</sup> The priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse it, and they brought out all the unclean things that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD; and the Levites took them and carried them out to the Wadi Kidron. <sup>17</sup> They began to sanctify on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the LORD; then for eight days they sanctified the house of the LORD, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.

**Romans 14:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Do Not Judge Another*

**14** Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup> Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup> Those who eat must not despise those who abstain,

and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup> Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

<sup>5</sup> Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup> Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

<sup>7</sup> We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup> *If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.* <sup>9</sup> *For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*

**Psalm 24:7-10** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O  
gates!  
and be lifted up, O  
ancient doors!  
that the King of glory  
may come in.

<sup>8</sup> Who is the King of glory?  
The LORD, strong and  
mighty,  
the LORD, mighty in  
battle.

<sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O  
gates!  
and be lifted up, O  
ancient doors!  
that the King of glory  
may come in.

<sup>10</sup> Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD of hosts,  
he is the King of glory.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 10:18** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Lying lips conceal hatred,  
and whoever utters  
slander is a fool.

**February**  
**28**



**2 Chronicles 29:18-36** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Then they went inside  
to King Hezekiah and said,  
“We have cleansed all the  
house of the LORD, the altar of  
burnt offering and all its  
utensils, and the table for the  
rows of bread and all its  
utensils. <sup>19</sup> All the utensils that  
King Ahaz repudiated during  
his reign when he was  
faithless, we have made ready  
and sanctified; see, they are in  
front of the altar of the LORD.”

*Temple Worship Restored*

<sup>20</sup> Then King Hezekiah rose  
early, assembled the officials  
of the city, and went up to the  
house of the LORD. <sup>21</sup> They  
brought seven bulls, seven  
rams, seven lambs, and seven  
male goats for a sin offering  
for the kingdom and for the  
sanctuary and for Judah. He  
commanded the priests the  
descendants of Aaron to offer  
them on the altar of the LORD.  
<sup>22</sup> So they slaughtered the  
bulls, and the priests received  
the blood and dashed it

against the altar; they slaughtered the rams and their blood was dashed against the altar; they also slaughtered the lambs and their blood was dashed against the altar.

<sup>23</sup> Then the male goats for the sin offering were brought to the king and the assembly; they laid their hands on them, <sup>24</sup> and the priests slaughtered them and made a sin offering with their blood at the altar, to make atonement for all Israel. For the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

<sup>25</sup> He stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, harps, and lyres, according to the commandment of David and of Gad the king's seer and of the prophet Nathan, for the commandment was from the LORD through his prophets.

<sup>26</sup> The Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

<sup>27</sup> Then Hezekiah commanded that the burnt offering be offered on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song to the LORD began also, and

the trumpets, accompanied by the instruments of King David of Israel. <sup>28</sup> The whole assembly worshiped, the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. <sup>29</sup> When the offering was finished, the king and all who were present with him bowed down and worshiped. <sup>30</sup> King Hezekiah and the officials commanded the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and of the seer Asaph. They sang praises with gladness, and they bowed down and worshiped.

<sup>31</sup> Then Hezekiah said, "You have now consecrated yourselves to the LORD; come near, bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD." The assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings; and all who were of a willing heart brought burnt offerings. <sup>32</sup> The number of the burnt offerings that the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, and two hundred lambs; all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD. <sup>33</sup> The consecrated

offerings were six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep. <sup>34</sup> But the priests were too few and could not skin all the burnt offerings, so, until other priests had sanctified themselves, their kindred, the Levites, helped them until the work was finished—for the Levites were more conscientious than the priests in sanctifying themselves. <sup>35</sup> Besides the great number of burnt offerings there was the fat of the offerings of well-being, and there were the drink offerings for the burnt offerings. Thus the service of the house of the LORD was restored. <sup>36</sup> And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because of what God had done for the people; for the thing had come about suddenly.

**Romans 14:10-15:4** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup> For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord,  
every knee shall bow  
to me,  
and every tongue shall  
give praise to God.”

<sup>12</sup> So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

*Do Not Make Another Stumble*

<sup>13</sup> Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another. <sup>14</sup> I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. <sup>15</sup> If your brother or sister is being injured by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not let what you eat cause the ruin of one for whom Christ died. <sup>16</sup> So do not let your good be spoken of as evil. <sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> The one who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and has human approval. <sup>19</sup> Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.



<sup>20</sup> Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for you to make others fall by what you eat; <sup>21</sup> it is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother or sister stumble. <sup>22</sup> The faith that you have, have as your own conviction before God. Blessed are those who have no reason to condemn themselves because of what they approve. <sup>23</sup> But those who have doubts are condemned if they eat, because they do not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

*Please Others, Not Yourself*

**15** We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup> Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor. <sup>3</sup> For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." <sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by

the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

**Psalm 25:1-7** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Guidance and for Deliverance*

Of David.

- 1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
- 2 O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.
- 3 Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
- 4 Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.
- 5 Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.
- 6 Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.



<sup>7</sup> Do not remember the sins  
of my youth or my  
transgressions;  
according to your  
steadfast love  
remember me,  
for your goodness' sake,  
O LORD!

**Proverbs 10:19** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> When words are many,  
transgression is not  
lacking,  
but the prudent are  
restrained in speech.

## March 1



**2 Chronicles 30:1-20** (NRSV)

*The Great Passover*

**30** Hezekiah sent word to all  
Israel and Judah, and wrote  
letters also to Ephraim and  
Manasseh, that they should  
come to the house of the LORD  
at Jerusalem, to keep the  
passover to the LORD the God  
of Israel. <sup>2</sup> For the king and his  
officials and all the assembly in

Jerusalem had taken counsel  
to keep the passover in the  
second month <sup>3</sup> (for they could  
not keep it at its proper time  
because the priests had not  
sanctified themselves in  
sufficient number, nor had the  
people assembled in  
Jerusalem). <sup>4</sup> The plan seemed  
right to the king and all the  
assembly. <sup>5</sup> So they decreed to  
make a proclamation  
throughout all Israel, from  
Beer-sheba to Dan, that the  
people should come and keep  
the passover to the LORD the  
God of Israel, at Jerusalem; for  
they had not kept it in great  
numbers as prescribed. <sup>6</sup> So  
couriers went throughout all  
Israel and Judah with letters  
from the king and his officials,  
as the king had commanded,  
saying, "O people of Israel,  
return to the LORD, the God of  
Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so  
that he may turn again to the  
remnant of you who have  
escaped from the hand of the  
kings of Assyria. <sup>7</sup> Do not be  
like your ancestors and your  
kindred, who were faithless to  
the LORD God of their  
ancestors, so that he made  
them a desolation, as you see.

<sup>8</sup> Do not now be stiff-necked as your ancestors were, but yield yourselves to the LORD and come to his sanctuary, which he has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, so that his fierce anger may turn away from you. <sup>9</sup> For as you return to the LORD, your kindred and your children will find compassion with their captors, and return to this land. For the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him.”

<sup>10</sup> So the couriers went from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun; but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. <sup>11</sup> Only a few from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. <sup>12</sup> The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the officials commanded by the word of the LORD.

<sup>13</sup> Many people came together in Jerusalem to keep the festival of unleavened

bread in the second month, a very large assembly. <sup>14</sup> They set to work and removed the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for offering incense they took away and threw into the Wadi Kidron. <sup>15</sup> They slaughtered the passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were ashamed, and they sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. <sup>16</sup> They took their accustomed posts according to the law of Moses the man of God; the priests dashed the blood that they received from the hands of the Levites. <sup>17</sup> For there were many in the assembly who had not sanctified themselves; therefore the Levites had to slaughter the passover lamb for everyone who was not clean, to make it holy to the LORD. <sup>18</sup> For a multitude of the people, many of them from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the passover otherwise than as prescribed. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “The

good LORD pardon all <sup>19</sup> who set their hearts to seek God, the LORD the God of their ancestors, even though not in accordance with the sanctuary's rules of cleanness." <sup>20</sup> The LORD heard Hezekiah, and healed the people.

**Romans 15:5-13** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*The Gospel for Jews and Gentiles Alike*

<sup>7</sup> Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, <sup>9</sup> and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name";

<sup>10</sup> and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";

<sup>11</sup> and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him";

<sup>12</sup> and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope."

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Psalms 25:8-15** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

<sup>9</sup> He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

10 All the paths of the LORD  
are steadfast love and  
faithfulness,  
for those who keep his  
covenant and his  
decrees.

11 For your name's sake, O  
LORD,  
pardon my guilt, for it is  
great.

12 Who are they that fear the  
LORD?  
He will teach them the  
way that they should  
choose.

13 They will abide in  
prosperity,  
and their children shall  
possess the land.

14 **The friendship of the LORD  
is for those who fear  
him,  
and he makes his  
covenant known to  
them.**

15 My eyes are ever toward  
the LORD,  
for he will pluck my feet  
out of the net.

### **Proverbs 10:20–21 (NRSV)**

20 The tongue of the  
righteous is choice  
silver;

the mind of the wicked is  
of little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous  
feed many, but fools  
die for lack of sense.

## **March 2**



### **2 Chronicles**

**30:21–31:21 (NRSV)**

21 The people of Israel who  
were present at Jerusalem  
kept the festival of unleavened  
bread seven days with great  
gladness; and the Levites and  
the priests praised the LORD  
day by day, accompanied by  
loud instruments for the LORD.

22 Hezekiah spoke  
encouragingly to all the Levites  
who showed good skill in the  
service of the LORD. So the  
people ate the food of the  
festival for seven days,  
sacrificing offerings of well-  
being and giving thanks to the  
LORD the God of their  
ancestors.

23 Then the whole  
assembly agreed together to

keep the festival for another seven days; so they kept it for another seven days with gladness. <sup>24</sup> For King Hezekiah of Judah gave the assembly a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep for offerings, and the officials gave the assembly a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep. The priests sanctified themselves in great numbers. <sup>25</sup> The whole assembly of Judah, the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the resident aliens who came out of the land of Israel, and the resident aliens who lived in Judah, rejoiced. <sup>26</sup> There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of King David of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> Then the priests and the Levites stood up and blessed the people, and their voice was heard; their prayer came to his holy dwelling in heaven.

*Pagan Shrines Destroyed*  
(2 Kings 18:4)

**31** Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities

of Judah and broke down the pillars, hewed down the sacred poles, and pulled down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the people of Israel returned to their cities, all to their individual properties.

<sup>2</sup> Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, division by division, everyone according to his service, the priests and the Levites, for burnt offerings and offerings of well-being, to minister in the gates of the camp of the LORD and to give thanks and praise. <sup>3</sup> The contribution of the king from his own possessions was for the burnt offerings: the burnt offerings of morning and evening, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the appointed festivals, as it is written in the law of the LORD. <sup>4</sup> He commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the portion due to the priests and the Levites, so that they might devote themselves to

the law of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> As soon as the word spread, the people of Israel gave in abundance the first fruits of grain, wine, oil, honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything. <sup>6</sup> The people of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of cattle and sheep, and the tithe of the dedicated things that had been consecrated to the LORD their God, and laid them in heaps. <sup>7</sup> In the third month they began to pile up the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month. <sup>8</sup> When Hezekiah and the officials came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and his people Israel. <sup>9</sup> Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites about the heaps. <sup>10</sup> The chief priest Azariah, who was of the house of Zadok, answered him, "Since they began to bring the contributions into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have plenty to spare; for the LORD has blessed his people, so that we

have this great supply left over."

*Reorganization of Priests  
and Levites*

<sup>11</sup> Then Hezekiah commanded them to prepare store-chambers in the house of the LORD; and they prepared them. <sup>12</sup> Faithfully they brought in the contributions, the tithes and the dedicated things. The chief officer in charge of them was Conaniah the Levite, with his brother Shimei as second; <sup>13</sup> while Jehiel, Azariah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah were overseers assisting Conaniah and his brother Shimei, by the appointment of King Hezekiah and of Azariah the chief officer of the house of God. <sup>14</sup> Kore son of Imnah the Levite, keeper of the east gate, was in charge of the freewill offerings to God, to apportion the contribution reserved for the LORD and the most holy offerings. <sup>15</sup> Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah were faithfully assisting him in the cities of

the priests, to distribute the portions to their kindred, old and young alike, by divisions, <sup>16</sup>except those enrolled by genealogy, males from three years old and upwards, all who entered the house of the LORD as the duty of each day required, for their service according to their offices, by their divisions. <sup>17</sup>The enrollment of the priests was according to their ancestral houses; that of the Levites from twenty years old and upwards was according to their offices, by their divisions. <sup>18</sup>The priests were enrolled with all their little children, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, the whole multitude; for they were faithful in keeping themselves holy. <sup>19</sup>And for the descendants of Aaron, the priests, who were in the fields of common land belonging to their towns, town by town, the people designated by name were to distribute portions to every male among the priests and to everyone among the Levites who was enrolled.

<sup>20</sup>Hezekiah did this throughout all Judah; he did what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God. <sup>21</sup>And every work that he undertook in the service of the house of God, and in accordance with the law and the commandments, to seek his God, he did with all his heart; and he prospered.

**Romans 15:14-22 (NRSV)**

*Paul's Reason for Writing So Boldly*

<sup>14</sup>I myself feel confident about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.

<sup>15</sup>Nevertheless on some points I have written to you rather boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God <sup>16</sup>to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>17</sup>In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast of my work for God. <sup>18</sup>For I will not venture to



speaking of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, <sup>19</sup> by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the good news of Christ. <sup>20</sup> Thus I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation, <sup>21</sup> but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told of him shall see,  
and those who have never heard of him shall understand.”

*Paul's Plan to Visit Rome*

<sup>22</sup> This is the reason that I have so often been hindered from coming to you.

**Psalm 25:16-22** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
for I am lonely and afflicted.

- <sup>17</sup> Relieve the troubles of my heart,  
and bring me out of my distress.
- <sup>18</sup> Consider my affliction and my trouble,  
and forgive all my sins.
- <sup>19</sup> Consider how many are my foes,  
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
- <sup>20</sup> O guard my life, and deliver me;  
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
- <sup>21</sup> May integrity and uprightness preserve me,  
for I wait for you.
- <sup>22</sup> Redeem Israel, O God,  
out of all its troubles.

**Proverbs 10:22** (NRSV)

- <sup>22</sup> The blessing of the LORD makes rich,  
and he adds no sorrow with it.

## March 3



### 2 Chronicles 32:1-23 (NRSV)

#### *Sennacherib's Invasion*

(2 Kings 18:13–19:34; Isa 36:2–22)

**32** After these things and these acts of faithfulness, King Sennacherib of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. <sup>2</sup> When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, <sup>3</sup> he planned with his officers and his warriors to stop the flow of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. <sup>4</sup> A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the wadi that flowed through the land, saying, “Why should the Assyrian kings come and find water in abundance?” <sup>5</sup> Hezekiah set to work resolutely and built up the entire wall that was broken down, and raised towers on it, and outside it he built another wall; he also strengthened the Millo in the city of David, and

made weapons and shields in abundance. <sup>6</sup> He appointed combat commanders over the people, and gathered them together to him in the square at the gate of the city and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, <sup>7</sup> “Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him; for there is one greater with us than with him. <sup>8</sup> With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles.” The people were encouraged by the words of King Hezekiah of Judah.

<sup>9</sup> After this, while King Sennacherib of Assyria was at Lachish with all his forces, he sent his servants to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah of Judah and to all the people of Judah that were in Jerusalem, saying, <sup>10</sup> “Thus says King Sennacherib of Assyria: On what are you relying, that you undergo the siege of Jerusalem? <sup>11</sup> Is not Hezekiah misleading you, handing you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, ‘The LORD our God

will save us from the hand of the king of Assyria'? <sup>12</sup> Was it not this same Hezekiah who took away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, 'Before one altar you shall worship, and upon it you shall make your offerings'? <sup>13</sup> Do you not know what I and my ancestors have done to all the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all able to save their lands out of my hand? <sup>14</sup> Who among all the gods of those nations that my ancestors utterly destroyed was able to save his people from my hand, that your God should be able to save you from my hand? <sup>15</sup> Now therefore do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to save his people from my hand or from the hand of my ancestors. How much less will your God save you out of my hand!"

<sup>16</sup> His servants said still more against the Lord GOD and against his servant Hezekiah.

<sup>17</sup> He also wrote letters to throw contempt on the LORD the God of Israel and to speak against him, saying, "Just as the gods of the nations in other lands did not rescue their people from my hands, so the God of Hezekiah will not rescue his people from my hand." <sup>18</sup> They shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, in order that they might take the city. <sup>19</sup> They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as if he were like the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of human hands.

*Sennacherib's Defeat  
and Death*

*(2 Kings 19:35–37)*

<sup>20</sup> Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed because of this and cried to heaven. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD sent an angel who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in disgrace to his own land. When he came into the house of his god, some of his own

sons struck him down there with the sword. <sup>22</sup> So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of King Sennacherib of Assyria and from the hand of all his enemies; he gave them rest on every side.

<sup>23</sup> Many brought gifts to the LORD in Jerusalem and precious things to King Hezekiah of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward.

**Romans 15:23-33 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> But now, with no further place for me in these regions, I desire, as I have for many years, to come to you <sup>24</sup> when I go to Spain. For I do hope to see you on my journey and to be sent on by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a little while. <sup>25</sup> At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem in a ministry to the saints; <sup>26</sup> for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to share their resources with the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> They were pleased to do this, and indeed they owe it to them; for if the

Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material things. <sup>28</sup> So, when I have completed this, and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will set out by way of you to Spain; <sup>29</sup> and I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

<sup>30</sup> I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, <sup>31</sup> that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, <sup>32</sup> so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. <sup>33</sup> The God of peace be with all of you. Amen.

**Psalms 26:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Justice and  
Declaration of Righteousness  
Of David.*

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O LORD,  
for I have walked in my  
integrity,  
and I have trusted in the  
LORD without wavering.

<sup>2</sup> Prove me, O LORD, and try  
 me;  
 test my heart and mind.  
<sup>3</sup> For your steadfast love is  
 before my eyes,  
 and I walk in faithfulness  
 to you.  
<sup>4</sup> I do not sit with the  
 worthless,  
 nor do I consort with  
 hypocrites;  
<sup>5</sup> I hate the company of  
 evildoers,  
 and will not sit with the  
 wicked.  
<sup>6</sup> I wash my hands in  
 innocence,  
 and go around your altar,  
 O LORD,  
<sup>7</sup> singing aloud a song of  
 thanksgiving,  
 and telling all your  
 wondrous deeds.  
<sup>8</sup> O LORD, I love the house in  
 which you dwell,  
 and the place where  
 your glory abides.

**Proverbs 10:23** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Doing wrong is like sport  
 to a fool, but wise  
 conduct is pleasure to  
 a person of  
 understanding.

## March 4



**2 Chronicles 32:24-33:13**  
 (NRSV)

*Hezekiah's Sickness*

(2 Kings 20:1–11; Isa 38:1–8)

<sup>24</sup> In those days Hezekiah  
 became sick and was at the  
 point of death. He prayed to  
 the LORD, and he answered  
 him and gave him a sign. <sup>25</sup> But  
 Hezekiah did not respond  
 according to the benefit done  
 to him, for his heart was  
 proud. Therefore wrath came  
 upon him and upon Judah and  
 Jerusalem. <sup>26</sup> Then Hezekiah  
 humbled himself for the pride  
 of his heart, both he and the  
 inhabitants of Jerusalem, so  
 that the wrath of the LORD did  
 not come upon them in the  
 days of Hezekiah.

*Hezekiah's Prosperity  
 and Achievements*

(2 Kings 20:12–21; Isa 39:1–8)

<sup>27</sup> Hezekiah had very great  
 riches and honor; and he  
 made for himself treasuries for  
 silver, for gold, for precious  
 stones, for spices, for shields,  
 and for all kinds of costly  
 objects; <sup>28</sup> storehouses also for

the yield of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds. <sup>29</sup> He likewise provided cities for himself, and flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him very great possessions. <sup>30</sup> This same Hezekiah closed the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down to the west side of the city of David. Hezekiah prospered in all his works. <sup>31</sup> So also in the matter of the envoys of the officials of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.

<sup>32</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his good deeds, are written in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

<sup>33</sup> Hezekiah slept with his ancestors, and they buried him on the ascent to the tombs of the descendants of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did

him honor at his death. His son Manasseh succeeded him.

*Reign of Manasseh*  
(2 Kings 21:1–9)

**33** Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. <sup>3</sup> For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had pulled down, and erected altars to the Baals, made sacred poles, worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them. <sup>4</sup> He built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, “In Jerusalem shall my name be forever.” <sup>5</sup> He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> He made his son pass through fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom, practiced soothsaying and augury and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to

anger. <sup>7</sup> The carved image of the idol that he had made he set in the house of God, of which God said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever; <sup>8</sup> I will never again remove the feet of Israel from the land that I appointed for your ancestors, if only they will be careful to do all that I have commanded them, all the law, the statutes, and the ordinances given through Moses." <sup>9</sup> Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the people of Israel.

*Manasseh Restored  
after Repentance*

<sup>10</sup> The LORD spoke to Manasseh and to his people, but they gave no heed. <sup>11</sup> Therefore the LORD brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh captive in manacles, bound him with fetters, and brought him to Babylon. <sup>12</sup> While he

was in distress he entreated the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. <sup>13</sup> He prayed to him, and God received his entreaty, heard his plea, and restored him again to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD indeed was God.

**Romans 16:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Personal Greetings*

**16** I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, <sup>2</sup> so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.

<sup>3</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus, <sup>4</sup> and who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

<sup>5</sup> Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epänetus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ.

<sup>6</sup> Greet Mary, who has worked very hard among you. <sup>7</sup> Greet

Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

<sup>8</sup> Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.

**Psalms 26:9-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Do not sweep me away with sinners,  
nor my life with the bloodthirsty,  
<sup>10</sup> those in whose hands are evil devices,  
and whose right hands are full of bribes.  
<sup>11</sup> But as for me, I walk in my integrity;  
redeem me, and be gracious to me.  
<sup>12</sup> My foot stands on level ground;  
in the great congregation I will bless the LORD.

**Proverbs 10:24-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> What the wicked dread will come upon them,  
but the desire of the righteous will be granted.

<sup>25</sup> When the tempest passes, the wicked are no more,  
but the righteous are established forever.

**March 5**



**2 Chronicles 33:14-34:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Afterward he built an outer wall for the city of David west of Gihon, in the valley, reaching the entrance at the Fish Gate; he carried it around Ophel, and raised it to a very great height. He also put commanders of the army in all the fortified cities in Judah.  
<sup>15</sup> He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem, and he threw them out of the city.  
<sup>16</sup> He also restored the altar of the LORD and offered on it sacrifices of well-being and of



thanksgiving; and he commanded Judah to serve the LORD the God of Israel.<sup>17</sup> The people, however, still sacrificed at the high places, but only to the LORD their God.

### *Death of Manasseh*

*(2 Kings 21:17–18)*

<sup>18</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, these are in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.<sup>19</sup> His prayer, and how God received his entreaty, all his sin and his faithlessness, the sites on which he built high places and set up the sacred poles and the images, before he humbled himself, these are written in the records of the seers.<sup>20</sup> So Manasseh slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in his house. His son Amon succeeded him.

### *Amon's Reign and Death* *(2 Kings 21:19–26)*

<sup>21</sup> Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as

his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images that his father Manasseh had made, and served them.<sup>23</sup> He did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself, but this Amon incurred more and more guilt.<sup>24</sup> His servants conspired against him and killed him in his house.<sup>25</sup> But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon; and the people of the land made his son Josiah king to succeed him.

### *Reign of Josiah*

*(2 Kings 22:1–2)*

**34** Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his ancestor David; he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.<sup>3</sup> For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still a boy, he began to seek the God of his ancestor David, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and

Jerusalem of the high places, the sacred poles, and the carved and the cast images.

<sup>4</sup> In his presence they pulled down the altars of the Baals; he demolished the incense altars that stood above them. He broke down the sacred poles and the carved and the cast images; he made dust of them and scattered it over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. <sup>5</sup> He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and purged Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, in their ruins all around, <sup>7</sup> he broke down the altars, beat the sacred poles and the images into powder, and demolished all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

*Discovery of the  
Book of the Law  
(2 Kings 22:3–20)*

<sup>8</sup> In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz,

the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.

<sup>9</sup> They came to the high priest Hilkiah and delivered the money that had been brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> They delivered it to the workers who had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and the workers who were working in the house of the LORD gave it for repairing and restoring the house.

<sup>11</sup> They gave it to the carpenters and the builders to buy quarried stone, and timber for binders, and beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had let go to ruin.

<sup>12</sup> The people did the work faithfully. Over them were appointed the Levites Jahath and Obadiah, of the sons of Merari, along with Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to have oversight. Other Levites, all skillful with instruments of

music, <sup>13</sup> were over the burden bearers and directed all who did work in every kind of service; and some of the Levites were scribes, and officials, and gatekeepers.

**Romans 16:10-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. <sup>11</sup> Greet my relative Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. <sup>12</sup> Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother—a mother to me also. <sup>14</sup> Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters who are with them. <sup>15</sup> Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. <sup>16</sup> Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

*Final Instructions*

<sup>17</sup> I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them. <sup>18</sup> For such people do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the simple-minded. <sup>19</sup> For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I want you to be wise in what is good and guileless in what is evil. <sup>20</sup> The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**Psalm 27:1 (NRSV)**

*Triumphant Song of Confidence Of David.*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?



**Proverbs 10:26 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> Like vinegar to the teeth,  
and smoke to the eyes,  
so are the lazy to their  
employers.

**March 6**



**2 Chronicles 34:14-33 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> While they were bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the LORD, the priest Hilkiah found the book of the law of the LORD given through Moses.

<sup>15</sup> Hilkiah said to the secretary Shaphan, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD"; and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan.

<sup>16</sup> Shaphan brought the book to the king, and further reported to the king, "All that was committed to your servants they are doing.

<sup>17</sup> They have emptied out the money that was found in the house of the LORD and have delivered it into the hand of

the overseers and the workers." <sup>18</sup> The secretary Shaphan informed the king, "The priest Hilkiah has given me a book." Shaphan then read it aloud to the king.

<sup>19</sup> When the king heard the words of the law he tore his clothes. <sup>20</sup> Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, the secretary Shaphan, and the king's servant Asaiah: <sup>21</sup> "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found; for the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us is great, because our ancestors did not keep the word of the LORD, to act in accordance with all that is written in this book."

*The Prophet Huldah Consulted*

<sup>22</sup> So Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent went to the prophet Huldah, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe (who lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter) and spoke to her to that effect. <sup>23</sup> She declared to

them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell the man who sent you to me, <sup>24</sup> Thus says the LORD: I will indeed bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book that was read before the king of Judah. <sup>25</sup> Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the works of their hands, my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched. <sup>26</sup> But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, <sup>27</sup> because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me, and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the LORD. <sup>28</sup> I will gather you to your ancestors and you shall be gathered to your grave in

peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place and its inhabitants." They took the message back to the king.

*The Covenant Renewed*  
(2 Kings 23:1–20)

<sup>29</sup> Then the king sent word and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>30</sup> The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the Levites, all the people both great and small; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. <sup>31</sup> The king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. <sup>32</sup> Then he made all who were present in Jerusalem and in Benjamin pledge themselves to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted according to the covenant of God, the God of

their ancestors. <sup>33</sup> Josiah took away all the abominations from all the territory that belonged to the people of Israel, and made all who were in Israel worship the LORD their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the LORD the God of their ancestors.

**Romans 16:21-27 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> Timothy, my co-worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my relatives.

<sup>22</sup> I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord.

<sup>23</sup> Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

*Final Doxology*

<sup>25</sup> Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made

known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

**Psalm 27:2-3 (NRSV)**

<sup>2</sup> When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh— my adversaries and foes— they shall stumble and fall.

<sup>3</sup> Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

**Proverbs 10:27–28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.

<sup>28</sup> The hope of the righteous ends in gladness, but the expectation of the wicked comes to nothing.

## March 7



### 2 Chronicles 35:1-27 (NRSV)

*Celebration of the Passover*  
(2 Kings 23:21–23)

**35** Josiah kept a passover to the LORD in Jerusalem; they slaughtered the passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month. <sup>2</sup> He appointed the priests to their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the LORD. <sup>3</sup> He said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy to the LORD, “Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; you need no longer carry it on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and his people Israel. <sup>4</sup> Make preparations by your ancestral houses by your divisions, following the written directions of King David of Israel and the written directions of his son Solomon. <sup>5</sup> Take position in the holy place according to the groupings of the ancestral houses of your kindred the people, and let there be

Levites for each division of an ancestral house. <sup>6</sup> Slaughter the passover lamb, sanctify yourselves, and on behalf of your kindred make preparations, acting according to the word of the LORD by Moses.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Josiah contributed to the people, as passover offerings for all that were present, lambs and kids from the flock to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bulls; these were from the king’s possessions. <sup>8</sup> His officials contributed willingly to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the chief officers of the house of God, gave to the priests for the passover offerings two thousand six hundred lambs and kids and three hundred bulls. <sup>9</sup> Conaniah also, and his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, the chiefs of the Levites, gave to the Levites for the passover offerings five thousand lambs and kids and five hundred bulls.

<sup>10</sup> When the service had been prepared for, the priests

stood in their place, and the Levites in their divisions according to the king's command. <sup>11</sup> They slaughtered the passover lamb, and the priests dashed the blood that they received from them, while the Levites did the skinning. <sup>12</sup> They set aside the burnt offerings so that they might distribute them according to the groupings of the ancestral houses of the people, to offer to the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. And they did the same with the bulls. <sup>13</sup> They roasted the passover lamb with fire according to the ordinance; and they boiled the holy offerings in pots, in caldrons, and in pans, and carried them quickly to all the people.

<sup>14</sup> Afterward they made preparations for themselves and for the priests, because the priests the descendants of Aaron were occupied in offering the burnt offerings and the fat parts until night; so the Levites made preparations for themselves and for the priests, the descendants of Aaron. <sup>15</sup> The singers, the descendants of Asaph, were in

their place according to the command of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and the king's seer Jeduthun. The gatekeepers were at each gate; they did not need to interrupt their service, for their kindred the Levites made preparations for them.

<sup>16</sup> So all the service of the LORD was prepared that day, to keep the passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah.

<sup>17</sup> The people of Israel who were present kept the passover at that time, and the festival of unleavened bread seven days. <sup>18</sup> No passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; none of the kings of Israel had kept such a passover as was kept by Josiah, by the priests and the Levites, by all Judah and Israel who were present, and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>19</sup> In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this passover was kept.

*Defeat by Pharaoh Neco  
and Death of Josiah  
(2 Kings 23:28–30)*



<sup>20</sup> After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, King Neco of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him. <sup>21</sup> But Neco sent envoys to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today, but against the house with which I am at war; and God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, so that he will not destroy you." <sup>22</sup> But Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but joined battle in the plain of Megiddo. <sup>23</sup> The archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am badly wounded." <sup>24</sup> So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was buried in the tombs of his ancestors. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. <sup>25</sup> Jeremiah also uttered a

lament for Josiah, and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a custom in Israel; they are recorded in the Laments. <sup>26</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his faithful deeds in accordance with what is written in the law of the LORD, <sup>27</sup> and his acts, first and last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

### **1 Corinthians 1:1-9 (NRSV)**

#### *Salutation*

**1** Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

<sup>2</sup> To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been

given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup> for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—  
<sup>6</sup> just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— <sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup> He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Psalm 27:4-6** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> One thing I asked of the LORD,  
that will I seek after:  
to live in the house of the LORD  
all the days of my life,  
to behold the beauty of the LORD,  
and to inquire in his temple.  
<sup>5</sup> For he will hide me in his shelter  
in the day of trouble;  
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;

he will set me high on a rock.

<sup>6</sup> Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me,  
and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;  
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

**Proverbs 10:29–30** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> The way of the LORD is a stronghold for the upright,  
but destruction for evildoers.

<sup>30</sup> The righteous will never be removed,  
but the wicked will not remain in the land.

**March 8**



**2 Chronicles 36:1-23** (NRSV)

*Reign of Jehoahaz*  
(2 Kings 23:31–33)

**36** The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king to succeed his father in Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Jehoahaz was twenty-three

years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> Then the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. <sup>4</sup> The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim; but Neco took his brother Jehoahaz and carried him to Egypt.

*Reign and Captivity  
of Jehoiakim  
(2 Kings 23:34–24:7)*

<sup>5</sup> Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. <sup>6</sup> Against him King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up, and bound him with fetters to take him to Babylon. <sup>7</sup> Nebuchadnezzar also carried some of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his palace in Babylon. <sup>8</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and the abominations that he did, and what was found against him,

are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah; and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him.

*Reign and Captivity  
of Jehoiachin  
(2 Kings 24:8–17)*

<sup>9</sup> Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. <sup>10</sup> In the spring of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, along with the precious vessels of the house of the LORD, and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

*Reign of Zedekiah  
(2 Kings 24:18–20; Jer 52:1–3a)*

<sup>11</sup> Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. <sup>12</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. He did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had

made him swear by God; he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>14</sup> All the leading priests and the people also were exceedingly unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of the LORD that he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

### *The Fall of Jerusalem*

(2 Kings 25:1–21; Jer 52:3b–30)

<sup>15</sup> The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; <sup>16</sup> but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD against his people became so great that there was no remedy.

<sup>17</sup> Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their youths with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or young woman, the aged or the feeble; he gave

them all into his hand. <sup>18</sup> All the vessels of the house of God, large and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officials, all these he brought to Babylon. <sup>19</sup> They burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious vessels. <sup>20</sup> He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, <sup>21</sup> to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had made up for its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

### *Cyrus Proclaims Liberty for the Exiles*

(Ezra 1:1–4)

<sup>22</sup> In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his

kingdom and also declared in a written edict: <sup>23</sup> “Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him! Let him go up.”

**1 Corinthians 1:10-17** (NRSV)

*Divisions in the Church*

<sup>10</sup> Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. <sup>11</sup> For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. <sup>12</sup> What I mean is that each of you says, “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” <sup>13</sup> Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup> I thank

God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, <sup>15</sup> so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. <sup>16</sup> (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) <sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

**Psalms 27:7-10** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud,  
be gracious to me and answer me!  
<sup>8</sup> “Come,” my heart says,  
“seek his face!”  
Your face, LORD, do I seek.  
<sup>9</sup> Do not hide your face from me.  
Do not turn your servant away in anger,  
you who have been my help.  
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,  
O God of my salvation!  
<sup>10</sup> If my father and mother forsake me,

the LORD will take me up.

**Proverbs 10:31–32** (NRSV)

- <sup>31</sup> The mouth of the  
righteous brings forth  
wisdom,  
but the perverse tongue  
will be cut off.
- <sup>32</sup> The lips of the righteous  
know what is  
acceptable,  
but the mouth of the  
wicked what is  
perverse.

## March 9



**Ezra 1:1-2:35** (NRSV)

*End of the Babylonian  
Captivity  
(2 Chr 36:22–23)*

**1** In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in order that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom,

and also in a written edict declared:

<sup>2</sup> “Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah. <sup>3</sup> Any of those among you who are of his people—may their God be with them!—are now permitted to go up to Jerusalem in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem; <sup>4</sup> and let all survivors, in whatever place they reside, be assisted by the people of their place with silver and gold, with goods and with animals, besides freewill offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem.”

<sup>5</sup> The heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites—everyone whose spirit God had stirred—got ready to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> All their neighbors aided them with silver vessels, with gold, with goods, with animals, and with valuable gifts, besides all

that was freely offered. <sup>7</sup> King Cyrus himself brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods. <sup>8</sup> King Cyrus of Persia had them released into the charge of Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. <sup>9</sup> And this was the inventory: gold basins, thirty; silver basins, one thousand; knives, twenty-nine; <sup>10</sup> gold bowls, thirty; other silver bowls, four hundred ten; other vessels, one thousand; <sup>11</sup> the total of the gold and silver vessels was five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar brought up, when the exiles were brought up from Babylonia to Jerusalem.

*List of the Returned Exiles*  
(Neh 7:6–73)

**2** Now these were the people of the province who came from those captive exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried captive to Babylonia; they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, all to their own towns. <sup>2</sup> They came

with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

The number of the Israelite people: <sup>3</sup> the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two. <sup>4</sup> Of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy-two. <sup>5</sup> Of Arah, seven hundred seventy-five. <sup>6</sup> Of Pahath-moab, namely the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred twelve. <sup>7</sup> Of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. <sup>8</sup> Of Zattu, nine hundred forty-five. <sup>9</sup> Of Zaccai, seven hundred sixty. <sup>10</sup> Of Bani, six hundred forty-two. <sup>11</sup> Of Bebai, six hundred twenty-three. <sup>12</sup> Of Azgad, one thousand two hundred twenty-two. <sup>13</sup> Of Adonikam, six hundred sixty-six. <sup>14</sup> Of Bigvai, two thousand fifty-six. <sup>15</sup> Of Adin, four hundred fifty-four. <sup>16</sup> Of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, ninety-eight. <sup>17</sup> Of Bezai, three hundred twenty-three. <sup>18</sup> Of Jorah, one hundred twelve. <sup>19</sup> Of Hashum, two hundred twenty-three. <sup>20</sup> Of Gibbar, ninety-five. <sup>21</sup> Of Bethlehem, one hundred

twenty-three. <sup>22</sup> The people of Netophah, fifty-six. <sup>23</sup> Of Anathoth, one hundred twenty-eight. <sup>24</sup> The descendants of Azmaveth, forty-two. <sup>25</sup> Of Kiriatharim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty-three. <sup>26</sup> Of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty-one. <sup>27</sup> The people of Michmas, one hundred twenty-two. <sup>28</sup> Of Bethel and Ai, two hundred twenty-three. <sup>29</sup> The descendants of Nebo, fifty-two. <sup>30</sup> Of Magbish, one hundred fifty-six. <sup>31</sup> Of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. <sup>32</sup> Of Harim, three hundred twenty. <sup>33</sup> Of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty-five. <sup>34</sup> Of Jericho, three hundred forty-five. <sup>35</sup> Of Senaah, three thousand six hundred thirty.

**1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (NRSV)**

*Christ the Power and  
Wisdom of God  
(Cp Isa 29:14)*

<sup>18</sup> For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

**Psalms 27:11-14 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, O LORD,



and lead me on a level  
path  
because of my enemies.

- <sup>12</sup> Do not give me up to the  
will of my adversaries,  
for false witnesses have  
risen against me,  
and they are breathing  
out violence.
- <sup>13</sup> I believe that I shall see the  
goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living.
- <sup>14</sup> Wait for the LORD;  
be strong, and let your  
heart take courage;  
wait for the LORD!

### Proverbs 11:1–3 (NRSV)

- <sup>1</sup> A false balance is an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
but an accurate weight is  
his delight.
- <sup>2</sup> **When pride comes, then  
comes disgrace;  
but wisdom is with the  
humble.**
- <sup>3</sup> The integrity of the upright  
guides them,  
but the crookedness of  
the treacherous  
destroys them.

## March 10



### Ezra 2:36–70 (NRSV)

<sup>36</sup>The priests: the  
descendants of Jedaiah, of the  
house of Jeshua, nine hundred  
seventy-three. <sup>37</sup>Of Immer,  
one thousand fifty-two. <sup>38</sup>Of  
Pashhur, one thousand two  
hundred forty-seven. <sup>39</sup>Of  
Harim, one thousand  
seventeen.

<sup>40</sup>The Levites: the  
descendants of Jeshua and  
Kadmiel, of the descendants of  
Hodaviah, seventy-four. <sup>41</sup>The  
singers: the descendants of  
Asaph, one hundred twenty-  
eight. <sup>42</sup>The descendants of  
the gatekeepers: of Shallum,  
of Ater, of Talmon, of Akkub,  
of Hatita, and of Shobai, in all  
one hundred thirty-nine.

<sup>43</sup>The temple servants: the  
descendants of Ziha, Hasupha,  
Tabbaoth, <sup>44</sup>Keros, Siaha,  
Padon, <sup>45</sup>Lebanah, Hagabah,  
Akkub, <sup>46</sup>Hagab, Shamlai,  
Hanan, <sup>47</sup>Giddel, Gahar,  
Reaiah, <sup>48</sup>Rezin, Nekoda,  
Gazzam, <sup>49</sup>Uzza, Paseah,  
Besai, <sup>50</sup>Asnah, Meunim,  
Nephisim, <sup>51</sup>Bakbuk, Hakupha,

Harhur,<sup>52</sup> Bazluth, Mehida,  
Harsha,<sup>53</sup> Barkos, Sisera,  
Temah,<sup>54</sup> Neziah, and Hatipha.

<sup>55</sup> The descendants of  
Solomon's servants: Sotai,  
Hassophereth, Peruda,  
<sup>56</sup> Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel,  
<sup>57</sup> Shephathiah, Hattil,  
Pochereth-hazzebaim, and  
Ami.

<sup>58</sup> All the temple servants  
and the descendants of  
Solomon's servants were three  
hundred ninety-two.

<sup>59</sup> The following were  
those who came up from Tel-  
melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub,  
Addan, and Immer, though  
they could not prove their  
families or their descent,  
whether they belonged to  
Israel: <sup>60</sup> the descendants of  
Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda,  
six hundred fifty-two. <sup>61</sup> Also,  
of the descendants of the  
priests: the descendants of  
Habaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai  
(who had married one of the  
daughters of Barzillai the  
Gileadite, and was called by  
their name). <sup>62</sup> These looked  
for their entries in the  
genealogical records, but they  
were not found there, and so  
they were excluded from the

priesthood as unclean; <sup>63</sup> the  
governor told them that they  
were not to partake of the  
most holy food, until there  
should be a priest to consult  
Urim and Thummim.

<sup>64</sup> The whole assembly  
together was forty-two  
thousand three hundred sixty,  
<sup>65</sup> besides their male and  
female servants, of whom  
there were seven thousand  
three hundred thirty-seven;  
and they had two hundred  
male and female singers.

<sup>66</sup> They had seven hundred  
thirty-six horses, two hundred  
forty-five mules, <sup>67</sup> four  
hundred thirty-five camels,  
and six thousand seven  
hundred twenty donkeys.

<sup>68</sup> As soon as they came to  
the house of the LORD in  
Jerusalem, some of the heads  
of families made freewill  
offerings for the house of God,  
to erect it on its site.

<sup>69</sup> According to their resources  
they gave to the building fund  
sixty-one thousand darics of  
gold, five thousand minas of  
silver, and one hundred  
priestly robes.

<sup>70</sup> The priests, the Levites,  
and some of the people lived

in Jerusalem and its vicinity; and the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all Israel in their towns.

**1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

*Proclaiming Christ Crucified*

**2** When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not

come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

**Psalm 28:1-5** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Help and  
Thanksgiving for It*  
Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> To you, O LORD, I call;  
my rock, do not refuse to  
hear me,  
for if you are silent to me,  
I shall be like those who  
go down to the Pit.
- <sup>2</sup> Hear the voice of my  
supplication,  
as I cry to you for help,  
as I lift up my hands  
toward your most holy  
sanctuary.
- <sup>3</sup> Do not drag me away with  
the wicked,

with those who are  
workers of evil,  
who speak peace with  
their neighbors,  
while mischief is in their  
hearts.

<sup>4</sup> Repay them according to  
their work,  
and according to the evil  
of their deeds;  
repay them according to  
the work of their  
hands;  
render them their due  
reward.

<sup>5</sup> Because they do not  
regard the works of the  
LORD,  
or the work of his hands,  
he will break them down  
and build them up no  
more.

**Proverbs 11:4** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Riches do not profit in the  
day of wrath,  
but righteousness  
delivers from death.

## March 11



**Ezra 3:1–13** (NRSV)

*Worship Restored at Jerusalem*

**3** When the seventh month came, and the Israelites were in the towns, the people gathered together in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> Then Jeshua son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his kin set out to build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as prescribed in the law of Moses the man of God.

<sup>3</sup> They set up the altar on its foundation, because they were in dread of the neighboring peoples, and they offered burnt offerings upon it to the LORD, morning and evening. <sup>4</sup> And they kept the festival of booths, as prescribed, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number according to the ordinance, as required for each day, <sup>5</sup> and after that the regular burnt offerings, the offerings at the new moon and at all the sacred festivals of the LORD, and the offerings of

everyone who made a freewill offering to the LORD. <sup>6</sup> From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid. <sup>7</sup> So they gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the Sidonians and the Tyrians to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the grant that they had from King Cyrus of Persia.

*Foundation Laid for the Temple*

<sup>8</sup> In the second year after their arrival at the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak made a beginning, together with the rest of their people, the priests and the Levites and all who had come to Jerusalem from the captivity. They appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to have the oversight of the work on the house of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> And Jeshua with his sons and his

kin, and Kadmiel and his sons, Binnui and Hodaviah along with the sons of Henadad, the Levites, their sons and kin, together took charge of the workers in the house of God.

<sup>10</sup> When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments were stationed to praise the LORD with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, according to the directions of King David of Israel; <sup>11</sup> and they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD,

“For he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever  
toward Israel.”


And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. <sup>12</sup> But many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, wept with a loud voice when they saw this house, though many shouted aloud for joy, <sup>13</sup> so that the people could not

distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted so loudly that the sound was heard far away.

**1 Corinthians 2:6-16** (NRSV)

*The True Wisdom of God*

<sup>6</sup> Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. <sup>7</sup> But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> But, as it is written,



“What no eye has seen,  
nor ear heard,  
nor the human heart  
conceived,  
what God has prepared for  
those who love him” —

<sup>10</sup> these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one

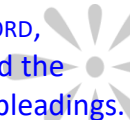
comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. <sup>13</sup> And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

<sup>14</sup> Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup> Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

<sup>16</sup> “For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

**Psalms 28:6-9** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
for he has heard the  
sound of my pleadings.



7 The LORD is my strength  
and my shield;  
in him my heart trusts;  
so I am helped, and my  
heart exults,  
and with my song I give  
thanks to him.

8 The LORD is the strength of  
his people;  
he is the saving refuge of  
his anointed.

9 O save your people, and  
bless your heritage;  
be their shepherd, and  
carry them forever.

**Proverbs 11:5–6** (NRSV)

5 The righteousness of the  
blameless keeps their  
ways straight,  
but the wicked fall by  
their own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of the  
upright saves them,  
but the treacherous  
are taken captive by  
their schemes.

## March 12



**Ezra 4:1-24** (NRSV)

*Resistance to Rebuilding the  
Temple*

**4** When the adversaries of  
Judah and Benjamin heard  
that the returned exiles were  
building a temple to the LORD,  
the God of Israel, <sup>2</sup> they  
approached Zerubbabel and  
the heads of families and said  
to them, “Let us build with  
you, for we worship your God  
as you do, and we have been  
sacrificing to him ever since  
the days of King Esar-haddon  
of Assyria who brought us  
here.” <sup>3</sup> But Zerubbabel,  
Jeshua, and the rest of the  
heads of families in Israel said  
to them, “You shall have no  
part with us in building a  
house to our God; but we  
alone will build to the LORD,  
the God of Israel, as King Cyrus  
of Persia has commanded us.”

<sup>4</sup> Then the people of the  
land discouraged the people of  
Judah, and made them afraid  
to build, <sup>5</sup> and they bribed  
officials to frustrate their plan  
throughout the reign of King

Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia.

*Rebuilding of Jerusalem  
Opposed*

<sup>6</sup>In the reign of Ahasuerus, in his accession year, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>7</sup>And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam and Mithredath and Tabeel and the rest of their associates wrote to King Artaxerxes of Persia; the letter was written in Aramaic and translated.

<sup>8</sup>Rehum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows <sup>9</sup>(then Rehum the royal deputy, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their associates, the judges, the envoys, the officials, the Persians, the people of Erech, the Babylonians, the people of Susa, that is, the Elamites, <sup>10</sup>and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River wrote—and

now <sup>11</sup>this is a copy of the letter that they sent):

“To King Artaxerxes: Your servants, the people of the province Beyond the River, send greeting. And now <sup>12</sup>may it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you to us have gone to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city; they are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations. <sup>13</sup>Now may it be known to the king that, if this city is rebuilt and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom, or toll, and the royal revenue will be reduced. <sup>14</sup>Now because we share the salt of the palace and it is not fitting for us to witness the king’s dishonor, therefore we send and inform the king, <sup>15</sup>so that a search may be made in the annals of your ancestors. You will discover in the annals that this is a rebellious city, hurtful to kings and provinces, and that sedition was stirred up in it from long ago. On that account this city was laid waste. <sup>16</sup>We make known to the king that, if this city is



rebuilt and its walls finished, you will then have no possession in the province Beyond the River.”

<sup>17</sup>The king sent an answer: “To Rehum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their associates who live in Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River, greeting. And now <sup>18</sup>the letter that you sent to us has been read in translation before me. <sup>19</sup>So I made a decree, and someone searched and discovered that this city has risen against kings from long ago, and that rebellion and sedition have been made in it. <sup>20</sup>Jerusalem has had mighty kings who ruled over the whole province Beyond the River, to whom tribute, custom, and toll were paid. <sup>21</sup>Therefore issue an order that these people be made to cease, and that this city not be rebuilt, until I make a decree. <sup>22</sup>Moreover, take care not to be slack in this matter; why should damage grow to the hurt of the king?”

<sup>23</sup>Then when the copy of King Artaxerxes’ letter was read before Rehum and the

scribe Shimshai and their associates, they hurried to the Jews in Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease.

<sup>24</sup>At that time the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.

### **1 Corinthians 3:1-4** (NRSV)

#### *On Divisions in the Corinthian Church*

**3** And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, <sup>3</sup>for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? <sup>4</sup>For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not merely human?

### **Psalm 29:1-2** (NRSV)

#### *The Voice of God in a Great Storm*

A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- <sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name;  
worship the LORD in holy splendor.

**Proverbs 11:7** (NRSV)

- <sup>7</sup> When the wicked die, their hope perishes,  
and the expectation of the godless comes to nothing.

**March 13**



**Ezra 5:1-6:1** (NRSV)

*Restoration of the Temple Resumed  
(Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1)*

- 5** Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.
- <sup>2</sup> Then Zerubbabel son of

Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set out to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God, helping them.

<sup>3</sup> At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus, “Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?” <sup>4</sup> They also asked them this, “What are the names of the men who are building this building?”

<sup>5</sup> But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report reached Darius and then answer was returned by letter in reply to it.

<sup>6</sup> The copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in the province Beyond the River sent to King Darius; <sup>7</sup> they sent him a report, in which was written as follows: “To Darius the king, all peace! <sup>8</sup> May it be known to the king that we went to the province

of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being built of hewn stone, and timber is laid in the walls; this work is being done diligently and prospers in their hands. <sup>9</sup> Then we spoke to those elders and asked them, 'Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?' <sup>10</sup> We also asked them their names, for your information, so that we might write down the names of the men at their head. <sup>11</sup> This was their reply to us: 'We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. <sup>12</sup> But because our ancestors had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia. <sup>13</sup> However, King Cyrus of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt. <sup>14</sup> Moreover, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which

Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem and had brought into the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. <sup>15</sup> He said to him, "Take these vessels; go and put them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site." <sup>16</sup> Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from that time until now it has been under construction, and it is not yet finished.' <sup>17</sup> And now, if it seems good to the king, have a search made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. Let the king send us his pleasure in this matter."

#### *The Decree of Darius*

**6** Then King Darius made a decree, and they searched the archives where the documents were stored in Babylon.

**1 Corinthians 3:5-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. <sup>6</sup> I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

<sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. <sup>9</sup> For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

<sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

<sup>12</sup> Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— <sup>13</sup> the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it,

because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. <sup>14</sup> If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.

**Psalms 29:3-11 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup> The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

<sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

<sup>7</sup> The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

<sup>8</sup> The voice of the LORD  
shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the  
wilderness of Kadesh.

<sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD  
causes the oaks to  
whirl,  
and strips the forest  
bare;  
and in his temple all say,  
“Glory!”

<sup>10</sup> The LORD sits enthroned  
over the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned  
as king forever.

<sup>11</sup> **May the LORD give strength  
to his people!  
May the LORD bless his  
people with peace!**

**Proverbs 11:8** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> The righteous are  
delivered from trouble,  
and the wicked get into  
it instead.

## March 14



**Ezra 6:2-22** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> But it was in Ecbatana, the capital in the province of Media, that a scroll was found on which this was written: “A record. <sup>3</sup> In the first year of his reign, King Cyrus issued a decree: Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be rebuilt, the place where sacrifices are offered and burnt offerings are brought; its height shall be sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, <sup>4</sup> with three courses of hewn stones and one course of timber; let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. <sup>5</sup> Moreover, let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought back to the temple in Jerusalem, each to its place; you shall put them in the house of God.”

<sup>6</sup> “Now you, Tattenai, governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-

bozenai, and you, their associates, the envoys in the province Beyond the River, keep away;<sup>7</sup> let the work on this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

<sup>8</sup> Moreover I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God: the cost is to be paid to these people, in full and without delay, from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province Beyond the River.

<sup>9</sup> Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require—let that be given to them day by day without fail,<sup>10</sup> so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children.

<sup>11</sup> Furthermore I decree that if anyone alters this edict, a beam shall be pulled out of the house of the perpetrator, who then shall be impaled on it. The house shall be made a dunghill.<sup>12</sup> May the God who

has established his name there overthrow any king or people that shall put forth a hand to alter this, or to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, make a decree; let it be done with all diligence.”

### *Completion and Dedication of the Temple*

<sup>13</sup> Then, according to the word sent by King Darius, Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what King Darius had ordered.<sup>14</sup> So the elders of the Jews built and prospered, through the prophesying of the prophet Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo. They finished their building by command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus, Darius, and King Artaxerxes of Persia;<sup>15</sup> and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

<sup>16</sup> The people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.

<sup>17</sup> They offered at the dedication of this house of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. <sup>18</sup> Then they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their courses for the service of God at Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

*The Passover Celebrated*  
(Cp Deut 16:1–8)

<sup>19</sup> On the fourteenth day of the first month the returned exiles kept the passover. <sup>20</sup> For both the priests and the Levites had purified themselves; all of them were clean. So they killed the passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves. <sup>21</sup> It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by all who had joined them and separated themselves from the pollutions of the nations of the land to worship the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>22</sup> With joy they celebrated the festival of unleavened bread

seven days; for the LORD had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.

**1 Corinthians 3:16-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? <sup>17</sup> If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

<sup>18</sup> Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. <sup>19</sup> For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written,

“He catches the wise in their craftiness,”

<sup>20</sup> and again,

“The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.”

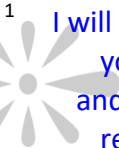
<sup>21</sup> So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, <sup>22</sup> whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present

or the future—all belong to you,<sup>23</sup> and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

**Psalms 30:1-3 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for Recovery  
from Grave Illness*

A Psalm. A Song at the dedication of the temple. Of David.

1 I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

2 O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

3 O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

**Proverbs 11:9–11 (NRSV)**

9 With their mouths the godless would destroy their neighbors, but by knowledge the righteous are delivered.

10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices;

and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.

11 By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

**March 15**



**Ezra 7:1–26 (NRSV)**

*The Coming and Work of Ezra*

**7** After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah,<sup>2</sup> son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub,<sup>3</sup> son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth,<sup>4</sup> son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki,<sup>5</sup> son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of the chief priest Aaron—<sup>6</sup> this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the LORD the God



of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was upon him.

<sup>7</sup> Some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants also went up to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. <sup>8</sup> They came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. <sup>9</sup> On the first day of the first month the journey up from Babylon was begun, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the gracious hand of his God was upon him. <sup>10</sup> For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel.

*The Letter of Artaxerxes  
to Ezra*

<sup>11</sup> This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to the priest Ezra, the scribe, a scholar of the text of the commandments of the LORD and his statutes for Israel: <sup>12</sup> “Artaxerxes, king of

kings, to the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven: Peace. And now <sup>13</sup> I decree that any of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites in my kingdom who freely offers to go to Jerusalem may go with you.

<sup>14</sup> For you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God, which is in your hand, <sup>15</sup> and also to convey the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, <sup>16</sup> with all the silver and gold that you shall find in the whole province of Babylonia, and with the freewill offerings of the people and the priests, given willingly for the house of their God in Jerusalem. <sup>17</sup> With this money, then, you shall with all diligence buy bulls, rams, and lambs, and their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and you shall offer them on the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem.

<sup>18</sup> Whatever seems good to you and your colleagues to do

with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do, according to the will of your God. <sup>19</sup> The vessels that have been given you for the service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem. <sup>20</sup> And whatever else is required for the house of your God, which you are responsible for providing, you may provide out of the king's treasury.

<sup>21</sup> "I, King Artaxerxes, decree to all the treasurers in the province Beyond the River: Whatever the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, requires of you, let it be done with all diligence, <sup>22</sup> up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred cors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and unlimited salt.

<sup>23</sup> Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, or wrath will come upon the realm of the king and his heirs. <sup>24</sup> We also notify you that it shall not be lawful to impose tribute, custom, or toll on any of the priests, the Levites, the

singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or other servants of this house of God.

<sup>25</sup> "And you, Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your God; and you shall teach those who do not know them. <sup>26</sup> All who will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be strictly executed on them, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of their goods or for imprisonment."

#### **1 Corinthians 4:1-9 (NRSV)**

##### *The Ministry of the Apostles*

**4** Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. <sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. <sup>3</sup> But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. <sup>4</sup> I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.

<sup>5</sup> Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God.

<sup>6</sup> I have applied all this to Apollos and myself for your benefit, brothers and sisters, so that you may learn through us the meaning of the saying, “Nothing beyond what is written,” so that none of you will be puffed up in favor of one against another. <sup>7</sup> For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?

<sup>8</sup> Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Quite apart from us you have become kings! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings, so that we might be kings with you! <sup>9</sup> For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a

spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals.

**Psalm 30:4-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.

<sup>5</sup> For his anger is but for a moment;  
his favor is for a lifetime.  
Weeping may linger for the night,  
but joy comes with the morning.

<sup>6</sup> As for me, I said in my prosperity,  
“I shall never be moved.”

<sup>7</sup> By your favor, O LORD, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed.

<sup>8</sup> To you, O LORD, I cried, and to the LORD I made supplication:

<sup>9</sup> “What profit is there in my death,  
if I go down to the Pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
Will it tell of your  
faithfulness?”

<sup>10</sup> Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!  
O LORD, be my helper!”

- 11 You have turned my  
mourning into dancing;  
you have taken off my  
sackcloth  
and clothed me with joy,  
12 so that my soul may praise  
you and not be silent.  
O LORD my God, I will  
give thanks to you  
forever.

**Proverbs 11:12–13** (NRSV)

- 12 Whoever belittles another  
lacks sense,  
but an intelligent person  
remains silent.  
13 A gossip goes about telling  
secrets,  
but one who is  
trustworthy in spirit  
keeps a confidence.

**March 16**



**Ezra 7:27-8:20** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the  
God of our ancestors, who put  
such a thing as this into the  
heart of the king to glorify the

house of the LORD in  
Jerusalem, <sup>28</sup> and who  
extended to me steadfast love  
before the king and his  
counselors, and before all the  
king's mighty officers. I took  
courage, for the hand of the  
LORD my God was upon me,  
and I gathered leaders from  
Israel to go up with me.

*Heads of Families Who  
Returned with Ezra*

**8** These are their family  
heads, and this is the  
genealogy of those who went  
up with me from Babylonia, in  
the reign of King Artaxerxes:  
<sup>2</sup> Of the descendants of  
Phinehas, Gershom. Of  
Ithamar, Daniel. Of David,  
Hattush, <sup>3</sup> of the descendants  
of Shecaniah. Of Parosh,  
Zechariah, with whom were  
registered one hundred fifty  
males. <sup>4</sup> Of the descendants of  
Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai son  
of Zerariah, and with him two  
hundred males. <sup>5</sup> Of the  
descendants of Zattu,  
Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and  
with him three hundred males.  
<sup>6</sup> Of the descendants of Adin,  
Ebed son of Jonathan, and  
with him fifty males. <sup>7</sup> Of the

descendants of Elam, Jeshaiiah son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.<sup>8</sup> Of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him eighty males.<sup>9</sup> Of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred eighteen males.<sup>10</sup> Of the descendants of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him one hundred sixty males.<sup>11</sup> Of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males.<sup>12</sup> Of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred ten males.<sup>13</sup> Of the descendants of Adonikam, those who came later, their names being Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, and with them sixty males.<sup>14</sup> Of the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai and Zaccur, and with them seventy males.

*Servants for the Temple*

<sup>15</sup> I gathered them by the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found there none

of the descendants of Levi.

<sup>16</sup> Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leaders, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were wise,<sup>17</sup> and sent them to Iddo, the leader at the place called Casiphia, telling them what to say to Iddo and his colleagues the temple servants at Casiphia, namely, to send us ministers for the house of our God.<sup>18</sup> Since the gracious hand of our God was upon us, they brought us a man of discretion, of the descendants of Mahli son of Levi son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and kin, eighteen;<sup>19</sup> also Hashabiah and with him Jeshaiiah of the descendants of Merari, with his kin and their sons, twenty;<sup>20</sup> besides two hundred twenty of the temple servants, whom David and his officials had set apart to attend the Levites. These were all mentioned by name.

**1 Corinthians 4:10-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak,

but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. <sup>11</sup>To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, <sup>12</sup>and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; <sup>13</sup>when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day.

#### *Fatherly Admonition*

<sup>14</sup>I am not writing this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. <sup>15</sup>For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. Indeed, in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. <sup>16</sup>I appeal to you, then, be imitators of me. <sup>17</sup>For this reason I sent you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church. <sup>18</sup>But some of you, thinking that I am not

coming to you, have become arrogant. <sup>19</sup>But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. <sup>20</sup>For the kingdom of God depends not on talk but on power. <sup>21</sup>What would you prefer? Am I to come to you with a stick, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

#### **Psalm 31:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Prayer and Praise for Deliverance from Enemies*  
To the leader. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;  
do not let me ever be put to shame;  
in your righteousness deliver me.
- <sup>2</sup> Incline your ear to me;  
rescue me speedily.  
Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a strong fortress to save me.

#### **Proverbs 11:14 (NRSV)**

- <sup>14</sup> Where there is no guidance, a nation falls,  
but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.

## March 17



**Ezra 8:21-36** (NRSV)

### *Fasting and Prayer for Protection*

<sup>21</sup>Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might deny ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our possessions. <sup>22</sup>For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and cavalry to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king that the hand of our God is gracious to all who seek him, but his power and his wrath are against all who forsake him. <sup>23</sup>So we fasted and petitioned our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

### *Gifts for the Temple*

<sup>24</sup>Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their kin with them. <sup>25</sup>And I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the vessels, the offering for the house of

our God that the king, his counselors, his lords, and all Israel there present had offered; <sup>26</sup>I weighed out into their hand six hundred fifty talents of silver, and one hundred silver vessels worth ... talents, and one hundred talents of gold, <sup>27</sup>twenty gold bowls worth a thousand darics, and two vessels of fine polished bronze as precious as gold. <sup>28</sup>And I said to them, "You are holy to the LORD, and the vessels are holy; and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your ancestors. <sup>29</sup>Guard them and keep them until you weigh them before the chief priests and the Levites and the heads of families in Israel at Jerusalem, within the chambers of the house of the LORD." <sup>30</sup>So the priests and the Levites took over the silver, the gold, and the vessels as they were weighed out, to bring them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God.

### *The Return to Jerusalem*

<sup>31</sup>Then we left the river Ahava on the twelfth day of

the first month, to go to Jerusalem; the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes along the way.

<sup>32</sup> We came to Jerusalem and remained there three days.

<sup>33</sup> On the fourth day, within the house of our God, the silver, the gold, and the vessels were weighed into the hands of the priest Meremoth son of Uriah, and with him was Eleazar son of Phinehas, and with them were the Levites, Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. <sup>34</sup> The total was counted and weighed, and the weight of everything was recorded.

<sup>35</sup> At that time those who had come from captivity, the returned exiles, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin offering twelve male goats; all this was a burnt offering to the LORD.

<sup>36</sup> They also delivered the king's commissions to the king's satraps and to the governors of the province Beyond the River; and they

supported the people and the house of God.

**1 Corinthians 5:1-8 (NRSV)**  
*Sexual Immorality  
Defiles the Church*

**5** It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not found even among pagans; for a man is living with his father's wife. <sup>2</sup> And you are arrogant! Should you not rather have mourned, so that he who has done this would have been removed from among you?

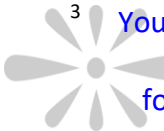
<sup>3</sup> For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present I have already pronounced judgment <sup>4</sup> in the name of the Lord Jesus on the man who has done such a thing. When you are assembled, and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup> you are to hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> Your boasting is not a good thing. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? <sup>7</sup> Clean



out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup>Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

**Psalms 31:3-8** (NRSV)



<sup>3</sup> You are indeed my rock  
and my fortress;  
for your name's sake  
lead me and guide me,  
<sup>4</sup> take me out of the net that  
is hidden for me,  
for you are my refuge.  
<sup>5</sup> Into your hand I commit  
my spirit;  
you have redeemed me,  
O LORD, faithful God.  
<sup>6</sup> You hate those who pay  
regard to worthless  
idols,  
but I trust in the LORD.  
<sup>7</sup> I will exult and rejoice in  
your steadfast love,  
because you have seen  
my affliction;  
you have taken heed of  
my adversities,

<sup>8</sup> and have not delivered me  
into the hand of the  
enemy;  
you have set my feet in a  
broad place.

**Proverbs 11:15** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> To guarantee loans for a  
stranger brings trouble,  
but there is safety in  
refusing to do so.

**March 18**



**Ezra 9:1-15** (NRSV)

*enunciation of Mixed  
Marriages*

**9** After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the

Egyptians, and the Amorites.  
<sup>2</sup> For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons. Thus the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands, and in this faithlessness the officials and leaders have led the way.”<sup>3</sup> When I heard this, I tore my garment and my mantle, and pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat appalled.<sup>4</sup> Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice.

*Ezra's Prayer*

<sup>5</sup> At the evening sacrifice I got up from my fasting, with my garments and my mantle torn, and fell on my knees, spread out my hands to the LORD my God,<sup>6</sup> and said,  
“O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens.<sup>7</sup> From the days of our ancestors to this day we

have been deep in guilt, and for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as is now the case.<sup>8</sup> But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the LORD our God, who has left us a remnant, and given us a stake in his holy place, in order that he may brighten our eyes and grant us a little sustenance in our slavery.<sup>9</sup> For we are slaves; yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to give us new life to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judea and Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> “And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments,<sup>11</sup> which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land that you are entering to possess is a land unclean with the pollutions of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations. They have filled

it from end to end with their uncleanness.<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, so that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.’<sup>13</sup> After all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have given us such a remnant as this,<sup>14</sup> shall we break your commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who practice these abominations? Would you not be angry with us until you destroy us without remnant or survivor?<sup>15</sup> O LORD, God of Israel, you are just, but we have escaped as a remnant, as is now the case. Here we are before you in our guilt, though no one can face you because of this.”

**1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (NRSV)**

*Sexual Immorality  
Must Be Judged*

<sup>9</sup> I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral persons—<sup>10</sup> not at all meaning the immoral of this world, or the greedy and robbers, or idolaters, since you would then need to go out of the world.<sup>11</sup> But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber. Do not even eat with such a one.<sup>12</sup> For what have I to do with judging those outside? Is it not those who are inside that you are to judge?<sup>13</sup> God will judge those outside. “Drive out the wicked person from among you.”

**Psalm 31:9-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD,  
for I am in distress;  
my eye wastes away  
from grief,  
my soul and body also.  
<sup>10</sup> For my life is spent with  
sorrow,

and my years with  
sighing;  
my strength fails because  
of my misery,  
and my bones waste  
away.  
11 I am the scorn of all my  
adversaries,  
a horror to my  
neighbors,  
an object of dread to my  
acquaintances;  
those who see me in the  
street flee from me.  
12 I have passed out of mind  
like one who is dead;  
I have become like a  
broken vessel.  
13 For I hear the whispering  
of many—  
terror all around!—  
as they scheme together  
against me,  
as they plot to take my  
life.  
14 But I trust in you, O LORD;  
I say, "You are my God."  
15 My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the  
hand of my enemies  
and persecutors.  
16 Let your face shine upon  
your servant;  
save me in your  
steadfast love.

17 Do not let me be put to  
shame, O LORD,  
for I call on you;  
let the wicked be put to  
shame;  
let them go  
dumbfounded to  
Sheol.

18 Let the lying lips be stilled  
that speak insolently  
against the righteous  
with pride and  
contempt.

**Proverbs 11:16–17 (NRSV)**

16 A gracious woman gets  
honor,  
but she who hates virtue  
is covered with shame.  
The timid become  
destitute,  
but the aggressive gain  
riches.

17 Those who are kind reward  
themselves,  
but the cruel do  
themselves harm.

## March 19



**Ezra 10:1-17** (NRSV)

### *The People's Response*

**10** While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him out of Israel; the people also wept bitterly. <sup>2</sup> Shecaniah son of Jehiel, of the descendants of Elam, addressed Ezra, saying, "We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. <sup>3</sup> So now let us make a covenant with our God to send away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. <sup>4</sup> Take action, for it is your duty, and we are with you; be strong, and do it." <sup>5</sup> Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear

that they would do as had been said. So they swore.

### *Foreign Wives and Their Children Rejected*

<sup>6</sup> Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God, and went to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, where he spent the night. He did not eat bread or drink water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles. <sup>7</sup> They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem, <sup>8</sup> and that if any did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all their property should be forfeited, and they themselves banned from the congregation of the exiles.

<sup>9</sup> Then all the people of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days; it was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the

heavy rain. <sup>10</sup> Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have trespassed and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. <sup>11</sup> Now make confession to the LORD the God of your ancestors, and do his will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives.” <sup>12</sup> Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, “It is so; we must do as you have said. <sup>13</sup> But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain; we cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for many of us have transgressed in this matter. <sup>14</sup> Let our officials represent the whole assembly, and let all in our towns who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every town, until the fierce wrath of our God on this account is averted from us.” <sup>15</sup> Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levites supported them.

<sup>16</sup> Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men, heads of families, according to their families, each of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter. <sup>17</sup> By the first day of the first month they had come to the end of all the men who had married foreign women.

### **1 Corinthians 6:1-8 (NRSV)**

#### *Lawsuits among Believers*

**6** When any of you has a grievance against another, do you dare to take it to court before the unrighteous, instead of taking it before the saints? <sup>2</sup> Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we are to judge angels—to say nothing of ordinary matters? <sup>4</sup> If you have ordinary cases, then, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? <sup>5</sup> I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to decide between

one believer and another,  
<sup>6</sup> but a believer goes to court  
against a believer—and before  
unbelievers at that?

<sup>7</sup> In fact, to have lawsuits  
at all with one another is  
already a defeat for you. Why  
not rather be wronged? Why  
not rather be defrauded? <sup>8</sup> But  
you yourselves wrong and  
defraud—and believers at  
that.

**Psalm 31:19-20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> O how abundant is your  
goodness  
that you have laid up for  
those who fear you,  
and accomplished for  
those who take refuge  
in you,  
in the sight of everyone!

<sup>20</sup> In the shelter of your  
presence you hide  
them  
from human plots;  
you hold them safe under  
your shelter  
from contentious  
tongues.

**Proverbs 11:18–19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> The wicked earn no real  
gain,

but those who sow  
righteousness get a  
true reward.

<sup>19</sup> Whoever is steadfast in  
righteousness will live,  
but whoever pursues evil  
will die.

**March 20**



**Ezra 10:18-44** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> There were found of the  
descendants of the priests  
who had married foreign  
women, of the descendants of  
Jeshua son of Jozadak and his  
brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer,  
Jarib, and Gedaliah. <sup>19</sup> They  
pledged themselves to send  
away their wives, and their  
guilt offering was a ram of the  
flock for their guilt. <sup>20</sup> Of the  
descendants of Immer: Hanani  
and Zebadiah. <sup>21</sup> Of the  
descendants of Harim:  
Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah,  
Jehiel, and Uziah. <sup>22</sup> Of the  
descendants of Pashhur:

Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

<sup>23</sup> Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

<sup>24</sup> Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

<sup>25</sup> And of Israel: of the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah, and Benaiah. <sup>26</sup> Of the

descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.

<sup>27</sup> Of the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

<sup>28</sup> Of the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. <sup>29</sup> Of the

descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.

<sup>30</sup> Of the descendants of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. <sup>31</sup> Of the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, <sup>32</sup> Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. <sup>33</sup> Of the descendants of Hashum:

Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. <sup>34</sup> Of the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, <sup>35</sup> Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, <sup>36</sup> Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, <sup>37</sup> Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu. <sup>38</sup> Of the descendants of Binnui: Shimei, <sup>39</sup> Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, <sup>40</sup> Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, <sup>41</sup> Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, <sup>42</sup> Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. <sup>43</sup> Of the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. <sup>44</sup> All these had married foreign women, and they sent them away with their children.

### **1 Corinthians 6:9-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, <sup>10</sup> thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you



were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

*Glorify God in Body and Spirit*

<sup>12</sup> “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.

<sup>13</sup> “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

<sup>14</sup> And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

<sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “The two shall be one flesh.” <sup>17</sup> But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup> Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body;

but the fornicator sins against the body itself. <sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

**Psalm 31:21-22** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
for he has wondrously  
shown his steadfast  
love to me  
when I was beset as a  
city under siege.

<sup>22</sup> I had said in my alarm,  
“I am driven far from  
your sight.”  
But you heard my  
supplications  
when I cried out to you  
for help.

**Proverbs 11:20–21** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> Crooked minds are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
but those of blameless  
ways are his delight.

<sup>21</sup> Be assured, the wicked will  
not go unpunished,  
but those who are  
righteous will escape.

## March 21



### Nehemiah 1:1–2:8 (NRSV)

#### *Nehemiah Prays for His People*

**1** The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital, <sup>2</sup> one of my brothers, Hanani, came with certain men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews that survived, those who had escaped the captivity, and about Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> They replied, “The survivors there in the province who escaped captivity are in great trouble and shame; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been destroyed by fire.”

<sup>4</sup> When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned for days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven. <sup>5</sup> I said, “O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments; <sup>6</sup> let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer

of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Both I and my family have sinned.

<sup>7</sup> We have offended you deeply, failing to keep the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances that you commanded your servant Moses. <sup>8</sup> Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; <sup>9</sup> but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are under the farthest skies, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place at which I have chosen to establish my name.’ <sup>10</sup> They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great power and your strong hand. <sup>11</sup> O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give success to your servant

today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man!”

At the time, I was cupbearer to the king.

### *Nehemiah Sent to Judah*

**2** In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was served him, I carried the wine and gave it to the king. Now, I had never been sad in his presence before. <sup>2</sup> So the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This can only be sadness of the heart.” Then I was very much afraid. <sup>3</sup> I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my ancestors’ graves, lies waste, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?” <sup>4</sup> Then the king said to me, “What do you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven. <sup>5</sup> Then I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my ancestors’ graves, so that I may rebuild it.” <sup>6</sup> The king said to me (the queen also was sitting beside him),

“How long will you be gone, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I set him a date. <sup>7</sup> Then I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may grant me passage until I arrive in Judah; <sup>8</sup> and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king’s forest, directing him to give me timber to make beams for the gates of the temple fortress, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.” And the king granted me what I asked, for the gracious hand of my God was upon me.

### **1 Corinthians 7:1-16** (NRSV)

#### *Directions concerning Marriage*

**7** Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is well for a man not to touch a woman.” <sup>2</sup> But because of cases of sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. <sup>3</sup> The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise

the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup>For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. <sup>5</sup>Do not deprive one another except perhaps by agreement for a set time, to devote yourselves to prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. <sup>6</sup>This I say by way of concession, not of command. <sup>7</sup>I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has a particular gift from God, one having one kind and another a different kind.

<sup>8</sup>To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain unmarried as I am. <sup>9</sup>But if they are not practicing self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion.

<sup>10</sup>To the married I give this command—not I but the Lord—that the wife should not separate from her husband <sup>11</sup>(but if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband),

and that the husband should not divorce his wife.

<sup>12</sup>To the rest I say—I and not the Lord—that if any believer has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. <sup>13</sup>And if any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. <sup>14</sup>For the unbelieving husband is made holy through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. <sup>15</sup>But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. It is to peace that God has called you. <sup>16</sup>Wife, for all you know, you might save your husband. Husband, for all you know, you might save your wife.

**Psalm 31:23-24** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Love the LORD, all you his saints.

The LORD preserves the faithful,



but abundantly repays  
the one who acts  
haughtily.

<sup>24</sup> Be strong, and let your  
heart take courage,  
all you who wait for the  
LORD.

**Proverbs 11:22 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> Like a gold ring in a pig's  
snout  
is a beautiful woman  
without good sense.

**March 22**



**Nehemiah 2:9–3:14 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Then I came to the  
governors of the province  
Beyond the River, and gave  
them the king's letters. Now  
the king had sent officers of  
the army and cavalry with me.

<sup>10</sup> When Sanballat the  
Horonite and Tobiah the  
Ammonite official heard this, it  
displeased them greatly that  
someone had come to seek

the welfare of the people of  
Israel.

*Nehemiah's Inspection of the  
Walls*

<sup>11</sup> So I came to Jerusalem  
and was there for three days.  
<sup>12</sup> Then I got up during the  
night, I and a few men with  
me; I told no one what my  
God had put into my heart to  
do for Jerusalem. The only  
animal I took was the animal I  
rode. <sup>13</sup> I went out by night by  
the Valley Gate past the  
Dragon's Spring and to the  
Dung Gate, and I inspected the  
walls of Jerusalem that had  
been broken down and its  
gates that had been destroyed  
by fire. <sup>14</sup> Then I went on to  
the Fountain Gate and to the  
King's Pool; but there was no  
place for the animal I was  
riding to continue. <sup>15</sup> So I went  
up by way of the valley by  
night and inspected the wall.  
Then I turned back and  
entered by the Valley Gate,  
and so returned. <sup>16</sup> The  
officials did not know where I  
had gone or what I was doing;  
I had not yet told the Jews, the  
priests, the nobles, the

officials, and the rest that were to do the work.

*Decision to Restore the Walls*

<sup>17</sup>Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so that we may no longer suffer disgrace.” <sup>18</sup>I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, “Let us start building!” So they committed themselves to the common good. <sup>19</sup>But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they mocked and ridiculed us, saying, “What is this that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?” <sup>20</sup>Then I replied to them, “The God of heaven is the one who will give us success, and we his servants are going to start building; but you have no share or claim or historic right in Jerusalem.”

*Organization of the Work*

**3** Then the high priest Eliashib set to work with his fellow priests and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set up its doors; they consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred and as far as the Tower of Hananel.

<sup>2</sup> And the men of Jericho built next to him. And next to them Zaccur son of Imri built.

<sup>3</sup> The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. <sup>4</sup> Next to them Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz made repairs. Next to them Meshullam son of Berechiah son of Meshezabel made repairs. Next to them Zadok son of Baana made repairs. <sup>5</sup> Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles would not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord.

<sup>6</sup> Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

<sup>7</sup> Next to them repairs were made by Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the

Meronothite—the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah—who were under the jurisdiction of the governor of the province Beyond the River. <sup>8</sup> Next to them Uzziel son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs; and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. <sup>9</sup> Next to them Rephaiah son of Hur, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. <sup>10</sup> Next to them Jedaiah son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house; and next to him Hattush son of Hashabneiah made repairs. <sup>11</sup> Malchijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of the Ovens. <sup>12</sup> Next to him Shallum son of Hallohesh, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.

<sup>13</sup> Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate; they rebuilt it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate.

<sup>14</sup> Malchijah son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired the Dung Gate; he rebuilt it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

**1 Corinthians 7:17-24** (NRSV)  
*The Life That the Lord Has Assigned*

<sup>17</sup> However that may be, let each of you lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God called you. This is my rule in all the churches.

<sup>18</sup> Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision.

Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision.

<sup>19</sup> Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but obeying the commandments of God is everything. <sup>20</sup> Let each of you remain in the condition in which you were called.

<sup>21</sup> Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. Even if you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition now more than ever. <sup>22</sup> For whoever was called in the Lord

as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. <sup>23</sup> You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters. <sup>24</sup> In whatever condition you were called, brothers and sisters, there remain with God.

**Psalms 32:1-7 (NRSV)**

*The Joy of Forgiveness*

Of David. A Maskil.

1 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.  
2 Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.  
3 While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long.  
4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;  
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. *Selah*  
5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you,

and I did not hide my iniquity;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"  
and you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*

6 Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.

7 You are a hiding place for me;  
you preserve me from trouble;  
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. *Selah*

**Proverbs 11:23 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> The desire of the righteous ends only in good; the expectation of the wicked in wrath.





## March 23



### Nehemiah 3:15–4:5 (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> And Shallum son of Colhozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he rebuilt it and covered it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars; and he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. <sup>16</sup> After him Nehemiah son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired from a point opposite the graves of David, as far as the artificial pool and the house of the warriors. <sup>17</sup> After him the Levites made repairs: Rehum son of Bani; next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district. <sup>18</sup> After him their kin made repairs: Binnui, son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of Keilah; <sup>19</sup> next to him Ezer son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the Angle. <sup>20</sup> After him Baruch son of Zabbai

repaired another section from the Angle to the door of the house of the high priest Eliashib. <sup>21</sup> After him Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib. <sup>22</sup> After him the priests, the men of the surrounding area, made repairs. <sup>23</sup> After them Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah son of Ananiah made repairs beside his own house. <sup>24</sup> After him Binnui son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the Angle and to the corner. <sup>25</sup> Palal son of Uzai repaired opposite the Angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh <sup>26</sup> and the temple servants living on Ophel made repairs up to a point opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower. <sup>27</sup> After him the Tekoites repaired another section opposite the

great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

<sup>28</sup> Above the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each one opposite his own house.

<sup>29</sup> After them Zadok son of Immer made repairs opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. <sup>30</sup> After him Hananiah son of Shelemiah and Hanun sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section.

After him Meshullam son of Berechiah made repairs opposite his living quarters.

<sup>31</sup> After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the Muster Gate, and to the upper room of the corner. <sup>32</sup> And between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

#### *Hostile Plots Thwarted*

**4** Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he mocked the Jews. <sup>2</sup> He said in the presence

of his associates and of the army of Samaria, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore things? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish it in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish—and burned ones at that?” <sup>3</sup> Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, “That stone wall they are building—any fox going up on it would break it down!”

<sup>4</sup> Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their taunt back on their own heads, and give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. <sup>5</sup> Do not cover their guilt, and do not let their sin be blotted out from your sight; for they have hurled insults in the face of the builders.

#### **1 Corinthians 7:25-31** (NRSV)

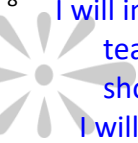
##### *The Unmarried*

##### *And the Widows*

<sup>25</sup> Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord’s mercy is trustworthy. <sup>26</sup> I think that, in view of the impending crisis, it is well for you to remain as you are. <sup>27</sup> Are you bound to a

wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. <sup>28</sup> But if you marry, you do not sin, and if a virgin marries, she does not sin. Yet those who marry will experience distress in this life, and I would spare you that. <sup>29</sup> I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, <sup>30</sup> and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, <sup>31</sup> and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

**Psalm 32:8-11** (NRSV)



<sup>8</sup> I will instruct you and  
teach you the way you  
should go;  
I will counsel you with  
my eye upon you.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be like a horse or a  
mule, without  
understanding,

whose temper must be  
curbed with bit and  
bridle,  
else it will not stay near  
you.

<sup>10</sup> Many are the torments of  
the wicked,  
but steadfast love  
surrounds those who  
trust in the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Be glad in the LORD and  
rejoice, O righteous,  
and shout for joy, all you  
upright in heart.

**Proverbs 11:24–26** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> Some give freely, yet grow  
all the richer;  
others withhold what is  
due, and only suffer  
want.

<sup>25</sup> A generous person will be  
enriched,  
and one who gives water  
will get water.

<sup>26</sup> The people curse those  
who hold back grain,  
but a blessing is on the  
head of those who sell  
it.

## March 24



### Nehemiah 4:6–5:13 (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> So we rebuilt the wall, and all the wall was joined together to half its height; for the people had a mind to work.

<sup>7</sup> But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and the gaps were beginning to be closed, they were very angry, <sup>8</sup> and all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. <sup>9</sup> So we prayed to our God, and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.

<sup>10</sup> But Judah said, “The strength of the burden bearers is failing, and there is too much rubbish so that we are unable to work on the wall.”

<sup>11</sup> And our enemies said, “They will not know or see anything before we come upon them and kill them and stop the work.” <sup>12</sup> When the Jews who

lived near them came, they said to us ten times, “From all the places where they live they will come up against us.”

<sup>13</sup> So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. <sup>14</sup> After I looked these things over, I stood up and said to the nobles and the officials and the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the LORD, who is great and awesome, and fight for your kin, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.”

<sup>15</sup> When our enemies heard that their plot was known to us, and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his work.

<sup>16</sup> From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and body-armor; and the leaders posted themselves behind the whole house of Judah, <sup>17</sup> who were building the wall. The burden bearers carried their loads in such a way that each labored on the work with one

hand and with the other held a weapon. <sup>18</sup> And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me. <sup>19</sup> And I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread out, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. <sup>20</sup> Rally to us wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet. Our God will fight for us."

<sup>21</sup> So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from break of dawn until the stars came out. <sup>22</sup> I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night inside Jerusalem, so that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day." <sup>23</sup> So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me ever took off our clothes; each kept his weapon in his right hand.

*Nehemiah Deals with  
Oppression*

**5** Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish kin. <sup>2</sup> For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many; we must get grain, so that we may eat and stay alive." <sup>3</sup> There were also those who said, "We are having to pledge our fields, our vineyards, and our houses in order to get grain during the famine." <sup>4</sup> And there were those who said, "We are having to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay the king's tax." <sup>5</sup> Now our flesh is the same as that of our kindred; our children are the same as their children; and yet we are forcing our sons and daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been ravished; we are powerless, and our fields and vineyards now belong to others."

<sup>6</sup> I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints. <sup>7</sup> After thinking it over, I brought charges against the nobles and the officials; I said to them, "You are all taking interest from your own

people.” And I called a great assembly to deal with them,<sup>8</sup> and said to them, “As far as we were able, we have bought back our Jewish kindred who had been sold to other nations; but now you are selling your own kin, who must then be bought back by us!” They were silent, and could not find a word to say.

<sup>9</sup> So I said, “The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God, to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?

<sup>10</sup> Moreover I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us stop this taking of interest.

<sup>11</sup> Restore to them, this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the interest on money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them.”

<sup>12</sup> Then they said, “We will restore everything and demand nothing more from them. We will do as you say.” And I called the priests, and made them take an oath to do as they had promised.<sup>13</sup> I also shook out the fold of my

garment and said, “So may God shake out everyone from house and from property who does not perform this promise. Thus may they be shaken out and emptied.” And all the assembly said, “Amen,” and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised.

### **1 Corinthians 7:32-40 (NRSV)**

<sup>32</sup> I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord;<sup>33</sup> but the married man is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please his wife,<sup>34</sup> and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin are anxious about the affairs of the Lord, so that they may be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please her husband.<sup>35</sup> I say this for your own benefit, not to put any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and unhindered devotion to the Lord.

<sup>36</sup> If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his fiancée, if his passions are strong, and so it has to be, let him marry as he wishes; it is no sin. Let them marry. <sup>37</sup> But if someone stands firm in his resolve, being under no necessity but having his own desire under control, and has determined in his own mind to keep her as his fiancée, he will do well.

<sup>38</sup> So then, he who marries his fiancée does well; and he who refrains from marriage will do better.

<sup>39</sup> A wife is bound as long as her husband lives. But if the husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, only in the Lord. <sup>40</sup> But in my judgment she is more blessed if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

### **Psalm 33:1-5** (NRSV)

*The Greatness and Goodness  
of God*

<sup>1</sup> Rejoice in the LORD, O you  
righteous.

Praise befits the upright.

<sup>2</sup> Praise the LORD with the  
lyre;

make melody to him  
with the harp of ten  
strings.

<sup>3</sup> Sing to him a new song;  
play skillfully on the  
strings, with loud  
shouts.

<sup>4</sup> For the word of the LORD is  
upright,  
and all his work is done  
in faithfulness.

<sup>5</sup> He loves righteousness and  
justice;  
the earth is full of the  
steadfast love of the  
LORD.

### **Proverbs 11:27** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Whoever diligently seeks  
good seeks favor,  
but evil comes to the one  
who searches for it.

## March 25



### Nehemiah 5:14–6:19 (NRSV)

#### *The Generosity of Nehemiah*

<sup>14</sup> Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food allowance of the governor.

<sup>15</sup> The former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people, and took food and wine from them, besides forty shekels of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God. <sup>16</sup> Indeed, I devoted myself to the work on this wall, and acquired no land; and all my servants were gathered there for the work.

<sup>17</sup> Moreover there were at my table one hundred fifty people, Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations around us.

<sup>18</sup> Now that which was prepared for one day was one

ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and every ten days skins of wine in abundance; yet with all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because of the heavy burden of labor on the people. <sup>19</sup> Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.

#### *Intrigues of Enemies Foiled*

**6** Now when it was reported to Sanballat and Tobiah and to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had built the wall and that there was no gap left in it (though up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), <sup>2</sup> Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono.” But they intended to do me harm. <sup>3</sup> So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it to come down to you?” <sup>4</sup> They sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. <sup>5</sup> In the same way



Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. <sup>6</sup> In it was written, "It is reported among the nations—and Geshem also says it—that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall; and according to this report you wish to become their king. <sup>7</sup> You have also set up prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, 'There is a king in Judah!' And now it will be reported to the king according to these words. So come, therefore, and let us confer together." <sup>8</sup> Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say have been done; you are inventing them out of your own mind" <sup>9</sup>—for they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

<sup>10</sup> One day when I went into the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his house, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the

temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, tonight they are coming to kill you." <sup>11</sup> But I said, "Should a man like me run away? Would a man like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!" <sup>12</sup> Then I perceived and saw that God had not sent him at all, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. <sup>13</sup> He was hired for this purpose, to intimidate me and make me sin by acting in this way, and so they could give me a bad name, in order to taunt me. <sup>14</sup> Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

#### *The Wall Completed*

<sup>15</sup> So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days.

<sup>16</sup> And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem; for they perceived that this work had been accomplished

with the help of our God.

<sup>17</sup> Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. <sup>18</sup> For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah. <sup>19</sup> Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence, and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

**1 Corinthians 8:1-3** (NRSV)

*Food Offered to Idols*

**8** Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

<sup>2</sup> Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge;

<sup>3</sup> but anyone who loves God is known by him.

**Psalms 33:6-11** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,

and all their host by the breath of his mouth.

<sup>7</sup> He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses.

<sup>8</sup> Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

<sup>9</sup> For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

<sup>11</sup> The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

**Proverbs 11:28** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Those who trust in their riches will wither, but the righteous will flourish like green leaves.

## March 26



### Nehemiah 7:1-60 (NRSV)

Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, <sup>2</sup> I gave my brother Hanani charge over Jerusalem, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel—for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many. <sup>3</sup> And I said to them, “The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened until the sun is hot; while the gatekeepers are still standing guard, let them shut and bar the doors. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some at their watch posts, and others before their own houses.” <sup>4</sup> The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few and no houses had been built.

#### *Lists of the Returned Exiles* (Ezra 2:1–70)

<sup>5</sup> Then my God put it into my mind to assemble the

nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book of the genealogy of those who were the first to come back, and I found the following written in it:

<sup>6</sup> These are the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of those exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried into exile; they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his town. <sup>7</sup> They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

The number of the Israelite people: <sup>8</sup> the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two. <sup>9</sup> Of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy-two. <sup>10</sup> Of Arah, six hundred fifty-two. <sup>11</sup> Of Pahath-moab, namely the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred eighteen. <sup>12</sup> Of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. <sup>13</sup> Of Zattu, eight hundred forty-five. <sup>14</sup> Of Zaccai, seven hundred sixty.

<sup>15</sup> Of Binnui, six hundred forty-eight. <sup>16</sup> Of Bebai, six hundred twenty-eight. <sup>17</sup> Of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty-two. <sup>18</sup> Of Adonikam, six hundred sixty-seven. <sup>19</sup> Of Bigvai, two thousand sixty-seven. <sup>20</sup> Of Adin, six hundred fifty-five. <sup>21</sup> Of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, ninety-eight. <sup>22</sup> Of Hashum, three hundred twenty-eight. <sup>23</sup> Of Bezai, three hundred twenty-four. <sup>24</sup> Of Hariph, one hundred twelve. <sup>25</sup> Of Gibeon, ninety-five. <sup>26</sup> The people of Bethlehem and Netophah, one hundred eighty-eight. <sup>27</sup> Of Anathoth, one hundred twenty-eight. <sup>28</sup> Of Beth-azmaveth, forty-two. <sup>29</sup> Of Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty-three. <sup>30</sup> Of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty-one. <sup>31</sup> Of Michmas, one hundred twenty-two. <sup>32</sup> Of Bethel and Ai, one hundred twenty-three. <sup>33</sup> Of the other Nebo, fifty-two. <sup>34</sup> The descendants of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. <sup>35</sup> Of Harim, three hundred twenty. <sup>36</sup> Of Jericho, three hundred forty-five. <sup>37</sup> Of Lod, Hadid, and Ono,

seven hundred twenty-one.

<sup>38</sup> Of Senaah, three thousand nine hundred thirty.

<sup>39</sup> The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah, namely the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy-three.

<sup>40</sup> Of Immer, one thousand fifty-two. <sup>41</sup> Of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred forty-seven. <sup>42</sup> Of Harim, one thousand seventeen.

<sup>43</sup> The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua, namely of Kadmiel of the descendants of Hodevah, seventy-four.

<sup>44</sup> The singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred forty-eight. <sup>45</sup> The gatekeepers: the descendants of Shallum, of Ater, of Talmon, of Akkub, of Hatita, of Shobai, one hundred thirty-eight.

<sup>46</sup> The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, of Hasupha, of Tabbaoth, <sup>47</sup> of Keros, of Sia, of Padon, <sup>48</sup> of Lebana, of Hagaba, of Shalmal, <sup>49</sup> of Hanan, of Giddel, of Gahar, <sup>50</sup> of Reaiah, of Rezin, of Nekoda, <sup>51</sup> of Gazzam, of Uzza, of Paseah, <sup>52</sup> of Besai, of Meunim, of Nephushesim, <sup>53</sup> of Bakbuk, of Hakupha, of Harhur, <sup>54</sup> of Bazlith, of

Mehida, of Harsha, <sup>55</sup> of Barkos, of Sisera, of Temah, <sup>56</sup> of Neziah, of Hatipha.

<sup>57</sup> The descendants of Solomon's servants: of Sotai, of Sophereth, of Perida, <sup>58</sup> of Jaala, of Darkon, of Giddel, <sup>59</sup> of Shephathiah, of Hattil, of Pochereth-hazzebaim, of Amon.

<sup>60</sup> All the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants were three hundred ninety-two.

### **1 Corinthians 8:4-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." <sup>5</sup> Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—<sup>6</sup> yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. <sup>7</sup> It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now,

they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup> "Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup> But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup> For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup> So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. <sup>12</sup> But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

### **Psalms 33:12-19 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.

13 The LORD looks down from  
heaven;  
he sees all humankind.  
14 From where he sits  
enthroned he watches  
all the inhabitants of the  
earth—  
15 he who fashions the hearts  
of them all,  
and observes all their  
deeds.

16 A king is not saved by his  
great army;  
a warrior is not delivered  
by his great strength.

17 The war horse is a vain  
hope for victory,  
and by its great might it  
cannot save.

18 Truly the eye of the LORD is  
on those who fear him,  
on those who hope in his  
steadfast love,

19 to deliver their soul from  
death,  
and to keep them alive in  
famine.

### Proverbs 11:29–31 (NRSV)

29 Those who trouble their  
households will inherit  
wind,  
and the fool will be  
servant to the wise.

30 The fruit of the righteous is  
a tree of life,  
but violence takes lives  
away.

31 If the righteous are repaid  
on earth,  
how much more the  
wicked and the sinner!

## March 27



### Nehemiah 7:61–8:18 (NRSV)

<sup>61</sup>The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer, but they could not prove their ancestral houses or their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: <sup>62</sup>the descendants of Delaiah, of Tobiah, of Nekoda, six hundred forty-two. <sup>63</sup>Also, of the priests: the descendants of Hobaiah, of Hakkoz, of Barzillai (who had married one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by their name). <sup>64</sup>These sought their registration

among those enrolled in the genealogies, but it was not found there, so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean; <sup>65</sup> the governor told them that they were not to partake of the most holy food, until a priest with Urim and Thummim should come.

<sup>66</sup> The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred sixty, <sup>67</sup> besides their male and female slaves, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven; and they had two hundred forty-five singers, male and female.

<sup>68</sup> They had seven hundred thirty-six horses, two hundred forty-five mules, <sup>69</sup> four hundred thirty-five camels, and six thousand seven hundred twenty donkeys.

<sup>70</sup> Now some of the heads of ancestral houses contributed to the work. The governor gave to the treasury one thousand darics of gold, fifty basins, and five hundred thirty priestly robes. <sup>71</sup> And some of the heads of ancestral houses gave into the building fund twenty thousand darics of gold and two thousand two

hundred minas of silver. <sup>72</sup> And what the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand darics of gold, two thousand minas of silver, and sixty-seven priestly robes.

<sup>73</sup> So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all Israel settled in their towns.

### *Ezra Summons the People to Obey the Law*

When the seventh month came—the people of Israel being settled in their towns—

**8** <sup>1</sup> all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. <sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup> He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand;

and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. <sup>4</sup> The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hash-baddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. <sup>5</sup> And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. <sup>6</sup> Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. <sup>8</sup> So they read from the book, from the law of God, with

interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

<sup>9</sup> And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." <sup>11</sup> So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." <sup>12</sup> And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.



*The Festival of Booths  
Celebrated  
(Cp Lev 23:33–43)*

<sup>13</sup> On the second day the heads of ancestral houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to the scribe Ezra in order to study the words of the law.

<sup>14</sup> And they found it written in the law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the people of Israel should live in booths during the festival of the seventh month, <sup>15</sup> and that they should publish and proclaim in all their towns and in Jerusalem as follows, “Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written.” <sup>16</sup> So the people went out and brought them, and made booths for themselves, each on the roofs of their houses, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. <sup>17</sup> And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in

them; for from the days of Jeshua son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. <sup>18</sup> And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the book of the law of God. They kept the festival seven days; and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

**1 Corinthians 9:1-10** (NRSV)  
*The Rights of an Apostle*

**9** Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? <sup>2</sup> If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.


<sup>3</sup> This is my defense to those who would examine me.

<sup>4</sup> Do we not have the right to our food and drink? <sup>5</sup> Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? <sup>6</sup> Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? <sup>7</sup> Who at any time pays the expenses for doing

military service? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not get any of its milk?

<sup>8</sup> Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law also say the same? <sup>9</sup> For it is written in the law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.” Is it for oxen that God is concerned? <sup>10</sup> Or does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was indeed written for our sake, for whoever plows should plow in hope and whoever threshes should thresh in hope of a share in the crop.

**Psalms 33:20-22 (NRSV)**



<sup>20</sup> Our soul waits for the LORD;  
he is our help and shield.  
<sup>21</sup> Our heart is glad in him,  
because we trust in his holy name.  
<sup>22</sup> Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,  
even as we hope in you.

**Proverbs 12:1 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,

but those who hate to be rebuked are stupid.

**March 28**



**Nehemiah 9:1-21 (NRSV)**

*National Confession*

**9** Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. <sup>2</sup> Then those of Israelite descent separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors. <sup>3</sup> They stood up in their place and read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth part of the day, and for another fourth they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God. <sup>4</sup> Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their

God. <sup>5</sup> Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, "Stand up and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise."

<sup>6</sup> And Ezra said: "You are the LORD, you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. To all of them you give life, and the host of heaven worships you. <sup>7</sup> You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham; <sup>8</sup> and you found his heart faithful before you, and made with him a covenant to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite; and you have fulfilled your promise, for you are righteous.

<sup>9</sup> "And you saw the distress of our ancestors in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea.

<sup>10</sup> You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted insolently against our ancestors. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. <sup>11</sup> And you divided the sea before them, so that they passed through the sea on dry land, but you threw their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. <sup>12</sup> Moreover, you led them by day with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire, to give them light on the way in which they should go. <sup>13</sup> You came down also upon Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, <sup>14</sup> and you made known your holy sabbath to them and gave them commandments and statutes and a law through your servant Moses. <sup>15</sup> For their hunger you gave them bread from heaven, and for their thirst you brought water for them out of the rock, and

you told them to go in to possess the land that you swore to give them.

<sup>16</sup> “But they and our ancestors acted presumptuously and stiffened their necks and did not obey your commandments; <sup>17</sup> they refused to obey, and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them; but they stiffened their necks and determined to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and you did not forsake them. <sup>18</sup> Even when they had cast an image of a calf for themselves and said, ‘This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt,’ and had committed great blasphemies, <sup>19</sup> you in your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness; the pillar of cloud that led them in the way did not leave them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night that gave them light on the way by which they should go. <sup>20</sup> You gave your good spirit to instruct them, and did not withhold your manna from

their mouths, and gave them water for their thirst. <sup>21</sup> Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

### **1 Corinthians 9:11-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? <sup>12</sup> If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we still more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is sacrificed on the altar? <sup>14</sup> In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

<sup>15</sup> But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing this so that they may be applied in my case. Indeed, I would rather die than that—

no one will deprive me of my ground for boasting! <sup>16</sup> If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! <sup>17</sup> For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. <sup>18</sup> What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

**Psalm 34:1-3 (NRSV)**

*Praise for Deliverance from  
Trouble*

Of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

- <sup>1</sup> I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- <sup>2</sup> My soul makes its boast in the LORD;  
let the humble hear and be glad.
- <sup>3</sup> O magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.

**Proverbs 12:2–3 (NRSV)**

<sup>2</sup> The good obtain favor from the LORD,  
but those who devise evil he condemns.

<sup>3</sup> No one finds security by wickedness,  
but the root of the righteous will never be moved.



**March 29**



**Nehemiah 9:22-10:27 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> And you gave them kingdoms and peoples, and allotted to them every corner, so they took possession of the land of King Sihon of Heshbon and the land of King Og of Bashan. <sup>23</sup> You multiplied their descendants like the stars of heaven, and brought them into the land that you had told their ancestors to enter and possess. <sup>24</sup> So the descendants went in and possessed the land, and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the

land, the Canaanites, and gave them into their hands, with their kings and the peoples of the land, to do with them as they pleased.<sup>25</sup> And they captured fortress cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses filled with all sorts of goods, hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive orchards, and fruit trees in abundance; so they ate, and were filled and became fat, and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

<sup>26</sup>“Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast your law behind their backs and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies.

<sup>27</sup>Therefore you gave them into the hands of their enemies, who made them suffer. Then in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hands of their enemies.<sup>28</sup> But after they had rest, they again did evil before

you, and you abandoned them to the hands of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them; yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you rescued them according to your mercies.

<sup>29</sup>And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your ordinances, by the observance of which a person shall live. They turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey.

<sup>30</sup>Many years you were patient with them, and warned them by your spirit through your prophets; yet they would not listen. Therefore you handed them over to the peoples of the lands.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

<sup>32</sup>“Now therefore, our God—the great and mighty and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love—

do not treat lightly all the hardship that has come upon us, upon our kings, our officials, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until today. <sup>33</sup> You have been just in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly; <sup>34</sup> our kings, our officials, our priests, and our ancestors have not kept your law or heeded the commandments and the warnings that you gave them. <sup>35</sup> Even in their own kingdom, and in the great goodness you bestowed on them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did not serve you and did not turn from their wicked works. <sup>36</sup> Here we are, slaves to this day—slaves in the land that you gave to our ancestors to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts. <sup>37</sup> Its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins; they have power also over our bodies and over our livestock at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.”

*Those Who Signed  
the Covenant*

<sup>38</sup> Because of all this we make a firm agreement in writing, and on that sealed document are inscribed the names of our officials, our Levites, and our priests.

**10** Upon the sealed document are the names of Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah; <sup>2</sup> Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, <sup>3</sup> Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, <sup>4</sup> Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, <sup>5</sup> Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, <sup>6</sup> Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, <sup>7</sup> Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, <sup>8</sup> Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah; these are the priests. <sup>9</sup> And the Levites: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel; <sup>10</sup> and their associates, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, <sup>11</sup> Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, <sup>12</sup> Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, <sup>13</sup> Hodiah, Bani, Beninu. <sup>14</sup> The leaders of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, <sup>15</sup> Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, <sup>16</sup> Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, <sup>17</sup> Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, <sup>18</sup> Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,

<sup>19</sup> Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,  
<sup>20</sup> Magpiash, Meshullam,  
Hezir, <sup>21</sup> Meshezabel, Zadok,  
Jaddua, <sup>22</sup> Pelatiah, Hanan,  
Anaiah, <sup>23</sup> Hoshea, Hananiah,  
Hasshub, <sup>24</sup> Hallohesh, Pilha,  
Shobek, <sup>25</sup> Rehum, Hashabnah,  
Maaseiah, <sup>26</sup> Ahiah, Hanan,  
Anan, <sup>27</sup> Malluch, Harim, and  
Baanah.

**1 Corinthians 9:19-27** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> For though I am free  
with respect to all, I have  
made myself a slave to all, so  
that I might win more of them.  
<sup>20</sup> To the Jews I became as a  
Jew, in order to win Jews. To  
those under the law I became  
as one under the law (though I  
myself am not under the law)  
so that I might win those  
under the law. <sup>21</sup> To those  
outside the law I became as  
one outside the law (though I  
am not free from God's law  
but am under Christ's law) so  
that I might win those outside  
the law. <sup>22</sup> To the weak I  
became weak, so that I might  
win the weak. I have become  
all things to all people, that I  
might by all means save some.  
<sup>23</sup> I do it all for the sake of the

gospel, so that I may share in  
its blessings.

<sup>24</sup> Do you not know that in  
a race the runners all  
compete, but only one  
receives the prize? Run in such  
a way that you may win it.

<sup>25</sup> Athletes exercise self-  
control in all things; they do it  
to receive a perishable wreath,  
but we an imperishable one.

<sup>26</sup> So I do not run aimlessly,  
nor do I box as though beating  
the air; <sup>27</sup> but I punish my body  
and enslave it, so that after  
proclaiming to others I myself  
should not be disqualified.

**Psalms 33:4-10** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and he  
answered me,  
and delivered me from  
all my fears.  
<sup>5</sup> Look to him, and be  
radiant;  
so your faces shall never  
be ashamed.  
<sup>6</sup> This poor soul cried, and  
was heard by the LORD,  
and was saved from  
every trouble.  
<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD  
encamps  
around those who fear  
him, and delivers them.



<sup>8</sup> O taste and see that the  
LORD is good;  
happy are those who  
take refuge in him.

<sup>9</sup> O fear the LORD, you his  
holy ones,  
for those who fear him  
have no want.

<sup>10</sup> The young lions suffer  
want and hunger,  
but those who seek the  
LORD lack no good  
thing.

#### **Proverbs 12:4 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> A good wife is the crown of  
her husband,  
but she who brings  
shame is like  
rottenness in his  
bones.

## **March 30**



#### **Nehemiah 10:28-39 (NRSV)**

##### *Summary of the Covenant*

<sup>28</sup>The rest of the people,  
the priests, the Levites, the  
gatekeepers, the singers, the

temple servants, and all who  
have separated themselves  
from the peoples of the lands  
to adhere to the law of God,  
their wives, their sons, their  
daughters, all who have  
knowledge and understanding,  
<sup>29</sup>join with their kin, their  
nobles, and enter into a curse  
and an oath to walk in God's  
law, which was given by  
Moses the servant of God, and  
to observe and do all the  
commandments of the LORD  
our Lord and his ordinances  
and his statutes. <sup>30</sup>We will not  
give our daughters to the  
peoples of the land or take  
their daughters for our sons;  
<sup>31</sup>and if the peoples of the  
land bring in merchandise or  
any grain on the sabbath day  
to sell, we will not buy it from  
them on the sabbath or on a  
holy day; and we will forego  
the crops of the seventh year  
and the exaction of every  
debt.

<sup>32</sup>We also lay on ourselves  
the obligation to charge  
ourselves yearly one-third of a  
shekel for the service of the  
house of our God: <sup>33</sup>for the  
rows of bread, the regular  
grain offering, the regular

burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moons, the appointed festivals, the sacred donations, and the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.<sup>34</sup> We have also cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, by ancestral houses, at appointed times, year by year, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law.

<sup>35</sup>We obligate ourselves to bring the first fruits of our soil and the first fruits of all fruit of every tree, year by year, to the house of the LORD;<sup>36</sup> also to bring to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God, the firstborn of our sons and of our livestock, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks;<sup>37</sup> and to bring the first of our dough, and our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the wine and the oil, to the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and to bring to the Levites the tithes from our soil, for it is the Levites

who collect the tithes in all our rural towns.<sup>38</sup> And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive the tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tithe of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.<sup>39</sup> For the people of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of grain, wine, and oil to the storerooms where the vessels of the sanctuary are, and where the priests that minister, and the gatekeepers and the singers are. We will not neglect the house of our God.

**1 Corinthians 10:1-13 (NRSV)**  
*Warnings from Israel's History*

**10** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,<sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,<sup>3</sup> and all ate the same spiritual food,<sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless,

God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup> Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup> Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” <sup>8</sup> We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup> We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup> And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup> So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup> **No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way**

**out so that you may be able to endure it.**

**Psalms 33:11-14 (NRSV)**

- <sup>11</sup> Come, O children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
- <sup>12</sup> Which of you desires life, and covets many days to enjoy good?
- <sup>13</sup> Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.
- <sup>14</sup> Depart from evil, and do good;  
seek peace, and pursue it.

**Proverbs 12:5-7 (NRSV)**

- <sup>5</sup> The thoughts of the righteous are just; the advice of the wicked is treacherous.
- <sup>6</sup> The words of the wicked are a deadly ambush, but the speech of the upright delivers them.
- <sup>7</sup> The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand.

## March 31



### Nehemiah 11:1-36 (NRSV)

#### *Population of the City Increased*

**11** Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem; and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in the holy city Jerusalem, while nine-tenths remained in the other towns. <sup>2</sup> And the people blessed all those who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> These are the leaders of the province who lived in Jerusalem; but in the towns of Judah all lived on their property in their towns: Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants. <sup>4</sup> And in Jerusalem lived some of the Judahites and of the Benjaminites. Of the Judahites: Athaiah son of Uziah son of Zechariah son of Amariah son of Shephathiah son of Mahalalel, of the descendants of Perez; <sup>5</sup> and Maaseiah son of Baruch son of Col-hozeh son of Hazaiah son

of Adaiah son of Joiarib son of Zechariah son of the Shilonite. <sup>6</sup> All the descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were four hundred sixty-eight valiant warriors.

<sup>7</sup> And these are the Benjaminites: Sallu son of Meshullam son of Joed son of Pedaiiah son of Kolaiah son of Maaseiah son of Ithiel son of Jeshaiiah. <sup>8</sup> And his brothers Gabbai, Sallai: nine hundred twenty-eight. <sup>9</sup> Joel son of Zichri was their overseer; and Judah son of Hassenuah was second in charge of the city.

<sup>10</sup> Of the priests: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, Jachin, <sup>11</sup> Seraiah son of Hilkiyah son of Meshullam son of Zadok son of Meraioth son of Ahitub, officer of the house of God, <sup>12</sup> and their associates who did the work of the house, eight hundred twenty-two; and Adaiah son of Jeroham son of Pelaliah son of Amzi son of Zechariah son of Pashhur son of Malchijah, <sup>13</sup> and his associates, heads of ancestral houses, two hundred forty-two; and Amashsai son of Azarel son of Ahzai son of Meshillemoth son of Immer,

<sup>14</sup> and their associates, valiant warriors, one hundred twenty-eight; their overseer was Zabdiel son of Hagedolim.

<sup>15</sup> And of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub son of Azrikam son of Hashabiah son of Bunni; <sup>16</sup> and Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the leaders of the Levites, who were over the outside work of the house of God; <sup>17</sup> and Mattaniah son of Mica son of Zabdi son of Asaph, who was the leader to begin the thanksgiving in prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his associates; and Abda son of Shammua son of Galal son of Jeduthun. <sup>18</sup> All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred eighty-four.

<sup>19</sup> The gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their associates, who kept watch at the gates, were one hundred seventy-two. <sup>20</sup> And the rest of Israel, and of the priests and the Levites, were in all the towns of Judah, all of them in their inheritance. <sup>21</sup> But the temple servants lived on Ophel; and Ziha and Gishpa were over the temple servants.

<sup>22</sup> The overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani son of Hashabiah son of Mattaniah son of Mica, of the descendants of Asaph, the singers, in charge of the work of the house of God.

<sup>23</sup> For there was a command from the king concerning them, and a settled provision for the singers, as was required every day. <sup>24</sup> And Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, of the descendants of Zerach son of Judah, was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

*Villages outside Jerusalem*

<sup>25</sup> And as for the villages, with their fields, some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its villages, and in Dibon and its villages, and in Jekabzeel and its villages, <sup>26</sup> and in Jeshua and in Moladah and Beth-pelet, <sup>27</sup> in Hazar-shual, in Beer-sheba and its villages, <sup>28</sup> in Ziklag, in Meconah and its villages, <sup>29</sup> in En-rimmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth, <sup>30</sup> Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, and Azekah and its villages. So they camped from

Beer-sheba to the valley of Hinnom.<sup>31</sup> The people of Benjamin also lived from Geba onward, at Michmash, Aija, Bethel and its villages,<sup>32</sup> Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,<sup>33</sup> Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,<sup>34</sup> Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,<sup>35</sup> Lod, and Ono, the valley of artisans.<sup>36</sup> And certain divisions of the Levites in Judah were joined to Benjamin.

**1 Corinthians 10:14-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols.<sup>15</sup> I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say.<sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?<sup>17</sup> Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.<sup>18</sup> Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar?<sup>19</sup> What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?<sup>20</sup> No, I imply that

what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons.<sup>21</sup> You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.<sup>22</sup> Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

*Do All to the Glory of God*  
(Cp Ps 24:1)

<sup>23</sup>“All things are lawful,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up.<sup>24</sup> Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other.

**Psalms 34:15-22 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.  
<sup>16</sup> The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.  
<sup>17</sup> When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears,

and rescues them from  
all their troubles.

18 **The LORD is near to the  
brokenhearted,  
and saves the crushed in  
spirit.**

19 **Many are the afflictions of  
the righteous,  
but the LORD rescues  
them from them all.**

20 **He keeps all their bones;  
not one of them will be  
broken.**

21 **Evil brings death to the  
wicked,  
and those who hate the  
righteous will be  
condemned.**

22 **The LORD redeems the life  
of his servants;  
none of those who take  
refuge in him will be  
condemned.**

### **Proverbs 12:8–9 (NRSV)**

8 **One is commended for  
good sense,  
but a perverse mind is  
despised.**

9 **Better to be despised and  
have a servant,  
than to be self-important  
and lack food.**

## **April 1**



### **Nehemiah 12:1-26 (NRSV)**

*A List of Priests and Levites  
(Cp Ezra 2:36–40)*

**12** These are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, <sup>2</sup> Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, <sup>3</sup> Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, <sup>4</sup> Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, <sup>5</sup> Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, <sup>6</sup> Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, <sup>7</sup> Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and of their associates in the days of Jeshua.

<sup>8</sup> And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who with his associates was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving. <sup>9</sup> And Bakbukiah and Unno their associates stood opposite them in the service. <sup>10</sup> Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim the father of Eliashib, Eliashib the father of Joiada, <sup>11</sup> Joiada the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan the father of Jaddua.

<sup>12</sup> In the days of Joiakim the priests, heads of ancestral houses, were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; <sup>13</sup> of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; <sup>14</sup> of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; <sup>15</sup> of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; <sup>16</sup> of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; <sup>17</sup> of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; <sup>18</sup> of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; <sup>19</sup> of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; <sup>20</sup> of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; <sup>21</sup> of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

<sup>22</sup> As for the Levites, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, there were recorded the heads of ancestral houses; also the priests until the reign of Darius the Persian. <sup>23</sup> The Levites, heads of ancestral houses, were recorded in the Book of the Annals until the days of Johanan son of Eliashib. <sup>24</sup> And the leaders of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua son of Kadmiel, with their associates over against

them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, section opposite to section. <sup>25</sup> Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers standing guard at the storehouses of the gates. <sup>26</sup> These were in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua son of Jozadak, and in the days of the governor Nehemiah and of the priest Ezra, the scribe.

### **1 Corinthians 10:25-33 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience, <sup>26</sup> for “the earth and its fullness are the Lord’s.” <sup>27</sup> If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. <sup>28</sup> But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, out of consideration for the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience—  
<sup>29</sup> I mean the other’s



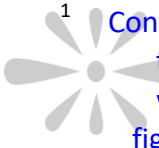
conscience, not your own. For why should my liberty be subject to the judgment of someone else's conscience?

<sup>30</sup> If I partake with thankfulness, why should I be denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

<sup>31</sup> So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, <sup>33</sup> just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved.

**Psalms 35:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies Of David.*



<sup>1</sup> Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me!

<sup>2</sup> Take hold of shield and buckler, and rise up to help me!

<sup>3</sup> Draw the spear and javelin against my pursuers; say to my soul, "I am your salvation."

<sup>4</sup> Let them be put to shame and dishonor who seek after my life. Let them be turned back and confounded who devise evil against me.

<sup>5</sup> Let them be like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them on.

<sup>6</sup> Let their way be dark and slippery, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

<sup>7</sup> For without cause they hid their net for me; without cause they dug a pit for my life.

<sup>8</sup> Let ruin come on them unawares.

And let the net that they hid ensnare them; let them fall in it—to their ruin.

<sup>9</sup> Then my soul shall rejoice in the LORD, exulting in his deliverance.

**Proverbs 12:10 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> The righteous know the needs of their animals, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

## April 2



### Nehemiah 12:27 -13:14 (NRSV)

#### *Dedication of the City Wall*

<sup>27</sup> Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with rejoicing, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres.

<sup>28</sup> The companies of the singers gathered together from the circuit around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites; <sup>29</sup> also from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built for themselves villages around Jerusalem. <sup>30</sup> And the priests and the Levites purified themselves; and they purified the people and the gates and the wall.

<sup>31</sup> Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall, and appointed two great companies that gave thanks and went in procession. One went to the right on the wall

to the Dung Gate; <sup>32</sup> and after them went Hoshaiah and half the officials of Judah, <sup>33</sup> and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, <sup>34</sup> Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, <sup>35</sup> and some of the young priests with trumpets: Zechariah son of Jonathan son of Shemaiah son of Mattaniah son of Micaiah son of Zaccur son of Asaph; <sup>36</sup> and his kindred, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God; and the scribe Ezra went in front of them. <sup>37</sup> At the Fountain Gate, in front of them, they went straight up by the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David, to the Water Gate on the east.

<sup>38</sup> The other company of those who gave thanks went to the left, and I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of the Ovens, to the Broad Wall, <sup>39</sup> and above the Gate of Ephraim, and by the Old Gate, and by the Fish Gate and the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, to the

Sheep Gate; and they came to a halt at the Gate of the Guard.<sup>40</sup> So both companies of those who gave thanks stood in the house of God, and I and half of the officials with me;<sup>41</sup> and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets;<sup>42</sup> and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang with Jezrahiah as their leader.<sup>43</sup> They offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. The joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.

#### *Temple Responsibilities*

<sup>44</sup> On that day men were appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions required by the law for the priests and for the Levites from the fields belonging to the towns; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who ministered.<sup>45</sup> They performed

the service of their God and the service of purification, as did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the command of David and his son Solomon.<sup>46</sup> For in the days of David and Asaph long ago there was a leader of the singers, and there were songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.<sup>47</sup> In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers. They set apart that which was for the Levites; and the Levites set apart that which was for the descendants of Aaron.

#### *Foreigners Separated from Israel*

(Num 22:1–24:25)

**13** On that day they read from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God,<sup>2</sup> because they did not meet the Israelites with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them—yet our God turned the curse into a blessing.<sup>3</sup> When the

people heard the law, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent.

*The Reforms of Nehemiah*

<sup>4</sup> Now before this, the priest Eliashib, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, and who was related to Tobiah, <sup>5</sup> prepared for Tobiah a large room where they had previously put the grain offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, wine, and oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, singers, and gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. <sup>6</sup> While this was taking place I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon I went to the king. After some time I asked leave of the king <sup>7</sup> and returned to Jerusalem. I then discovered the wrong that Eliashib had done on behalf of Tobiah, preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God. <sup>8</sup> And I was very angry, and I threw all the household furniture of Tobiah out of the room. <sup>9</sup> Then I gave orders and

they cleansed the chambers, and I brought back the vessels of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.

<sup>10</sup> I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them; so that the Levites and the singers, who had conducted the service, had gone back to their fields. <sup>11</sup> So I remonstrated with the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them together and set them in their stations. <sup>12</sup> Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses. <sup>13</sup> And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses the priest Shelemiah, the scribe Zadok, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and as their assistant Hanan son of Zaccur son of Mattaniah, for they were considered faithful; and their duty was to distribute to their associates. <sup>14</sup> Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for his service.

**1 Corinthians 11:1-12** (NRSV)

**11** <sup>1</sup> Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

*Head Coverings*

<sup>2</sup> I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions just as I handed them on to you. <sup>3</sup> But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband is the head of his wife, and God is the head of Christ. <sup>4</sup> Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, <sup>5</sup> but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head—it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. <sup>7</sup> For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; but woman is the reflection of man. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. <sup>9</sup> Neither

was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. <sup>10</sup> For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. <sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. <sup>12</sup> For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God.

**Psalms 35:10-18** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> All my bones shall say,  
“O LORD, who is like you?  
You deliver the weak  
from those too strong for  
them,  
the weak and needy  
from those who  
despoil them.”

<sup>11</sup> Malicious witnesses rise  
up;  
they ask me about things  
I do not know.

<sup>12</sup> They repay me evil for  
good;  
my soul is forlorn.

<sup>13</sup> But as for me, when they  
were sick,  
I wore sackcloth;  
I afflicted myself with  
fasting.

I prayed with head bowed  
on my bosom,  
<sup>14</sup> as though I grieved for a  
friend or a brother;  
I went about as one who  
laments for a mother,  
bowed down and in  
mourning.

<sup>15</sup> But at my stumbling they  
gathered in glee,  
they gathered together  
against me;  
ruffians whom I did not  
know

tore at me without  
ceasing;  
<sup>16</sup> they impiously mocked  
more and more,  
gnashing at me with  
their teeth.

<sup>17</sup> How long, O LORD, will you  
look on?  
Rescue me from their  
ravages,  
my life from the lions!

<sup>18</sup> Then I will thank you in the  
great congregation;  
in the mighty throng I  
will praise you.

**Proverbs 12:11 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Those who till their land  
will have plenty of  
food,

but those who follow  
worthless pursuits  
have no sense.

**April 3**



**Nehemiah 13:15-31 (NRSV)**

*Sabbath Reforms Begun*

<sup>15</sup> In those days I saw in  
Judah people treading wine  
presses on the sabbath, and  
bringing in heaps of grain and  
loading them on donkeys; and  
also wine, grapes, figs, and all  
kinds of burdens, which they  
brought into Jerusalem on the  
sabbath day; and I warned  
them at that time against  
selling food. <sup>16</sup> Tyrians also,  
who lived in the city, brought  
in fish and all kinds of  
merchandise and sold them on  
the sabbath to the people of  
Judah, and in Jerusalem.

<sup>17</sup> Then I remonstrated with  
the nobles of Judah and said  
to them, "What is this evil  
thing that you are doing,  
profaning the sabbath day?"

<sup>18</sup> Did not your ancestors act in this way, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring more wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath.”

<sup>19</sup> When it began to be dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the sabbath. And I set some of my servants over the gates, to prevent any burden from being brought in on the sabbath day. <sup>20</sup> Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem once or twice. <sup>21</sup> But I warned them and said to them, “Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you.” From that time on they did not come on the sabbath. <sup>22</sup> And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to keep the sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favor, O my God, and spare

me according to the greatness of your steadfast love.

*Mixed Marriages Condemned*  
(Cp Ezra 9:1–4)

<sup>23</sup> In those days also I saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab; <sup>24</sup> and half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke the language of various peoples. <sup>25</sup> And I contended with them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, “You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. <sup>26</sup> Did not King Solomon of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin. <sup>27</sup> Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?”

<sup>28</sup> And one of the sons of Jehoiada, son of the high priest Eliashib, was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; I chased him away from me.

<sup>29</sup> Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, the covenant of the priests and the Levites.

<sup>30</sup> Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; <sup>31</sup> and I provided for the wood offering, at appointed times, and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

**1 Corinthians 11:13--16 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled?

<sup>14</sup> Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him,

<sup>15</sup> but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. <sup>16</sup> But if anyone is disposed to be contentious—we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

**Psalms 35:19-28 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Do not let my treacherous enemies rejoice over me,  
or those who hate me without cause wink the eye.

<sup>20</sup> For they do not speak peace,  
but they conceive deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land.

<sup>21</sup> They open wide their mouths against me;  
they say, “Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it.”

<sup>22</sup> You have seen, O LORD; do not be silent!  
O Lord, do not be far from me!

<sup>23</sup> Wake up! Bestir yourself for my defense,  
for my cause, my God and my Lord!

<sup>24</sup> Vindicate me, O LORD, my God,  
according to your righteousness,  
and do not let them rejoice over me.

<sup>25</sup> Do not let them say to themselves,  
“Aha, we have our heart’s desire.”



Do not let them say, “We  
have swallowed you  
up.”

<sup>26</sup> Let all those who rejoice at  
my calamity  
be put to shame and  
confusion;  
let those who exalt  
themselves against me  
be clothed with shame  
and dishonor.

<sup>27</sup> Let those who desire my  
vindication  
shout for joy and be glad,  
and say evermore,  
“Great is the LORD,  
who delights in the  
welfare of his servant.”

<sup>28</sup> Then my tongue shall tell  
of your righteousness  
and of your praise all day  
long.

**Proverbs 12:12–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> The wicked covet the  
proceeds of  
wickedness,  
but the root of the  
righteous bears fruit.

<sup>13</sup> The evil are ensnared by  
the transgression of  
their lips,  
but the righteous escape  
from trouble.

<sup>14</sup> From the fruit of the  
mouth one is filled  
with good things,  
and manual labor has its  
reward.

**April 4**



**Esther 1:1-2:4 (NRSV)**

*King Ahasuerus Deposes  
Queen Vashti*

**1** This happened in the days  
of Ahasuerus, the same  
Ahasuerus who ruled over one  
hundred twenty-seven  
provinces from India to  
Ethiopia. <sup>2</sup> In those days when  
King Ahasuerus sat on his royal  
throne in the citadel of Susa,  
<sup>3</sup> in the third year of his reign,  
he gave a banquet for all his  
officials and ministers. The  
army of Persia and Media and  
the nobles and governors of  
the provinces were present,  
<sup>4</sup> while he displayed the great  
wealth of his kingdom and the  
splendor and pomp of his

majesty for many days, one hundred eighty days in all.

<sup>5</sup> When these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in the citadel of Susa, both great and small, a banquet lasting for seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

<sup>6</sup> There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings tied with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and marble pillars. There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and colored stones. <sup>7</sup> Drinks were served in golden goblets, goblets of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king. <sup>8</sup> Drinking was by flagons, without restraint; for the king had given orders to all the officials of his palace to do as each one desired.

<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Queen Vashti gave a banquet for the women in the palace of King Ahasuerus.

<sup>10</sup> On the seventh day, when the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona,

Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who attended him, <sup>11</sup> to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing the royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the officials her beauty; for she was fair to behold. <sup>12</sup> But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. At this the king was enraged, and his anger burned within him.

<sup>13</sup> Then the king consulted the sages who knew the laws (for this was the king's procedure toward all who were versed in law and custom, <sup>14</sup> and those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven officials of Persia and Media, who had access to the king, and sat first in the kingdom): <sup>15</sup> "According to the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti because she has not performed the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed by the eunuchs?" <sup>16</sup> Then Memucan said in the presence of the king and the officials, "Not only has Queen Vashti done wrong to the king, but

also to all the officials and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. <sup>17</sup> For this deed of the queen will be made known to all women, causing them to look with contempt on their husbands, since they will say, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him, and she did not come.' <sup>18</sup> This very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's behavior will rebel against the king's officials, and there will be no end of contempt and wrath! <sup>19</sup> If it pleases the king, let a royal order go out from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes so that it may not be altered, that Vashti is never again to come before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she. <sup>20</sup> So when the decree made by the king is proclaimed throughout all his kingdom, vast as it is, all women will give honor to their husbands, high and low alike." <sup>21</sup> This advice pleased the king and the officials, and the

king did as Memucan proposed; <sup>22</sup> he sent letters to all the royal provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, declaring that every man should be master in his own house.

### *Esther Becomes Queen*

**2** After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus had abated, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. <sup>2</sup> Then the king's servants who attended him said, "Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for the king. <sup>3</sup> And let the king appoint commissioners in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the beautiful young virgins to the harem in the citadel of Susa under custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; let their cosmetic treatments be given them. <sup>4</sup> And let the girl who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This pleased the king, and he did so.

**1 Corinthians 11:17-22** (NRSV)

*Abuses at the Lord's Supper*

<sup>17</sup> Now in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. <sup>18</sup> For, to begin with, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it. <sup>19</sup> Indeed, there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you are genuine. <sup>20</sup> When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. <sup>21</sup> For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. <sup>22</sup> What! Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this matter I do not commend you!

**Psalms 36:1-5** (NRSV)

*Human Wickedness and Divine Goodness*

To the leader. Of David, the servant of the LORD.

- <sup>1</sup> Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in their hearts; there is no fear of God before their eyes.
- <sup>2</sup> For they flatter themselves in their own eyes that their iniquity cannot be found out and hated.
- <sup>3</sup> The words of their mouths are mischief and deceit; they have ceased to act wisely and do good.
- <sup>4</sup> They plot mischief while on their beds; they are set on a way that is not good; they do not reject evil.
- <sup>5</sup> Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.

**Proverbs 12:15-17** (NRSV)

- <sup>15</sup> Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to advice.
- <sup>16</sup> Fools show their anger at once, but the prudent ignore an insult.

<sup>17</sup> Whoever speaks the truth  
gives honest evidence,  
but a false witness  
speaks deceitfully.

## April 5



### Esther 2:5-3:15 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Now there was a Jew in the citadel of Susa whose name was Mordecai son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish, a Benjaminite. <sup>6</sup> Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem among the captives carried away with King Jeconiah of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried away. <sup>7</sup> Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is Esther, his cousin, for she had neither father nor mother; the girl was fair and beautiful, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter. <sup>8</sup> So when the king's order and his edict were proclaimed, and when many

young women were gathered in the citadel of Susa in custody of Hegai, Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put in custody of Hegai, who had charge of the women. <sup>9</sup> The girl pleased him and won his favor, and he quickly provided her with her cosmetic treatments and her portion of food, and with seven chosen maids from the king's palace, and advanced her and her maids to the best place in the harem. <sup>10</sup> Esther did not reveal her people or kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to tell. <sup>11</sup> Every day Mordecai would walk around in front of the court of the harem, to learn how Esther was and how she fared.

<sup>12</sup> The turn came for each girl to go in to King Ahasuerus, after being twelve months under the regulations for the women, since this was the regular period of their cosmetic treatment, six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and cosmetics for women. <sup>13</sup> When the girl went in to the king she was given whatever she asked

for to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.

<sup>14</sup> In the evening she went in; then in the morning she came back to the second harem in custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines; she did not go in to the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

<sup>15</sup> When the turn came for Esther daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter, to go in to the king, she asked for nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch, who had charge of the women, advised. Now Esther was admired by all who saw her. <sup>16</sup> When Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign, <sup>17</sup> the king loved Esther more than all the other women; of all the virgins she won his favor and devotion, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. <sup>18</sup> Then the king gave a great banquet to

all his officials and ministers—"Esther's banquet." He also granted a holiday to the provinces, and gave gifts with royal liberality.

*Mordecai Discovers a Plot*

<sup>19</sup> When the virgins were being gathered together, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. <sup>20</sup> Now Esther had not revealed her kindred or her people, as Mordecai had charged her; for Esther obeyed Mordecai just as when she was brought up by him. <sup>21</sup> In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus. <sup>22</sup> But the matter came to the knowledge of Mordecai, and he told it to Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in the name of Mordecai. <sup>23</sup> When the affair was investigated and found to be so, both the men were hanged on the gallows. It was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.

*Haman Undertakes  
to Destroy the Jews*

**3** After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the officials who were with him. <sup>2</sup> And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and did obeisance to Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or do obeisance. <sup>3</sup> Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?" <sup>4</sup> When they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would avail; for he had told them that he was a Jew. <sup>5</sup> When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or do obeisance to him, Haman was infuriated. <sup>6</sup> But he thought it beneath him to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, having been told who Mordecai's people were, Haman plotted to destroy all

the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

<sup>7</sup> In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur—which means "the lot"—before Haman for the day and for the month, and the lot fell on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. <sup>8</sup> Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and separated among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not appropriate for the king to tolerate them. <sup>9</sup> If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued for their destruction, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king's business, so that they may put it into the king's treasuries." <sup>10</sup> So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. <sup>11</sup> The king said to

Haman, “The money is given to you, and the people as well, to do with them as it seems good to you.”

<sup>12</sup> Then the king’s secretaries were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and an edict, according to all that Haman commanded, was written to the king’s satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and every people in its own language; it was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king’s ring.

<sup>13</sup> Letters were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces, giving orders to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods. <sup>14</sup> A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation, calling on all the peoples to be ready for that day. <sup>15</sup> The couriers went quickly by order

of the king, and the decree was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.

### **1 Corinthians 11:23-34** (NRSV)

*The Institution of  
the Lord’s Supper*  
(Mt 26:26–29; Mk 14:22–25;  
Lk 22:14–23)

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, **“This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”** <sup>25</sup> In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, **“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”** <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

*Partaking of the Supper  
Unworthily*

<sup>27</sup> Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the



cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. <sup>30</sup> For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. <sup>31</sup> But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. <sup>32</sup> But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

<sup>33</sup> So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. <sup>34</sup> If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation. About the other things I will give instructions when I come.

**Psalm 36:6-9** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Your [the Lord's] righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep;

you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup> How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

<sup>8</sup> They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

<sup>9</sup> For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

**Proverbs 12:18** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

**April 6**



**Esther 4:1-5:14** (NRSV)

*Esther Agrees to Help the Jews*

**4** When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai

tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went through the city, wailing with a loud and bitter cry; <sup>2</sup> he went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. <sup>3</sup> In every province, wherever the king's command and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and most of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

<sup>4</sup> When Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed; she sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth; but he would not accept them.

<sup>5</sup> Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what was happening and why. <sup>6</sup> Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, <sup>7</sup> and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had

promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. <sup>8</sup> Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther, explain it to her, and charge her to go to the king to make supplication to him and entreat him for her people.

<sup>9</sup> Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. <sup>10</sup> Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him a message for Mordecai, saying, <sup>11</sup> "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—all alike are to be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden scepter to someone, may that person live. I myself have not been called to come in to the king for thirty days." <sup>12</sup> When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, <sup>13</sup> Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.

<sup>14</sup> For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this." <sup>15</sup> Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, <sup>16</sup> "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish." <sup>17</sup> Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

### *Esther's Banquet*

**5** On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, opposite the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne inside the palace opposite the entrance to the palace. <sup>2</sup> As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won his favor and he held out to her the

golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter. <sup>3</sup> The king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom." <sup>4</sup> Then Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to a banquet that I have prepared for the king." <sup>5</sup> Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, so that we may do as Esther desires." So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. <sup>6</sup> While they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." <sup>7</sup> Then Esther said, "This is my petition and request: <sup>8</sup> If I have won the king's favor, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet that I will prepare for them, and then I will do as the king has said."

*Haman Plans to Have  
Mordecai Hanged*

<sup>9</sup> Haman went out that day happy and in good spirits. But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, and observed that he neither rose nor trembled before him, he was infuriated with Mordecai; <sup>10</sup> nevertheless Haman restrained himself and went home. Then he sent and called for his friends and his wife Zeresh, <sup>11</sup> and Haman recounted to them the splendor of his riches, the number of his sons, all the promotions with which the king had honored him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and the ministers of the king. <sup>12</sup> Haman added, "Even Queen Esther let no one but myself come with the king to the banquet that she prepared. Tomorrow also I am invited by her, together with the king. <sup>13</sup> Yet all this does me no good so long as I see the Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate." <sup>14</sup> Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Let a gallows fifty cubits high be made, and in the morning tell the king to

have Mordecai hanged on it; then go with the king to the banquet in good spirits." This advice pleased Haman, and he had the gallows made.

**1 Corinthians 12:1-7** (NRSV)

*Spiritual Gifts*

**12** Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. <sup>3</sup> Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. <sup>7</sup> To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.



**Psalm 36:10-12** (NRSV)

- <sup>10</sup> O continue your steadfast  
love to those who  
know you,  
and your salvation to the  
upright of heart!  
<sup>11</sup> Do not let the foot of the  
arrogant tread on me,  
or the hand of the  
wicked drive me away.  
<sup>12</sup> There the evildoers lie  
prostrate;  
they are thrust down,  
unable to rise.

**Proverbs 12:19–20** (NRSV)

- <sup>19</sup> Truthful lips endure  
forever,  
but a lying tongue lasts  
only a moment.  
<sup>20</sup> Deceit is in the mind of  
those who plan evil,  
but those who counsel  
peace have joy.

**April 7**



**Esther 6:1-7:10** (NRSV)

*The King Honors Mordecai*

**6** On that night the king could not sleep, and he gave orders to bring the book of records, the annals, and they were read to the king. <sup>2</sup> It was found written how Mordecai had told about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, and who had conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus. <sup>3</sup> Then the king said, "What honor or distinction has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" The king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him." <sup>4</sup> The king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about having Mordecai hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for him. <sup>5</sup> So the king's servants told him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." The king said, "Let him come in." <sup>6</sup> So Haman came in, and the king said to him, "What shall be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor?" Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king wish to honor more than

me?" <sup>7</sup> So Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king wishes to honor, <sup>8</sup> let royal robes be brought, which the king has worn, and a horse that the king has ridden, with a royal crown on its head. <sup>9</sup> Let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble officials; let him robe the man whom the king wishes to honor, and let him conduct the man on horseback through the open square of the city, proclaiming before him: 'Thus shall it be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor.' "

<sup>10</sup> Then the king said to Haman, "Quickly, take the robes and the horse, as you have said, and do so to the Jew Mordecai who sits at the king's gate. Leave out nothing that you have mentioned."

<sup>11</sup> So Haman took the robes and the horse and robed Mordecai and led him riding through the open square of the city, proclaiming, "Thus shall it be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor."

<sup>12</sup> Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate, but Haman

hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered.

<sup>13</sup> When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom your downfall has begun, is of the Jewish people, you will not prevail against him, but will surely fall before him."

#### *Haman's Downfall and Mordecai's Advancement*

<sup>14</sup> While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried Haman off to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

**7** <sup>1</sup> So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. <sup>2</sup> On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled."

<sup>3</sup> Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given

me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. <sup>4</sup> For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.” <sup>5</sup> Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?” <sup>6</sup> Esther said, “A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. <sup>7</sup> The king rose from the feast in wrath and went into the palace garden, but Haman stayed to beg his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that the king had determined to destroy him. <sup>8</sup> When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman had thrown himself on the couch where Esther was reclining; and the king said, “Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?” As the words left the mouth of the king, they covered Haman’s face. <sup>9</sup> Then


Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high.” And the king said, “Hang him on that.” <sup>10</sup> So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

**1 Corinthians 12:8-26 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

## One Body with Many Members

(Cp Eph 4:1–16)



<sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup> If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup> If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many members, yet one body. <sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to

the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; <sup>24</sup> whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, <sup>25</sup> that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup> If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

## Psalm 37:1-6 (NRSV)

*Exhortation to Patience and Trust*

Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Do not fret because of the wicked;  
do not be envious of wrongdoers,  
<sup>2</sup> for they will soon fade like the grass,



and wither like the green herb.

<sup>3</sup> Trust in the LORD, and do good;  
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.

<sup>4</sup> Take delight in the LORD,  
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

<sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD;  
trust in him, and he will act.

<sup>6</sup> He will make your vindication shine like the light,  
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

### **Proverbs 12:21–23** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> No harm happens to the righteous,  
but the wicked are filled with trouble.

<sup>22</sup> Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,  
but those who act faithfully are his delight.

<sup>23</sup> One who is clever conceals knowledge,  
but the mind of a fool broadcasts folly.

## **April 8**



### **Esther 8:1-9:15** (NRSV)

#### *Esther Saves the Jews*

**8** On that day King Ahasuerus gave to Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told what he was to her.

<sup>2</sup> Then the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. So Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

<sup>3</sup> Then Esther spoke again to the king; she fell at his feet, weeping and pleading with him to avert the evil design of Haman the Agagite and the plot that he had devised against the Jews. <sup>4</sup> The king held out the golden scepter to Esther, <sup>5</sup> and Esther rose and stood before the king. She said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have won his favor, and if the thing seems right before the king, and I have his approval, let an order be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman son of

Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote giving orders to destroy the Jews who are in all the provinces of the king.

<sup>6</sup> For how can I bear to see the calamity that is coming on my people? Or how can I bear to see the destruction of my kindred?" <sup>7</sup> Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to the Jew Mordecai, "See, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows, because he plotted to lay hands on the Jews. <sup>8</sup> You may write as you please with regard to the Jews, in the name of the king, and seal it with the king's ring; for an edict written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked."

<sup>9</sup> The king's secretaries were summoned at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and an edict was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews and to the satraps and the governors and the officials of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred

twenty-seven provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, and also to the Jews in their script and their language. <sup>10</sup> He wrote letters in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed them with the king's ring, and sent them by mounted couriers riding on fast steeds bred from the royal herd. <sup>11</sup> By these letters the king allowed the Jews who were in every city to assemble and defend their lives, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate any armed force of any people or province that might attack them, with their children and women, and to plunder their goods <sup>12</sup> on a single day throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. <sup>13</sup> A copy of the writ was to be issued as a decree in every province and published to all peoples, and the Jews were to be ready on that day to take revenge on their enemies. <sup>14</sup> So the couriers, mounted on their swift royal steeds, hurried out, urged by the king's command.

The decree was issued in the citadel of Susa.

<sup>15</sup> Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king, wearing royal robes of blue and white, with a great golden crown and a mantle of fine linen and purple, while the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.

<sup>16</sup> For the Jews there was light and gladness, joy and honor.

<sup>17</sup> In every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict came, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a festival and a holiday. Furthermore, many of the peoples of the country professed to be Jews, because the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them.

*Destruction of the  
Enemies of the Jews*

**9** Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain power over them, but which had been changed to a day when the Jews would gain power over their foes, <sup>2</sup> the

Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who had sought their ruin; and no one could withstand them, because the fear of them had fallen upon all peoples. <sup>3</sup> All the officials of the provinces, the satraps and the governors, and the royal officials were supporting the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them. <sup>4</sup> For Mordecai was powerful in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces as the man Mordecai grew more and more powerful. <sup>5</sup> So the Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, slaughtering, and destroying them, and did as they pleased to those who hated them. <sup>6</sup> In the citadel of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred people. <sup>7</sup> They killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, <sup>8</sup> Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, <sup>9</sup> Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, Vaizatha, <sup>10</sup> the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews; but they did not touch the plunder.

<sup>11</sup> That very day the number of those killed in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king. <sup>12</sup> The king said to Queen Esther, "In the citadel of Susa the Jews have killed five hundred people and also the ten sons of Haman. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It shall be granted you. And what further is your request? It shall be fulfilled." <sup>13</sup> Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be allowed tomorrow also to do according to this day's edict, and let the ten sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows." <sup>14</sup> So the king commanded this to be done; a decree was issued in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman were hanged. <sup>15</sup> The Jews who were in Susa gathered also on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and they killed three hundred persons in Susa; but they did not touch the plunder.

**1 Corinthians 12:7-31** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. <sup>28</sup> And God has

appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

**Psalm 37:-7-11** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Be still before the LORD,  
and wait patiently for  
him;  
do not fret over those  
who prosper in their  
way,  
over those who carry out  
evil devices.

<sup>8</sup> Refrain from anger, and  
forsake wrath.  
Do not fret—it leads only  
to evil.

<sup>9</sup> For the wicked shall be cut  
off,  
but those who wait for  
the LORD shall inherit  
the land.

<sup>10</sup> Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.

<sup>11</sup> But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

**Proverbs 12:24 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> The hand of the diligent will rule, while the lazy will be put to forced labor.

**April 9**



**Esther 9:16-10:3 (NRSV)**

Esther 9:16–10:3 (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Now the other Jews who were in the king's provinces also gathered to defend their lives, and gained relief from their enemies, and killed seventy-five thousand of those who hated them; but they laid

no hands on the plunder.

<sup>17</sup> This was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made that a day of feasting and gladness.

*The Feast of Purim  
Inaugurated*

<sup>18</sup> But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth, and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and gladness.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the open towns, hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and feasting, a holiday on which they send gifts of food to one another.

<sup>20</sup> Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, <sup>21</sup> enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, <sup>22</sup> as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month

that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.<sup>23</sup> So the Jews adopted as a custom what they had begun to do, as Mordecai had written to them.

<sup>24</sup> Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur—that is “the lot”—to crush and destroy them;<sup>25</sup> but when Esther came before the king, he gave orders in writing that the wicked plot that he had devised against the Jews should come upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.<sup>26</sup> Therefore these days are called Purim, from the word Pur. Thus because of all that was written in this letter, and of what they had faced in this matter, and of what had happened to them,<sup>27</sup> the Jews established and accepted as a custom for themselves and their

descendants and all who joined them, that without fail they would continue to observe these two days every year, as it was written and at the time appointed.<sup>28</sup> These days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, in every family, province, and city; and these days of Purim should never fall into disuse among the Jews, nor should the commemoration of these days cease among their descendants.

<sup>29</sup> Queen Esther daughter of Abihail, along with the Jew Mordecai, gave full written authority, confirming this second letter about Purim.<sup>30</sup> Letters were sent wishing peace and security to all the Jews, to the one hundred twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus,<sup>31</sup> and giving orders that these days of Purim should be observed at their appointed seasons, as the Jew Mordecai and Queen Esther enjoined on the Jews, just as they had laid down for themselves and for their descendants regulations concerning their fasts and

their lamentations. <sup>32</sup> The command of Queen Esther fixed these practices of Purim, and it was recorded in writing.

**10** King Ahasuerus laid tribute on the land and on the islands of the sea. <sup>2</sup> All the acts of his power and might, and the full account of the high honor of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Media and Persia? <sup>3</sup> For Mordecai the Jew was next in rank to King Ahasuerus, and he was powerful among the Jews and popular with his many kindred, for he sought the good of his people and interceded for the welfare of all his descendants.

**1 Corinthians 13:1-13** (NRSV)  
*The Gift of Love*

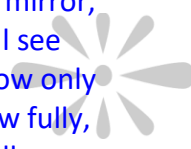
**13** If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to

remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant <sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; <sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. <sup>7</sup> It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

<sup>8</sup> Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. <sup>9</sup> For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; <sup>10</sup> but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

<sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully



known. <sup>13</sup> And now faith, hope,  
and love abide, these three;  
and the greatest of these is  
love.

**Psalm 37:12-20** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> The wicked plot against  
the righteous,  
and gnash their teeth at  
them;  
<sup>13</sup> but the LORD laughs at the  
wicked,  
for he sees that their day  
is coming.  
<sup>14</sup> The wicked draw the  
sword and bend their  
bows  
to bring down the poor  
and needy,  
to kill those who walk  
uprightly;  
<sup>15</sup> their sword shall enter  
their own heart,  
and their bows shall be  
broken.  
<sup>16</sup> Better is a little that the  
righteous person has  
than the abundance of  
many wicked.  
<sup>17</sup> For the arms of the wicked  
shall be broken,  
but the LORD upholds the  
righteous.

<sup>18</sup> The LORD knows the days  
of the blameless,

and their heritage will  
abide forever;

<sup>19</sup> they are not put to shame  
in evil times,  
in the days of famine  
they have abundance.  
<sup>20</sup> But the wicked perish,  
and the enemies of the  
LORD are like the glory  
of the pastures;  
they vanish—like smoke  
they vanish away.

**Proverbs 12:25** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Anxiety weighs down the  
human heart,  
but a good word cheers  
it up.

## April 10



**Job 1:1-22** (NRSV)

*Job and His Family*

**1** There was once a man in  
the land of Uz whose name  
was Job. That man was  
blameless and upright, one  
who feared God and turned  
away from evil. <sup>2</sup> There were





born to him seven sons and three daughters.<sup>3</sup> He had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred donkeys, and very many servants; so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east.<sup>4</sup> His sons used to go and hold feasts in one another's houses in turn; and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.<sup>5</sup> And when the feast days had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." This is what Job always did.

#### *Attack on Job's Character*

<sup>6</sup> One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.<sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking

up and down on it."<sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil."<sup>9</sup> Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing?<sup>10</sup> Have you not put a fence around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.<sup>11</sup> But stretch out your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face."<sup>12</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, all that he has is in your power; only do not stretch out your hand against him!" So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

#### *Job Loses Property and Children*

<sup>13</sup> One day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the eldest brother's house,<sup>14</sup> a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding

beside them, <sup>15</sup> and the Sabceans fell on them and carried them off, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you.” <sup>16</sup> While he was still speaking, another came and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; I alone have escaped to tell you.” <sup>17</sup> While he was still speaking, another came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three columns, made a raid on the camels and carried them off, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you.”

<sup>18</sup> While he was still speaking, another came and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house, <sup>19</sup> and suddenly a great wind came across the desert, struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; I alone have escaped to tell you.”

<sup>20</sup> Then Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head, and fell on the ground and worshiped.

<sup>21</sup> He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there; the LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

<sup>22</sup> In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrongdoing.

**1 Corinthians 14:1-9** (NRSV)  
*Gifts of Prophecy and Tongues*

**14** Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup> For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit. <sup>3</sup> On the other hand, those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. <sup>4</sup> Those who speak in a tongue build up themselves, but those who prophesy build up the church. <sup>5</sup> Now I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless

someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

<sup>6</sup> Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you in some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? <sup>7</sup> It is the same way with lifeless instruments that produce sound, such as the flute or the harp. If they do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is being played? <sup>8</sup> And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? <sup>9</sup> So with yourselves; if in a tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is being said? For you will be speaking into the air.

**Psalms 37:21-29 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> The wicked borrow, and do not pay back,  
but the righteous are generous and keep giving;  
<sup>22</sup> for those blessed by the LORD shall inherit the land,  
but those cursed by him shall be cut off.

<sup>23</sup> Our steps are made firm by the LORD,  
when he delights in our way;

<sup>24</sup> though we stumble, we shall not fall headlong,  
for the LORD holds us by the hand.

<sup>25</sup> I have been young, and now am old,  
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken  
or their children begging bread.

<sup>26</sup> They are ever giving liberally and lending,  
and their children become a blessing.

<sup>27</sup> Depart from evil, and do good;  
so you shall abide forever.

<sup>28</sup> For the LORD loves justice;  
he will not forsake his faithful ones.

The righteous shall be kept safe forever,  
but the children of the wicked shall be cut off.

<sup>29</sup> The righteous shall inherit the land,  
and live in it forever.



**Proverbs 12:26** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> The righteous gives good advice to friends, but the way of the wicked leads astray.

**April 11**



**Job 2:1-3:26** (NRSV)

*Attack on Job's Health*

**2** One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." <sup>3</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited

me against him, to destroy him for no reason." <sup>4</sup> Then Satan answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to save their lives." <sup>5</sup> But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." <sup>6</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life."

<sup>7</sup> So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. <sup>8</sup> Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

<sup>9</sup> Then his wife said to him, "Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die."

<sup>10</sup> But he said to her, "You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

*Job's Three Friends*

<sup>11</sup> Now when Job's three friends heard of all these troubles that had come upon

him, each of them set out from his home—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him.

<sup>12</sup> When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads. <sup>13</sup> They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

*Job Curses the  
Day He Was Born*

**3** After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. <sup>2</sup> Job said:

<sup>3</sup> “Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night that said, ‘A man-child is conceived.’

<sup>4</sup> Let that day be darkness! May God above not seek it, or light shine on it.

<sup>5</sup> Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.

Let clouds settle upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.

<sup>6</sup> That night—let thick darkness seize it! let it not rejoice among the days of the year; let it not come into the number of the months.

<sup>7</sup> Yes, let that night be barren; let no joyful cry be heard in it.

<sup>8</sup> Let those curse it who curse the Sea, those who are skilled to rouse up Leviathan.

<sup>9</sup> Let the stars of its dawn be dark; let it hope for light, but have none; may it not see the eyelids of the morning—

<sup>10</sup> because it did not shut the doors of my mother’s womb, and hide trouble from my eyes.

<sup>11</sup> “Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire?

<sup>12</sup> Why were there knees to receive me,

or breasts for me to  
suck?  
13 Now I would be lying down  
and quiet;  
I would be asleep; then I  
would be at rest  
14 with kings and counselors  
of the earth  
who rebuild ruins for  
themselves,  
15 or with princes who have  
gold,  
who fill their houses with  
silver.  
16 Or why was I not buried  
like a stillborn child,  
like an infant that never  
sees the light?  
17 There the wicked cease  
from troubling,  
and there the weary are  
at rest.  
18 There the prisoners are at  
ease together;  
they do not hear the  
voice of the  
taskmaster.  
19 The small and the great  
are there,  
and the slaves are free  
from their masters.  
20 "Why is light given to one  
in misery,  
and life to the bitter in  
soul,

21 who long for death, but it  
does not come,  
and dig for it more than  
for hidden treasures;  
22 who rejoice exceedingly,  
and are glad when they  
find the grave?  
23 Why is light given to one  
who cannot see the  
way,  
whom God has fenced  
in?  
24 For my sighing comes like  
my bread,  
and my groanings are  
poured out like water.  
25 Truly the thing that I fear  
comes upon me,  
and what I dread befalls  
me.  
26 I am not at ease, nor am I  
quiet;  
I have no rest; but  
trouble comes."

**1 Corinthians 14:10-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> There are doubtless many  
different kinds of sounds in  
the world, and nothing is  
without sound. <sup>11</sup> If then I do  
not know the meaning of a  
sound, I will be a foreigner to  
the speaker and the speaker a  
foreigner to me. <sup>12</sup> So with  
yourselves; since you are

eager for spiritual gifts, strive to excel in them for building up the church.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret.

<sup>14</sup> For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unproductive. <sup>15</sup> What should I do then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also.

<sup>16</sup> Otherwise, if you say a blessing with the spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say the “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since the outsider does not know what you are saying? <sup>17</sup> For you may give thanks well enough, but the other person is not built up.

### **Psalm 37:30-33 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom,  
and their tongues speak justice.

<sup>31</sup> The law of their God is in their hearts;  
their steps do not slip.

<sup>32</sup> The wicked watch for the righteous,  
and seek to kill them.

<sup>33</sup> The LORD will not abandon them to their power,  
or let them be condemned when they are brought to trial.

### **Proverbs 12:27–28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> The lazy do not roast their game,  
but the diligent obtain precious wealth.

<sup>28</sup> In the path of righteousness there is life,  
in walking its path there is no death.



## **April 12**



### **Job 4:1-5:27 (NRSV)**

*Eliphaz Speaks: Job Has Sinned*

**4** Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

<sup>2</sup> “If one ventures a word with you, will you be offended?”

But who can keep from  
speaking?  
3 See, you have instructed  
many;  
you have strengthened  
the weak hands.  
4 Your words have  
supported those who  
were stumbling,  
and you have made firm  
the feeble knees.  
5 But now it has come to  
you, and you are  
impatient;  
it touches you, and you  
are dismayed.  
6 Is not your fear of God  
your confidence,  
and the integrity of your  
ways your hope?  
7 "Think now, who that was  
innocent ever  
perished?  
Or where were the  
upright cut off?  
8 As I have seen, those who  
plow iniquity  
and sow trouble reap the  
same.  
9 By the breath of God they  
perish,  
and by the blast of his  
anger they are  
consumed.

10 The roar of the lion, the  
voice of the fierce lion,  
and the teeth of the  
young lions are broken.  
11 The strong lion perishes  
for lack of prey,  
and the whelps of the  
lioness are scattered.  
12 "Now a word came  
stealing to me,  
my ear received the  
whisper of it.  
13 Amid thoughts from  
visions of the night,  
when deep sleep falls on  
mortals,  
14 dread came upon me, and  
trembling,  
which made all my bones  
shake.  
15 A spirit glided past my  
face;  
the hair of my flesh  
bristled.  
16 It stood still,  
but I could not discern its  
appearance.  
A form was before my  
eyes;  
there was silence, then I  
heard a voice:  
17 'Can mortals be righteous  
before God?



Can human beings be  
pure before their  
Maker?  
18 Even in his servants he  
puts no trust,  
and his angels he charges  
with error;  
19 how much more those  
who live in houses of  
clay,  
whose foundation is in  
the dust,  
who are crushed like a  
moth.  
20 Between morning and  
evening they are  
destroyed;  
they perish forever  
without any regarding  
it.  
21 Their tent-cord is plucked  
up within them,  
and they die devoid of  
wisdom.'

*Job Is Corrected by God*

**5** "Call now; is there  
anyone who will  
answer you?  
To which of the holy ones  
will you turn?  
2 Surely vexation kills the  
fool,  
and jealousy slays the  
simple.

3 I have seen fools taking  
root,  
but suddenly I cursed  
their dwelling.  
4 Their children are far from  
safety,  
they are crushed in the  
gate,  
and there is no one to  
deliver them.  
5 The hungry eat their  
harvest,  
and they take it even out  
of the thorns;  
and the thirsty pant after  
their wealth.  
6 For misery does not come  
from the earth,  
nor does trouble sprout  
from the ground;  
7 but human beings are born  
to trouble  
just as sparks fly upward.  
8 "As for me, I would seek  
God,  
and to God I would  
commit my cause.  
9 He does great things and  
unsearchable,  
marvelous things  
without number.  
10 He gives rain on the earth  
and sends waters on the  
fields;

11 he sets on high those who  
are lowly,  
and those who mourn  
are lifted to safety.  
12 He frustrates the devices  
of the crafty,  
so that their hands  
achieve no success.  
13 He takes the wise in their  
own craftiness;  
and the schemes of the  
wily are brought to a  
quick end.  
14 They meet with darkness  
in the daytime,  
and grope at noonday as  
in the night.  
15 But he saves the needy  
from the sword of their  
mouth,  
from the hand of the  
mighty.  
16 So the poor have hope,  
and injustice shuts its  
mouth.  
17 "How happy is the one  
whom God reprove;  
therefore do not despise  
the discipline of the  
Almighty.  
18 For he wounds, but he  
binds up;  
he strikes, but his hands  
heal.

19 He will deliver you from six  
troubles;  
in seven no harm shall  
touch you.  
20 In famine he will redeem  
you from death,  
and in war from the  
power of the sword.  
21 You shall be hidden from  
the scourge of the  
tongue,  
and shall not fear  
destruction when it  
comes.  
22 At destruction and famine  
you shall laugh,  
and shall not fear the  
wild animals of the  
earth.  
23 For you shall be in league  
with the stones of the  
field,  
and the wild animals  
shall be at peace with  
you.  
24 You shall know that your  
tent is safe,  
you shall inspect your  
fold and miss nothing.  
25 You shall know that your  
descendants will be  
many,  
and your offspring like  
the grass of the earth.

<sup>26</sup> You shall come to your  
grave in ripe old age,  
as a shock of grain comes  
up to the threshing  
floor in its season.  
<sup>27</sup> See, we have searched this  
out; it is true.  
Hear, and know it for  
yourself.”

**1 Corinthians 14:18-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> I thank God that I speak in  
tongues more than all of you;  
<sup>19</sup> nevertheless, in church I  
would rather speak five words  
with my mind, in order to  
instruct others also, than ten  
thousand words in a tongue.

<sup>20</sup> Brothers and sisters, do  
not be children in your  
thinking; rather, be infants in  
evil, but in thinking be adults.

<sup>21</sup> In the law it is written,  
“By people of strange  
tongues  
and by the lips of  
foreigners  
I will speak to this people;  
yet even then they will  
not listen to me,”  
says the Lord. <sup>22</sup> Tongues,  
then, are a sign not for  
believers but for unbelievers,  
while prophecy is not for  
unbelievers but for believers.

<sup>23</sup> If, therefore, the whole  
church comes together and all  
speak in tongues, and  
outsiders or unbelievers enter,  
will they not say that you are  
out of your mind? <sup>24</sup> But if all  
prophecy, an unbeliever or  
outsider who enters is  
reproved by all and called to  
account by all. <sup>25</sup> After the  
secrets of the unbeliever’s  
heart are disclosed, that  
person will bow down before  
God and worship him,  
declaring, “God is really  
among you.”

**Psalms 37:34-40 (NRSV)**

<sup>34</sup> Wait for the LORD, and  
keep to his way,  
and he will exalt you to  
inherit the land;  
you will look on the  
destruction of the  
wicked.

<sup>35</sup> I have seen the wicked  
oppressing,  
and towering like a cedar  
of Lebanon.

<sup>36</sup> Again I passed by, and they  
were no more;  
though I sought them,  
they could not be  
found.

37 Mark the blameless, and  
behold the upright,  
for there is posterity for  
the peaceable.  
38 But transgressors shall be  
altogether destroyed;  
the posterity of the  
wicked shall be cut off.

39 The salvation of the  
righteous is from the  
LORD;  
he is their refuge in the  
time of trouble.

40 The LORD helps them and  
rescues them;  
he rescues them from  
the wicked, and saves  
them,  
because they take refuge  
in him.

**Proverbs 13:1** (NRSV)

1 A wise child loves  
discipline,  
but a scoffer does not  
listen to rebuke.

**April 13**



**Job 6:1-7:21** (NRSV)

*Job Replies:  
My Complaint Is Just*

6 Then Job answered:  
2 "O that my vexation were  
weighed,  
and all my calamity laid  
in the balances!  
3 For then it would be  
heavier than the sand  
of the sea;  
therefore my words have  
been rash.  
4 For the arrows of the  
Almighty are in me;  
my spirit drinks their  
poison;  
the terrors of God are  
arrayed against me.  
5 Does the wild ass bray  
over its grass,  
or the ox low over its  
fodder?  
6 Can that which is tasteless  
be eaten without salt,  
or is there any flavor in  
the juice of mallows?  
7 My appetite refuses to  
touch them;  
they are like food that is  
loathsome to me.

8 "O that I might have my  
request,  
and that God would  
grant my desire;  
9 that it would please God to  
crush me,  
that he would let loose  
his hand and cut me  
off!

10 This would be my  
consolation;  
I would even exult in  
unrelenting pain;  
for I have not denied the  
words of the Holy One.

11 What is my strength, that I  
should wait?  
And what is my end, that  
I should be patient?

12 Is my strength the strength  
of stones,  
or is my flesh bronze?

13 In truth I have no help in  
me,  
and any resource is  
driven from me.

14 "Those who withhold  
kindness from a friend  
forsake the fear of the  
Almighty.

15 My companions are  
treacherous like a  
torrent-bed,  
like freshets that pass  
away,

16 that run dark with ice,  
turbid with melting  
snow.

17 In time of heat they  
disappear;  
when it is hot, they  
vanish from their  
place.

18 The caravans turn aside  
from their course;  
they go up into the  
waste, and perish.

19 The caravans of Tema look,  
the travelers of Sheba  
hope.

20 They are disappointed  
because they were  
confident;  
they come there and are  
confounded.

21 Such you have now  
become to me;  
you see my calamity, and  
are afraid.

22 Have I said, 'Make me a  
gift'?

Or, 'From your wealth  
offer a bribe for me'?

23 Or, 'Save me from an  
opponent's hand'?

Or, 'Ransom me from the  
hand of oppressors'?

24 "Teach me, and I will be  
silent;

make me understand  
how I have gone  
wrong.  
25 How forceful are honest  
words!  
But your reproof, what  
does it reprove?  
26 Do you think that you can  
reprove words,  
as if the speech of the  
desperate were wind?  
27 You would even cast lots  
over the orphan,  
and bargain over your  
friend.  
28 “But now, be pleased to  
look at me;  
for I will not lie to your  
face.  
29 Turn, I pray, let no wrong  
be done.  
Turn now, my vindication  
is at stake.  
30 Is there any wrong on my  
tongue?  
Cannot my taste discern  
calamity?

*Job: My Suffering  
Is without End*

**7** “Do not human beings  
have a hard service on  
earth,

and are not their days  
like the days of a  
laborer?  
2 Like a slave who longs for  
the shadow,  
and like laborers who  
look for their wages,  
3 so I am allotted months of  
emptiness,  
and nights of misery are  
apportioned to me.  
4 When I lie down I say,  
‘When shall I rise?’  
But the night is long,  
and I am full of tossing  
until dawn.  
5 My flesh is clothed with  
worms and dirt;  
my skin hardens, then  
breaks out again.  
6 My days are swifter than a  
weaver’s shuttle,  
and come to their end  
without hope.  
7 “Remember that my life is  
a breath;  
my eye will never again  
see good.  
8 The eye that beholds me  
will see me no more;  
while your eyes are upon  
me, I shall be gone.  
9 As the cloud fades and  
vanishes,

so those who go down to  
Sheol do not come up;  
10 they return no more to  
their houses,  
nor do their places know  
them any more.  
11 "Therefore I will not  
restrain my mouth;  
I will speak in the  
anguish of my spirit;  
I will complain in the  
bitterness of my soul.  
12 Am I the Sea, or the  
Dragon,  
that you set a guard over  
me?  
13 When I say, 'My bed will  
comfort me,  
my couch will ease my  
complaint,'  
14 then you scare me with  
dreams  
and terrify me with  
visions,  
15 so that I would choose  
strangling  
and death rather than  
this body.  
16 I loathe my life; I would  
not live forever.  
Let me alone, for my  
days are a breath.  
17 What are human beings,  
that you make so much  
of them,

that you set your mind  
on them,  
18 visit them every morning,  
test them every  
moment?  
19 Will you not look away  
from me for a while,  
let me alone until I  
swallow my spittle?  
20 If I sin, what do I do to you,  
you watcher of  
humanity?  
Why have you made me  
your target?  
Why have I become a  
burden to you?  
21 Why do you not pardon  
my transgression  
and take away my  
iniquity?  
For now I shall lie in the  
earth;  
you will seek me, but I  
shall not be."

**1 Corinthians 14:26-40 (NRSV)**

*Orderly Worship*

<sup>26</sup> What should be done  
then, my friends? When you  
come together, each one has a  
hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a  
tongue, or an interpretation.  
Let all things be done for  
building up. <sup>27</sup> If anyone speaks  
in a tongue, let there be only

two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret.

<sup>28</sup> But if there is no one to interpret, let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God. <sup>29</sup> Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. <sup>30</sup> If a revelation is made to someone else sitting nearby, let the first person be silent. <sup>31</sup> For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged. <sup>32</sup> And the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets, <sup>33</sup> for God is a God not of disorder but of peace.

(As in all the churches of the saints, <sup>34</sup> women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. <sup>35</sup> If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

<sup>36</sup> Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?)

<sup>37</sup> Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you

is a command of the Lord.

<sup>38</sup> Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized. <sup>39</sup> So, my friends, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; <sup>40</sup> but all things should be done decently and in order.

### **Psalm 38:1-18 (NRSV)**

*A Penitent Sufferer's*

*Plea for Healing*

A Psalm of David,

for the memorial offering.

- 1 O LORD, do not rebuke me  
in your anger,  
or discipline me in your  
wrath.
- 2 For your arrows have sunk  
into me,  
and your hand has come  
down on me.
- 3 There is no soundness in  
my flesh  
because of your  
indignation;  
there is no health in my  
bones  
because of my sin.
- 4 For my iniquities have  
gone over my head;  
they weigh like a burden  
too heavy for me.
- 5 My wounds grow foul and  
fester



because of my  
foolishness;  
6 I am utterly bowed down  
and prostrate;  
all day long I go around  
mourning.  
7 For my loins are filled with  
burning,  
and there is no  
soundness in my flesh.  
8 I am utterly spent and  
crushed;  
I groan because of the  
tumult of my heart.  
9 O Lord, all my longing is  
known to you;  
my sighing is not hidden  
from you.  
10 My heart throbs, my  
strength fails me;  
as for the light of my  
eyes—it also has gone  
from me.  
11 My friends and  
companions stand  
aloof from my  
affliction,  
and my neighbors stand  
far off.  
12 Those who seek my life lay  
their snares;  
those who seek to hurt  
me speak of ruin,  
and meditate treachery  
all day long.

13 But I am like the deaf, I do  
not hear;  
like the mute, who  
cannot speak.  
14 Truly, I am like one who  
does not hear,  
and in whose mouth is  
no retort.  
15 But it is for you, O LORD,  
that I wait;  
it is you, O Lord my God,  
who will answer.  
16 For I pray, “Only do not let  
them rejoice over me,  
those who boast against  
me when my foot  
slips.”  
17 For I am ready to fall,  
and my pain is ever with  
me.  
18 I confess my iniquity;  
I am sorry for my sin.

**Proverbs 13:2–3 (NRSV)**

2 From the fruit of their  
words good persons  
eat good things,  
but the desire of the  
treacherous is for  
wrongdoing.  
3 Those who guard their  
mouths preserve their  
lives;  
those who open wide  
their lips come to ruin.

April 14



Job 8:1-9:24 (NRSV)

*Bildad Speaks:  
Job Should Repent*

**8** Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

<sup>2</sup> “How long will you say these things, and the words of your mouth be a great wind?

<sup>3</sup> Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert the right?

<sup>4</sup> If your children sinned against him, he delivered them into the power of their transgression.

<sup>5</sup> If you will seek God and make supplication to the Almighty,

<sup>6</sup> if you are pure and upright, surely then he will rouse himself for you and restore to you your rightful place.

<sup>7</sup> Though your beginning was small, your latter days will be very great.

<sup>8</sup> “For inquire now of bygone generations, and consider what their ancestors have found;

<sup>9</sup> for we are but of yesterday, and we know nothing, for our days on earth are but a shadow.

<sup>10</sup> Will they not teach you and tell you and utter words out of their understanding?

<sup>11</sup> “Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish where there is no water?

<sup>12</sup> While yet in flower and not cut down, they wither before any other plant.

<sup>13</sup> Such are the paths of all who forget God; the hope of the godless shall perish.

<sup>14</sup> Their confidence is gossamer, a spider’s house their trust.

<sup>15</sup> If one leans against its house, it will not stand; if one lays hold of it, it will not endure.

<sup>16</sup> The wicked thrive before the sun,

and their shoots spread  
over the garden.  
17 Their roots twine around  
the stoneheap;  
they live among the  
rocks.  
18 If they are destroyed from  
their place,  
then it will deny them,  
saying, 'I have never  
seen you.'  
19 See, these are their happy  
ways,  
and out of the earth still  
others will spring.  
20 "See, God will not reject a  
blameless person,  
nor take the hand of  
evildoers.  
21 He will yet fill your mouth  
with laughter,  
and your lips with shouts  
of joy.  
22 Those who hate you will be  
clothed with shame,  
and the tent of the  
wicked will be no  
more."

*Job Replies: There  
Is No Mediator*

**9** Then Job answered:  
2 "Indeed I know that this is  
so;

but how can a mortal be  
just before God?  
3 If one wished to contend  
with him,  
one could not answer  
him once in a  
thousand.  
4 He is wise in heart, and  
mighty in strength  
—who has resisted him,  
and succeeded?—  
5 he who removes  
mountains, and they  
do not know it,  
when he overturns them  
in his anger;  
6 who shakes the earth out  
of its place,  
and its pillars tremble;  
7 who commands the sun,  
and it does not rise;  
who seals up the stars;  
8 who alone stretched out  
the heavens  
and trampled the waves  
of the Sea;  
9 who made the Bear and  
Orion,  
the Pleiades and the  
chambers of the south;  
10 who does great things  
beyond understanding,  
and marvelous things  
without number.

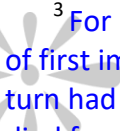
11 Look, he passes by me, and  
I do not see him;  
he moves on, but I do  
not perceive him.  
12 He snatches away; who  
can stop him?  
Who will say to him,  
'What are you doing?'  
13 "God will not turn back his  
anger;  
the helpers of Rahab  
bowed beneath him.  
14 How then can I answer  
him,  
choosing my words with  
him?  
15 Though I am innocent, I  
cannot answer him;  
I must appeal for mercy  
to my accuser.  
16 If I summoned him and he  
answered me,  
I do not believe that he  
would listen to my  
voice.  
17 For he crushes me with a  
tempest,  
and multiplies my  
wounds without cause;  
18 he will not let me get my  
breath,  
but fills me with  
bitterness.

19 If it is a contest of  
strength, he is the  
strong one!  
If it is a matter of justice,  
who can summon him?  
20 Though I am innocent, my  
own mouth would  
condemn me;  
though I am blameless,  
he would prove me  
perverse.  
21 I am blameless; I do not  
know myself;  
I loathe my life.  
22 It is all one; therefore I say,  
he destroys both the  
blameless and the  
wicked.  
23 When disaster brings  
sudden death,  
he mocks at the calamity  
of the innocent.  
24 The earth is given into the  
hand of the wicked;  
he covers the eyes of its  
judges—  
if it is not he, who then is  
it?

**1 Corinthians 15:1-11** (NRSV)  
*The Resurrection of Christ*  
(Cp Mk 16:9-20)

**15** Now I would remind you,  
brothers and sisters, of the  
good news that I proclaimed

to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand,<sup>2</sup> through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you— unless you have come to believe in vain.



<sup>3</sup> For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures,<sup>4</sup> and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures,<sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.<sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.<sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.<sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.<sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I

worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.<sup>11</sup> Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

**Psalm 38:19-22** (NRSV)

- <sup>19</sup> Those who are my foes  
without cause are  
mighty,  
and many are those who  
hate me wrongfully.
- <sup>20</sup> Those who render me evil  
for good  
are my adversaries  
because I follow after  
good.
- <sup>21</sup> Do not forsake me, O LORD;  
O my God, do not be far  
from me;
- <sup>22</sup> make haste to help me,  
O Lord, my salvation.

**Proverbs 13:4** (NRSV)

- <sup>4</sup> The appetite of the lazy  
craves, and gets  
nothing,  
while the appetite of the  
diligent is richly  
supplied.

## April 15



9:25-11:20 (NRSV)

25 “My days are swifter than  
a runner;  
they flee away, they see  
no good.  
26 They go by like skiffs of  
reed,  
like an eagle swooping  
on the prey.  
27 If I say, ‘I will forget my  
complaint;  
I will put off my sad  
countenance and be of  
good cheer,’  
28 I become afraid of all my  
suffering,  
for I know you will not  
hold me innocent.  
29 I shall be condemned;  
why then do I labor in  
vain?  
30 If I wash myself with soap  
and cleanse my hands  
with lye,  
31 yet you will plunge me into  
filth,  
and my own clothes will  
abhor me.  
32 For he is not a mortal, as I  
am, that I might  
answer him,

that we should come to  
trial together.

33 There is no umpire  
between us,  
who might lay his hand  
on us both.  
34 If he would take his rod  
away from me,  
and not let dread of him  
terrify me,  
35 then I would speak  
without fear of him,  
for I know I am not what  
I am thought to be.

*Job: I Loathe My Life*

**10** “I loathe my life;  
I will give free utterance  
to my complaint;  
I will speak in the  
bitterness of my soul.  
2 I will say to God, Do not  
condemn me;  
let me know why you  
contend against me.  
3 Does it seem good to you  
to oppress,  
to despise the work of  
your hands  
and favor the schemes of  
the wicked?  
4 Do you have eyes of flesh?  
Do you see as humans  
see?

5 Are your days like the days  
of mortals,  
or your years like human  
years,  
6 that you seek out my  
iniquity  
and search for my sin,  
7 although you know that I  
am not guilty,  
and there is no one to  
deliver out of your  
hand?  
8 Your hands fashioned and  
made me;  
and now you turn and  
destroy me.  
9 Remember that you  
fashioned me like clay;  
and will you turn me to  
dust again?  
10 Did you not pour me out  
like milk  
and curdle me like  
cheese?  
11 You clothed me with skin  
and flesh,  
and knit me together  
with bones and sinews.  
12 You have granted me life  
and steadfast love,  
and your care has  
preserved my spirit.  
13 Yet these things you hid in  
your heart;

I know that this was your  
purpose.  
14 If I sin, you watch me,  
and do not acquit me of  
my iniquity.  
15 If I am wicked, woe to me!  
If I am righteous, I  
cannot lift up my head,  
for I am filled with disgrace  
and look upon my  
affliction.  
16 Bold as a lion you hunt me;  
you repeat your exploits  
against me.  
17 You renew your witnesses  
against me,  
and increase your  
vexation toward me;  
you bring fresh troops  
against me.  
18 "Why did you bring me  
forth from the womb?  
Would that I had died  
before any eye had  
seen me,  
19 and were as though I had  
not been,  
carried from the womb  
to the grave.  
20 Are not the days of my life  
few?  
Let me alone, that I may  
find a little comfort  
21 before I go, never to  
return,

to the land of gloom and  
deep darkness,  
22 the land of gloom and  
chaos,  
where light is like  
darkness.”

*Zophar Speaks: Job's Guilt  
Deserves Punishment*

**11** Then Zophar the  
Naamathite answered:  
2 “Should a multitude of  
words go unanswered,  
and should one full of  
talk be vindicated?  
3 Should your babble put  
others to silence,  
and when you mock,  
shall no one shame  
you?  
4 For you say, ‘My conduct is  
pure,  
and I am clean in God’s  
sight.’  
5 But O that God would  
speak,  
and open his lips to you,  
6 and that he would tell you  
the secrets of wisdom!  
For wisdom is many-  
sided.  
Know then that God exacts  
of you less than your  
guilt deserves.

7 “Can you find out the deep  
things of God?  
Can you find out the limit  
of the Almighty?  
8 It is higher than heaven—  
what can you do?  
Deeper than Sheol—  
what can you know?  
9 Its measure is longer than  
the earth,  
and broader than the  
sea.  
10 If he passes through, and  
imprisons,  
and assembles for  
judgment, who can  
hinder him?  
11 For he knows those who  
are worthless;  
when he sees iniquity,  
will he not consider it?  
12 But a stupid person will get  
understanding,  
when a wild ass is born  
human.  
13 “If you direct your heart  
rightly,  
you will stretch out your  
hands toward him.  
14 If iniquity is in your hand,  
put it far away,  
and do not let  
wickedness reside in  
your tents.



15 Surely then you will lift up  
your face without  
blemish;  
you will be secure, and  
will not fear.  
16 You will forget your  
misery;  
you will remember it as  
waters that have  
passed away.  
17 And your life will be  
brighter than the  
noonday;  
its darkness will be like  
the morning.  
18 And you will have  
confidence, because  
there is hope;  
you will be protected  
and take your rest in  
safety.  
19 You will lie down, and no  
one will make you  
afraid;  
many will entreat your  
favor.  
20 But the eyes of the wicked  
will fail;  
all way of escape will be  
lost to them,  
and their hope is to  
breathe their last.”

**1 Corinthians 15:12-28** (NRSV)  
*The Resurrection of the Dead*  
(Cp 1 Thess 4:13–18)

12 Now if Christ is  
proclaimed as raised from the  
dead, how can some of you  
say there is no resurrection of  
the dead? 13 If there is no  
resurrection of the dead, then  
Christ has not been raised;  
14 and if Christ has not been  
raised, then our proclamation  
has been in vain and your faith  
has been in vain. 15 We are  
even found to be  
misrepresenting God, because  
we testified of God that he  
raised Christ—whom he did  
not raise if it is true that the  
dead are not raised. 16 For if  
the dead are not raised, then  
Christ has not been raised. 17 If  
Christ has not been raised,  
your faith is futile and you are  
still in your sins. 18 Then those  
also who have died in Christ  
have perished. 19 If for this life  
only we have hoped in Christ,  
we are of all people most to  
be pitied.

20 But in fact Christ has been  
raised from the dead, the first  
fruits of those who have died.

21 For since death came  
through a human being, the  
resurrection of the dead has  
also come through a human  
being; 22 for as all die in Adam,

so all will be made alive in Christ.<sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.<sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power.<sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.<sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death.<sup>27</sup> For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him.<sup>28</sup> When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all.

**Psalms 39:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Wisdom  
and Forgiveness*

To the leader: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> I said, “I will guard my ways

that I may not sin with my tongue;  
I will keep a muzzle on my mouth  
as long as the wicked are in my presence.”

<sup>2</sup> I was silent and still;

I held my peace to no avail;

my distress grew worse,  
<sup>3</sup> my heart became hot within me.

While I mused, the fire burned;

then I spoke with my tongue:

<sup>4</sup> “LORD, let me know my end,

and what is the measure of my days;

let me know how fleeting my life is.

<sup>5</sup> You have made my days a few handbreadths,  
and my lifetime is as nothing in your sight.

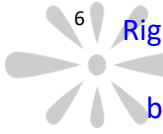
Surely everyone stands as a mere breath.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 13:5-6 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> The righteous hate falsehood,

but the wicked act  
shamefully and  
disgracefully.



<sup>6</sup> Righteousness guards one  
whose way is upright,  
but sin overthrows the  
wicked.

## April 16



**Job 12:1-13:28** (NRSV)

*Job Replies: I Am a  
Laughingstock*

**12** Then Job answered:  
<sup>2</sup> “No doubt you are the  
people,  
and wisdom will die with  
you.  
<sup>3</sup> But I have understanding  
as well as you;  
I am not inferior to you.  
Who does not know such  
things as these?  
<sup>4</sup> I am a laughingstock to my  
friends;  
I, who called upon God  
and he answered me,

a just and blameless  
man, I am a  
laughingstock.

<sup>5</sup> Those at ease have  
contempt for  
misfortune,  
but it is ready for those  
whose feet are  
unstable.  
<sup>6</sup> The tents of robbers are at  
peace,  
and those who provoke  
God are secure,  
who bring their god in  
their hands.  
<sup>7</sup> “But ask the animals, and  
they will teach you;  
the birds of the air, and  
they will tell you;  
<sup>8</sup> ask the plants of the earth,  
and they will teach  
you;  
and the fish of the sea  
will declare to you.  
<sup>9</sup> Who among all these does  
not know  
that the hand of the LORD  
has done this?  
<sup>10</sup> In his hand is the life of  
every living thing  
and the breath of every  
human being.  
<sup>11</sup> Does not the ear test  
words

as the palate tastes  
food?  
12 Is wisdom with the aged,  
and understanding in  
length of days?  
13 With God are wisdom and  
strength;  
he has counsel and  
understanding.  
14 If he tears down, no one  
can rebuild;  
if he shuts someone in,  
no one can open up.  
15 If he withholds the waters,  
they dry up;  
if he sends them out,  
they overwhelm the  
land.  
16 With him are strength and  
wisdom;  
the deceived and the  
deceiver are his.  
17 He leads counselors away  
stripped,  
and makes fools of  
judges.  
18 He looses the sash of  
kings,  
and binds a waistcloth  
on their loins.  
19 He leads priests away  
stripped,  
and overthrows the  
mighty.

20 He deprives of speech  
those who are trusted,  
and takes away the  
discernment of the  
elders.  
21 He pours contempt on  
princes,  
and looses the belt of  
the strong.  
22 He uncovers the deeps out  
of darkness,  
and brings deep  
darkness to light.  
23 He makes nations great,  
then destroys them;  
he enlarges nations, then  
leads them away.  
24 He strips understanding  
from the leaders of the  
earth,  
and makes them wander  
in a pathless waste.  
25 They grope in the dark  
without light;  
he makes them stagger  
like a drunkard.

**13** “Look, my eye has seen all  
this,  
my ear has heard and  
understood it.  
2 What you know, I also  
know;  
I am not inferior to you.

3 But I would speak to the  
Almighty,  
and I desire to argue my  
case with God.  
4 As for you, you whitewash  
with lies;  
all of you are worthless  
physicians.  
5 If you would only keep  
silent,  
that would be your  
wisdom!  
6 Hear now my reasoning,  
and listen to the  
pleadings of my lips.  
7 Will you speak falsely for  
God,  
and speak deceitfully for  
him?  
8 Will you show partiality  
toward him,  
will you plead the case  
for God?  
9 Will it be well with you  
when he searches you  
out?  
Or can you deceive him,  
as one person deceives  
another?  
10 He will surely rebuke you  
if in secret you show  
partiality.  
11 Will not his majesty terrify  
you,

and the dread of him fall  
upon you?  
12 Your maxims are proverbs  
of ashes,  
your defenses are  
defenses of clay.  
13 "Let me have silence, and I  
will speak,  
and let come on me  
what may.  
14 I will take my flesh in my  
teeth,  
and put my life in my  
hand.  
15 See, he will kill me; I have  
no hope;  
but I will defend my ways  
to his face.  
16 This will be my salvation,  
that the godless shall not  
come before him.  
17 Listen carefully to my  
words,  
and let my declaration  
be in your ears.  
18 I have indeed prepared my  
case;  
I know that I shall be  
vindicated.  
19 Who is there that will  
contend with me?  
For then I would be  
silent and die.

*Job's Despondent Prayer*

20 Only grant two things to  
me,  
then I will not hide  
myself from your face:  
21 withdraw your hand far  
from me,  
and do not let dread of  
you terrify me.  
22 Then call, and I will  
answer;  
or let me speak, and you  
reply to me.  
23 How many are my  
iniquities and my sins?  
Make me know my  
transgression and my  
sin.  
24 Why do you hide your  
face,  
and count me as your  
enemy?  
25 Will you frighten a  
windblown leaf  
and pursue dry chaff?  
26 For you write bitter things  
against me,  
and make me reap the  
iniquities of my youth.  
27 You put my feet in the  
stocks,  
and watch all my paths;  
you set a bound to the  
soles of my feet.

28 One wastes away like a  
rotten thing,  
like a garment that is  
moth-eaten.

**1 Corinthians 15:29-44** (NRSV)

29 Otherwise, what will  
those people do who receive  
baptism on behalf of the  
dead? If the dead are not  
raised at all, why are people  
baptized on their behalf?  
30 And why are we putting  
ourselves in danger every  
hour? 31 I die every day! That is  
as certain, brothers and  
sisters, as my boasting of  
you—a boast that I make in  
Christ Jesus our Lord. 32 If with  
merely human hopes I fought  
with wild animals at Ephesus,  
what would I have gained by  
it? If the dead are not raised,  
“Let us eat and drink,  
for tomorrow we die.”  
33 Do not be deceived:  
“Bad company ruins good  
morals.”  
34 Come to a sober and right  
mind, and sin no more; for  
some people have no  
knowledge of God. I say this to  
your shame.

### *The Resurrection Body*

<sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” <sup>36</sup> Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup> And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. <sup>39</sup> Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. <sup>40</sup> There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

<sup>42</sup> So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in

power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

### **Psalm 39:6-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Surely everyone goes about like a shadow. Surely for nothing they are in turmoil; they heap up, and do not know who will gather. <sup>7</sup> “And now, O Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in you. <sup>8</sup> Deliver me from all my transgressions. Do not make me the scorn of the fool. <sup>9</sup> I am silent; I do not open my mouth, for it is you who have done it. <sup>10</sup> Remove your stroke from me; I am worn down by the blows of your hand. <sup>11</sup> “You chastise mortals in punishment for sin, consuming like a moth what is dear to them; surely everyone is a mere breath. *Selah* <sup>12</sup> “Hear my prayer, O LORD,

and give ear to my cry;  
do not hold your peace  
at my tears.

For I am your passing  
guest,  
an alien, like all my  
forebears.

<sup>13</sup> Turn your gaze away from  
me, that I may smile  
again,  
before I depart and am  
no more.”

**Proverbs 13:7–8 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Some pretend to be rich,  
yet have nothing;  
others pretend to be  
poor, yet have great  
wealth.

<sup>8</sup> Wealth is a ransom for a  
person’s life,  
but the poor get no  
threats.

**April 17**



**Job 14:1-15:35 (NRSV)**

**14** “A mortal, born of  
woman, few of days  
and full of trouble,  
<sup>2</sup> comes up like a flower  
and withers,  
flees like a shadow and  
does not last.  
<sup>3</sup> Do you fix your eyes on  
such a one?  
Do you bring me into  
judgment with you?  
<sup>4</sup> Who can bring a clean  
thing out of an  
unclean?  
No one can.  
<sup>5</sup> Since their days are  
determined,  
and the number of their  
months is known to  
you,  
and you have appointed  
the bounds that they  
cannot pass,  
<sup>6</sup> look away from them, and  
desist,  
that they may enjoy, like  
laborers, their days.  
<sup>7</sup> “For there is hope for a  
tree,



if it is cut down, that it  
will sprout again,  
and that its shoots will  
not cease.  
8 Though its root grows old  
in the earth,  
and its stump dies in the  
ground,  
9 yet at the scent of water it  
will bud  
and put forth branches  
like a young plant.  
10 But mortals die, and are  
laid low;  
humans expire, and  
where are they?  
11 As waters fail from a lake,  
and a river wastes away  
and dries up,  
12 so mortals lie down and do  
not rise again;  
until the heavens are no  
more, they will not  
awake  
or be roused out of their  
sleep.  
13 O that you would hide me  
in Sheol,  
that you would conceal  
me until your wrath is  
past,  
that you would appoint  
me a set time, and  
remember me!

14 If mortals die, will they live  
again?  
All the days of my service  
I would wait  
until my release should  
come.  
15 You would call, and I  
would answer you;  
you would long for the  
work of your hands.  
16 For then you would not  
number my steps,  
you would not keep  
watch over my sin;  
17 my transgression would be  
sealed up in a bag,  
and you would cover  
over my iniquity.  
18 "But the mountain falls  
and crumbles away,  
and the rock is removed  
from its place;  
19 the waters wear away the  
stones;  
the torrents wash away  
the soil of the earth;  
so you destroy the hope  
of mortals.  
20 You prevail forever against  
them, and they pass  
away;  
you change their  
countenance, and send  
them away.

21 Their children come to  
honor, and they do not  
know it;  
they are brought low,  
and it goes unnoticed.  
22 They feel only the pain of  
their own bodies,  
and mourn only for  
themselves.”

*Eliphaz Speaks: Job  
Undermines Religion*

**15** Then Eliphaz the Temanite  
answered:

2 “Should the wise answer  
with windy knowledge,  
and fill themselves with  
the east wind?  
3 Should they argue in  
unprofitable talk,  
or in words with which  
they can do no good?  
4 But you are doing away  
with the fear of God,  
and hindering meditation  
before God.  
5 For your iniquity teaches  
your mouth,  
and you choose the  
tongue of the crafty.  
6 Your own mouth  
condemns you, and not  
I;  
your own lips testify  
against you.

7 “Are you the firstborn of  
the human race?  
Were you brought forth  
before the hills?  
8 Have you listened in the  
council of God?  
And do you limit wisdom  
to yourself?  
9 What do you know that we  
do not know?  
What do you understand  
that is not clear to us?  
10 The gray-haired and the  
aged are on our side,  
those older than your  
father.  
11 Are the consolations of  
God too small for you,  
or the word that deals  
gently with you?  
12 Why does your heart carry  
you away,  
and why do your eyes  
flash,  
13 so that you turn your spirit  
against God,  
and let such words go  
out of your mouth?  
14 What are mortals, that  
they can be clean?  
Or those born of woman,  
that they can be  
righteous?  
15 God puts no trust even in  
his holy ones,

and the heavens are not  
clean in his sight;  
16 how much less one who is  
abominable and  
corrupt,  
one who drinks iniquity  
like water!  
17 "I will show you; listen to  
me;  
what I have seen I will  
declare—  
18 what sages have told,  
and their ancestors have  
not hidden,  
19 to whom alone the land  
was given,  
and no stranger passed  
among them.  
20 The wicked writhe in pain  
all their days,  
through all the years that  
are laid up for the  
ruthless.  
21 Terrifying sounds are in  
their ears;  
in prosperity the  
destroyer will come  
upon them.  
22 They despair of returning  
from darkness,  
and they are destined for  
the sword.  
23 They wander abroad for  
bread, saying, 'Where  
is it?'

They know that a day of  
darkness is ready at  
hand;  
24 distress and anguish terrify  
them;  
they prevail against  
them, like a king  
prepared for battle.  
25 Because they stretched  
out their hands against  
God,  
and bid defiance to the  
Almighty,  
26 running stubbornly against  
him  
with a thick-bossed  
shield;  
27 because they have covered  
their faces with their  
fat,  
and gathered fat upon  
their loins,  
28 they will live in desolate  
cities,  
in houses that no one  
should inhabit,  
houses destined to  
become heaps of ruins;  
29 they will not be rich, and  
their wealth will not  
endure,  
nor will they strike root  
in the earth;  
30 they will not escape from  
darkness;

the flame will dry up  
their shoots,  
and their blossom will be  
swept away by the  
wind.

31 Let them not trust in  
emptiness, deceiving  
themselves;  
for emptiness will be  
their recompense.

32 It will be paid in full before  
their time,  
and their branch will not  
be green.

33 They will shake off their  
unripe grape, like the  
vine,  
and cast off their  
blossoms, like the olive  
tree.

34 For the company of the  
godless is barren,  
and fire consumes the  
tents of bribery.

35 They conceive mischief  
and bring forth evil  
and their heart prepares  
deceit.”

**1 Corinthians 15:45-58 (NRSV)**

<sup>45</sup>Thus it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup>But it is not the spiritual that is first,

but the physical, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup>The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup>As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup>Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

<sup>50</sup>What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup>Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, <sup>52</sup>in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup>For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup>When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:



“Death has been  
swallowed up in  
victory.”

<sup>55</sup> “Where, O death, is your  
victory?  
Where, O death, is your  
sting?”

<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and  
the power of sin is the law.

<sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who  
gives us the victory through  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved, be  
steadfast, immovable, always  
excelling in the work of the  
Lord, because you know that  
in the Lord your labor is not in  
vain.

### **Psalm 40:1-3** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for Deliverance  
and Prayer for Help  
(Ps 70:1–5)*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> I waited patiently for the  
LORD;  
he inclined to me and  
heard my cry.  
<sup>2</sup> He drew me up from the  
desolate pit,  
out of the miry bog,  
and set my feet upon a  
rock,  
making my steps secure.  
<sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my  
mouth,

a song of praise to our  
God.

Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the  
LORD.

### **Proverbs 13:9–10** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> The light of the righteous  
rejoices,  
but the lamp of the  
wicked goes out.

<sup>10</sup> By insolence the heedless  
make strife,  
but wisdom is with those  
who take advice.



## **April 18**



### **Job 16:1-18:4** (NRSV)

*Job Reaffirms His Innocence*

**16** Then Job answered:

<sup>2</sup> “I have heard many such  
things;  
miserable comforters are  
you all.

<sup>3</sup> Have windy words no  
limit?

Or what provokes you  
that you keep on  
talking?  
4 I also could talk as you do,  
if you were in my place;  
I could join words together  
against you,  
and shake my head at  
you.  
5 I could encourage you with  
my mouth,  
and the solace of my lips  
would assuage your  
pain.  
6 "If I speak, my pain is not  
assuaged,  
and if I forbear, how  
much of it leaves me?  
7 Surely now God has worn  
me out;  
he has made desolate all  
my company.  
8 And he has shriveled me  
up,  
which is a witness  
against me;  
my leanness has risen up  
against me,  
and it testifies to my  
face.  
9 He has torn me in his  
wrath, and hated me;  
he has gnashed his teeth  
at me;

my adversary sharpens  
his eyes against me.  
10 They have gaped at me  
with their mouths;  
they have struck me  
insolently on the  
cheek;  
they mass themselves  
together against me.  
11 God gives me up to the  
ungodly,  
and casts me into the  
hands of the wicked.  
12 I was at ease, and he broke  
me in two;  
he seized me by the neck  
and dashed me to  
pieces;  
he set me up as his target;  
13 his archers surround me.  
He slashes open my  
kidneys, and shows no  
mercy;  
he pours out my gall on  
the ground.  
14 He bursts upon me again  
and again;  
he rushes at me like a  
warrior.  
15 I have sewed sackcloth  
upon my skin,  
and have laid my  
strength in the dust.  
16 My face is red with  
weeping,

and deep darkness is on  
my eyelids,  
17 though there is no violence  
in my hands,  
and my prayer is pure.  
18 “O earth, do not cover my  
blood;  
let my outcry find no  
resting place.  
19 Even now, in fact, my  
witness is in heaven,  
and he that vouches for  
me is on high.  
20 My friends scorn me;  
my eye pours out tears  
to God,  
21 that he would maintain the  
right of a mortal with  
God,  
as one does for a  
neighbor.  
22 For when a few years have  
come,  
I shall go the way from  
which I shall not  
return.

*Job Prays for Relief*

**17** My spirit is broken, my  
days are extinct,  
the grave is ready for  
me.  
2 Surely there are mockers  
around me,

and my eye dwells on  
their provocation.  
3 “Lay down a pledge for me  
with yourself;  
who is there that will  
give surety for me?  
4 Since you have closed their  
minds to  
understanding,  
therefore you will not let  
them triumph.  
5 Those who denounce  
friends for reward—  
the eyes of their children  
will fail.  
6 “He has made me a  
byword of the peoples,  
and I am one before  
whom people spit.  
7 My eye has grown dim  
from grief,  
and all my members are  
like a shadow.  
8 The upright are appalled at  
this,  
and the innocent stir  
themselves up against  
the godless.  
9 Yet the righteous hold to  
their way,  
and they that have clean  
hands grow stronger  
and stronger.  
10 But you, come back now,  
all of you,

and I shall not find a  
sensible person among  
you.

<sup>11</sup> My days are past, my plans  
are broken off,  
the desires of my heart.

<sup>12</sup> They make night into day;  
'The light,' they say, 'is  
near to the darkness.'

<sup>13</sup> If I look for Sheol as my  
house,  
if I spread my couch in  
darkness,

<sup>14</sup> if I say to the Pit, 'You are  
my father,'  
and to the worm, 'My  
mother,' or 'My sister,'

<sup>15</sup> where then is my hope?  
Who will see my hope?

<sup>16</sup> Will it go down to the bars  
of Sheol?  
Shall we descend  
together into the  
dust?"

*Bildad Speaks: God Punishes  
the Wicked*

**18** Then Bildad the Shuhite  
answered:

<sup>2</sup> "How long will you hunt  
for words?  
Consider, and then we  
shall speak.

<sup>3</sup> Why are we counted as  
cattle?

Why are we stupid in  
your sight?

<sup>4</sup> You who tear yourself in  
your anger—  
shall the earth be  
forsaken because of  
you,  
or the rock be removed  
out of its place?

**1 Corinthians 16:1-9** (NRSV)  
*The Collection for the Saints*

**16** Now concerning the  
collection for the saints: you  
should follow the directions I  
gave to the churches of  
Galatia. <sup>2</sup> On the first day of  
every week, each of you is to  
put aside and save whatever  
extra you earn, so that  
collections need not be taken  
when I come. <sup>3</sup> And when I  
arrive, I will send any whom  
you approve with letters to  
take your gift to Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> If  
it seems advisable that I  
should go also, they will  
accompany me.

*Plans for Travel  
(Cp Acts 19:21)*

<sup>5</sup> I will visit you after  
passing through Macedonia—  
for I intend to pass through  
Macedonia— <sup>6</sup> and perhaps I



will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way, wherever I go. <sup>7</sup> I do not want to see you now just in passing, for I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. <sup>8</sup> But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, <sup>9</sup> for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

**Psalms 40:4-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Happy are those who make the LORD their trust, who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.

<sup>5</sup> You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

<sup>6</sup> Sacrifice and offering you do not desire,

but you have given me an open ear.

Burnt offering and sin offering

you have not required.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

<sup>8</sup> I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

<sup>9</sup> I have told the glad news of deliverance

in the great congregation; see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD.

<sup>10</sup> I have not hidden your saving help within my heart,

I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;

I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.

**Proverbs 13:11 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Wealth hastily gotten will dwindle,

but those who gather  
little by little will  
increase it.

## April 19



### Job 18:5-19:29 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> “Surely the light of the  
wicked is put out,  
and the flame of their  
fire does not shine.  
<sup>6</sup> The light is dark in their  
tent,  
and the lamp above  
them is put out.  
<sup>7</sup> Their strong steps are  
shortened,  
and their own schemes  
throw them down.  
<sup>8</sup> For they are thrust into a  
net by their own feet,  
and they walk into a  
pitfall.  
<sup>9</sup> A trap seizes them by the  
heel;  
a snare lays hold of  
them.  
<sup>10</sup> A rope is hid for them in  
the ground,

a trap for them in the  
path.  
<sup>11</sup> Terrors frighten them on  
every side,  
and chase them at their  
heels.  
<sup>12</sup> Their strength is consumed  
by hunger,  
and calamity is ready for  
their stumbling.  
<sup>13</sup> By disease their skin is  
consumed,  
the firstborn of Death  
consumes their limbs.  
<sup>14</sup> They are torn from the  
tent in which they  
trusted,  
and are brought to the  
king of terrors.  
<sup>15</sup> In their tents nothing  
remains;  
sulfur is scattered upon  
their habitations.  
<sup>16</sup> Their roots dry up  
beneath,  
and their branches  
wither above.  
<sup>17</sup> Their memory perishes  
from the earth,  
and they have no name  
in the street.  
<sup>18</sup> They are thrust from light  
into darkness,  
and driven out of the  
world.

19 They have no offspring or  
descendant among  
their people,  
and no survivor where  
they used to live.  
20 They of the west are  
appalled at their fate,  
and horror seizes those  
of the east.  
21 Surely such are the  
dwellings of the  
ungodly,  
such is the place of those  
who do not know  
God.”

*Job Replies: I Know That My  
Redeemer Lives*

**19** Then Job answered:  
2 “How long will you  
torment me,  
and break me in pieces  
with words?  
3 These ten times you have  
cast reproach upon  
me;  
are you not ashamed to  
wrong me?  
4 And even if it is true that I  
have erred,  
my error remains with  
me.  
5 If indeed you magnify  
yourselves against me,

and make my humiliation  
an argument against  
me,  
6 know then that God has  
put me in the wrong,  
and closed his net  
around me.  
7 Even when I cry out,  
‘Violence!’ I am not  
answered;  
I call aloud, but there is  
no justice.  
8 He has walled up my way  
so that I cannot pass,  
and he has set darkness  
upon my paths.  
9 He has stripped my glory  
from me,  
and taken the crown  
from my head.  
10 He breaks me down on  
every side, and I am  
gone,  
he has uprooted my  
hope like a tree.  
11 He has kindled his wrath  
against me,  
and counts me as his  
adversary.  
12 His troops come on  
together;  
they have thrown up  
siegeworks against me,  
and encamp around my  
tent.

13 "He has put my family far  
from me,  
and my acquaintances  
are wholly estranged  
from me.  
14 My relatives and my close  
friends have failed me;  
15 the guests in my house  
have forgotten me;  
my serving girls count me  
as a stranger;  
I have become an alien in  
their eyes.  
16 I call to my servant, but he  
gives me no answer;  
I must myself plead with  
him.  
17 My breath is repulsive to  
my wife;  
I am loathsome to my  
own family.  
18 Even young children  
despise me;  
when I rise, they talk  
against me.  
19 All my intimate friends  
abhor me,  
and those whom I loved  
have turned against  
me.  
20 My bones cling to my skin  
and to my flesh,  
and I have escaped by  
the skin of my teeth.

21 Have pity on me, have pity  
on me, O you my  
friends,  
for the hand of God has  
touched me!  
22 Why do you, like God,  
pursue me,  
never satisfied with my  
flesh?  
23 "O that my words were  
written down!  
O that they were  
inscribed in a book!  
24 O that with an iron pen  
and with lead  
they were engraved on a  
rock forever!  
25 For I know that my  
Redeemer lives,  
and that at the last he  
will stand upon the  
earth;  
26 and after my skin has been  
thus destroyed,  
then in my flesh I shall  
see God,  
27 whom I shall see on my  
side,  
and my eyes shall  
behold, and not  
another.  
My heart faints within  
me!  
28 If you say, 'How we will  
persecute him!'

and, 'The root of the matter is found in him';  
<sup>29</sup> be afraid of the sword, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, so that you may know there is a judgment."

**1 Corinthians 16:10-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> If Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord just as I am; <sup>11</sup> therefore let no one despise him. Send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am expecting him with the brothers.

<sup>12</sup> Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but he was not at all willing to come now. He will come when he has the opportunity.

*Final Messages and Greetings*

<sup>13</sup> Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. <sup>14</sup> Let all that you do be done in love.

<sup>15</sup> Now, brothers and sisters, you know that members of the household of

Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; <sup>16</sup> I urge you to put yourselves at the service of such people, and of everyone who works and toils with them. <sup>17</sup> I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; <sup>18</sup> for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. So give recognition to such persons.

<sup>19</sup> The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, greet you warmly in the Lord. <sup>20</sup> All the brothers and sisters send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

<sup>21</sup> I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. <sup>22</sup> Let anyone be accursed who has no love for the Lord. Our Lord, come! <sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. <sup>24</sup> My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

**Psalm 40:11-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Do not, O LORD, withhold your mercy from me;

let your steadfast love and  
your faithfulness  
keep me safe forever.

- <sup>12</sup> For evils have  
encompassed me  
without number;  
my iniquities have  
overtaken me,  
until I cannot see;  
they are more than the  
hairs of my head,  
and my heart fails me.
- <sup>13</sup> Be pleased, O LORD, to  
deliver me;  
O LORD, make haste to  
help me.

**Proverbs 13:12–14** (NRSV)

- <sup>12</sup> Hope deferred makes the  
heart sick,  
but a desire fulfilled is a  
tree of life.
- <sup>13</sup> Those who despise the  
word bring destruction  
on themselves,  
but those who respect  
the commandment will  
be rewarded.
- <sup>14</sup> The teaching of the wise is  
a fountain of life,  
so that one may avoid  
the snares of death.

**April 20**



**Job 20:1-21:21** (NRSV)

*Zophar Speaks: Wickedness  
Receives Just Retribution*

- 20** Then Zophar the  
Naamathite answered:
- <sup>2</sup> “Pay attention! My  
thoughts urge me to  
answer,  
because of the agitation  
within me.
- <sup>3</sup> I hear censure that insults  
me,  
and a spirit beyond my  
understanding answers  
me.
- <sup>4</sup> Do you not know this from  
of old,  
ever since mortals were  
placed on earth,  
<sup>5</sup> that the exulting of the  
wicked is short,  
and the joy of the  
godless is but for a  
moment?
- <sup>6</sup> Even though they mount  
up high as the heavens,  
and their head reaches  
to the clouds,  
<sup>7</sup> they will perish forever like  
their own dung;

those who have seen  
them will say, 'Where  
are they?'

8 They will fly away like a  
dream, and not be  
found;  
they will be chased away  
like a vision of the  
night.

9 The eye that saw them will  
see them no more,  
nor will their place  
behold them any  
longer.

10 Their children will seek the  
favor of the poor,  
and their hands will give  
back their wealth.

11 Their bodies, once full of  
youth,  
will lie down in the dust  
with them.

12 "Though wickedness is  
sweet in their mouth,  
though they hide it  
under their tongues,  
13 though they are loath to  
let it go,  
and hold it in their  
mouths,  
14 yet their food is turned in  
their stomachs;  
it is the venom of asps  
within them.

15 They swallow down riches  
and vomit them up  
again;  
God casts them out of  
their bellies.

16 They will suck the poison  
of asps;  
the tongue of a viper will  
kill them.

17 They will not look on the  
rivers,  
the streams flowing with  
honey and curds.

18 They will give back the  
fruit of their toil,  
and will not swallow it  
down;  
from the profit of their  
trading  
they will get no  
enjoyment.

19 For they have crushed and  
abandoned the poor,  
they have seized a house  
that they did not build.

20 "They knew no quiet in  
their bellies;  
in their greed they let  
nothing escape.

21 There was nothing left  
after they had eaten;  
therefore their  
prosperity will not  
endure.

22 In full sufficiency they will  
be in distress;  
all the force of misery  
will come upon them.  
23 To fill their belly to the full  
God will send his fierce  
anger into them,  
and rain it upon them as  
their food.  
24 They will flee from an iron  
weapon;  
a bronze arrow will strike  
them through.  
25 It is drawn forth and  
comes out of their  
body,  
and the glittering point  
comes out of their gall;  
terrors come upon them.  
26 Utter darkness is laid up  
for their treasures;  
a fire fanned by no one  
will devour them;  
what is left in their tent  
will be consumed.  
27 The heavens will reveal  
their iniquity,  
and the earth will rise up  
against them.  
28 The possessions of their  
house will be carried  
away,  
dragged off in the day of  
God's wrath.

29 This is the portion of the  
wicked from God,  
the heritage decreed for  
them by God."

*Job Replies: The Wicked Often  
Go Unpunished*

**21** Then Job answered:  
2 "Listen carefully to my  
words,  
and let this be your  
consolation.  
3 Bear with me, and I will  
speak;  
then after I have spoken,  
mock on.  
4 As for me, is my complaint  
addressed to mortals?  
Why should I not be  
impatient?  
5 Look at me, and be  
appalled,  
and lay your hand upon  
your mouth.  
6 When I think of it I am  
dismayed,  
and shuddering seizes  
my flesh.  
7 Why do the wicked live on,  
reach old age, and grow  
mighty in power?  
8 Their children are  
established in their  
presence,



and their offspring  
before their eyes.  
9 Their houses are safe from  
fear,  
and no rod of God is  
upon them.  
10 Their bull breeds without  
fail;  
their cow calves and  
never miscarries.  
11 They send out their little  
ones like a flock,  
and their children dance  
around.  
12 They sing to the  
tambourine and the  
lyre,  
and rejoice to the sound  
of the pipe.  
13 They spend their days in  
prosperity,  
and in peace they go  
down to Sheol.  
14 They say to God, 'Leave us  
alone!  
We do not desire to  
know your ways.  
15 What is the Almighty, that  
we should serve him?  
And what profit do we  
get if we pray to him?'  
16 Is not their prosperity  
indeed their own  
achievement?

The plans of the wicked  
are repugnant to me.  
17 "How often is the lamp of  
the wicked put out?  
How often does calamity  
come upon them?  
How often does God  
distribute pains in his  
anger?  
18 How often are they like  
straw before the wind,  
and like chaff that the  
storm carries away?  
19 You say, 'God stores up  
their iniquity for their  
children.'  
Let it be paid back to  
them, so that they may  
know it.  
20 Let their own eyes see  
their destruction,  
and let them drink of the  
wrath of the Almighty.  
21 For what do they care for  
their household after  
them,  
when the number of  
their months is cut off?

## **2 Corinthians 1:1-7 (NRSV)**

### *Salutation*

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ  
Jesus by the will of God, and  
Timothy our brother,

To the church of God that is in Corinth, including all the saints throughout Achaia:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Paul's Thanksgiving  
after Affliction*

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, <sup>4</sup> who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. <sup>5</sup> **For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ.** <sup>6</sup> If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering.

<sup>7</sup> Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

**Psalm 40:14-17** (NRSV)

- <sup>14</sup> Let all those be put to shame and confusion who seek to snatch away my life;  
let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt.
- <sup>15</sup> Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"
- <sup>16</sup> But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the LORD!"
- <sup>17</sup> As for me, I am poor and needy,  
but the Lord takes thought for me.  
You are my help and my deliverer;  
do not delay, O my God.

**Proverbs 13:15-16** (NRSV)

- <sup>15</sup> Good sense wins favor,  
but the way of the faithless is their ruin.
- <sup>16</sup> The clever do all things intelligently,

but the fool displays  
folly.

## April 21



### Job 21:22-22:30 (NRSV)

- 22 Will any teach God  
knowledge,  
seeing that he judges  
those that are on high?
- 23 One dies in full prosperity,  
being wholly at ease and  
secure,  
24 his loins full of milk  
and the marrow of his  
bones moist.
- 25 Another dies in bitterness  
of soul,  
never having tasted of  
good.
- 26 They lie down alike in the  
dust,  
and the worms cover  
them.
- 27 "Oh, I know your thoughts,  
and your schemes to  
wrong me.
- 28 For you say, 'Where is the  
house of the prince?

Where is the tent in  
which the wicked  
lived?'

- 29 Have you not asked those  
who travel the roads,  
and do you not accept  
their testimony,  
30 that the wicked are spared  
in the day of calamity,  
and are rescued in the  
day of wrath?
- 31 Who declares their way to  
their face,  
and who repays them for  
what they have done?
- 32 When they are carried to  
the grave,  
a watch is kept over their  
tomb.
- 33 The clods of the valley are  
sweet to them;  
everyone will follow  
after,  
and those who went  
before are  
innumerable.
- 34 How then will you comfort  
me with empty  
nothings?  
There is nothing left of  
your answers but  
falsehood."

*Eliphaz Speaks: Job's  
Wickedness Is Great*

**22** Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

<sup>2</sup> “Can a mortal be of use to God?  
Can even the wisest be of service to him?  
<sup>3</sup> Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous,  
or is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?  
<sup>4</sup> Is it for your piety that he reproves you,  
and enters into judgment with you?  
<sup>5</sup> Is not your wickedness great?  
There is no end to your iniquities.  
<sup>6</sup> For you have exacted pledges from your family for no reason,  
and stripped the naked of their clothing.  
<sup>7</sup> You have given no water to the weary to drink,  
and you have withheld bread from the hungry.  
<sup>8</sup> The powerful possess the land,  
and the favored live in it.

<sup>9</sup> You have sent widows away empty-handed,  
and the arms of the orphans you have crushed.  
<sup>10</sup> Therefore snares are around you,  
and sudden terror overwhelms you,  
<sup>11</sup> or darkness so that you cannot see;  
a flood of water covers you.  
<sup>12</sup> “Is not God high in the heavens?  
See the highest stars,  
how lofty they are!  
<sup>13</sup> Therefore you say, ‘What does God know?  
Can he judge through the deep darkness?  
<sup>14</sup> Thick clouds enwrap him,  
so that he does not see,  
and he walks on the dome of heaven.’  
<sup>15</sup> Will you keep to the old way  
that the wicked have trod?  
<sup>16</sup> They were snatched away before their time;  
their foundation was washed away by a flood.

17 They said to God, 'Leave us  
alone,'  
and 'What can the  
Almighty do to us?'  
18 Yet he filled their houses  
with good things—  
but the plans of the  
wicked are repugnant  
to me.  
19 The righteous see it and  
are glad;  
the innocent laugh them  
to scorn,  
20 saying, 'Surely our  
adversaries are cut off,  
and what they left, the  
fire has consumed.'  
21 "Agree with God, and be at  
peace;  
in this way good will  
come to you.  
22 Receive instruction from  
his mouth,  
and lay up his words in  
your heart.  
23 If you return to the  
Almighty, you will be  
restored,  
if you remove  
unrighteousness from  
your tents,  
24 if you treat gold like dust,  
and gold of Ophir like the  
stones of the torrent-

25 and if the Almighty is your  
gold  
and your precious silver,  
26 then you will delight  
yourself in the  
Almighty,  
and lift up your face to  
God.  
27 You will pray to him, and  
he will hear you,  
and you will pay your  
vows.  
28 You will decide on a  
matter, and it will be  
established for you,  
and light will shine on  
your ways.  
29 When others are  
humiliated, you say it is  
pride;  
for he saves the humble.  
30 He will deliver even those  
who are guilty;  
they will escape because  
of the cleanness of  
your hands."

## **2 Corinthians 1:8-11 (NRSV)**


<sup>8</sup>We do not want you to  
be unaware, brothers and  
sisters, of the affliction we  
experienced in Asia; for we  
were so utterly, unbearably  
crushed that we despaired of  
life itself. <sup>9</sup>Indeed, we felt that

we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. <sup>10</sup> He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on him we have set our hope that he will rescue us again, <sup>11</sup> as you also join in helping us by your prayers, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

**Psalms 41:1-3** (NRSV)

*Assurance of God's Help and a Plea for Healing*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

 <sup>1</sup> Happy are those who consider the poor; the LORD delivers them in the day of trouble.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD protects them and keeps them alive; they are called happy in the land. You do not give them up to the will of their enemies.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD sustains them on their sickbed; in their illness you heal all their infirmities.

**Proverbs 13:17-19** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> A bad messenger brings trouble, but a faithful envoy, healing.

<sup>18</sup> Poverty and disgrace are for the one who ignores instruction, but one who heeds reproof is honored.

<sup>19</sup> A desire realized is sweet to the soul, but to turn away from evil is an abomination to fools.

**April 22**



**Job 23:1-24:25** (NRSV)

*Job Replies: My Complaint Is Bitter*

**23** Then Job answered:

<sup>2</sup> "Today also my complaint is bitter; his hand is heavy despite my groaning.

<sup>3</sup> Oh, that I knew where I might find him,

that I might come even  
to his dwelling!  
4 I would lay my case before  
him,  
and fill my mouth with  
arguments.  
5 I would learn what he  
would answer me,  
and understand what he  
would say to me.  
6 Would he contend with me  
in the greatness of his  
power?  
No; but he would give  
heed to me.  
7 There an upright person  
could reason with him,  
and I should be acquitted  
forever by my judge.  
8 "If I go forward, he is not  
there;  
or backward, I cannot  
perceive him;  
9 on the left he hides, and I  
cannot behold him;  
I turn to the right, but I  
cannot see him.  
10 But he knows the way that  
I take;  
when he has tested me, I  
shall come out like  
gold.  
11 My foot has held fast to his  
steps;

I have kept his way and  
have not turned aside.  
12 I have not departed from  
the commandment of  
his lips;  
I have treasured in my  
bosom the words of his  
mouth.  
13 But he stands alone and  
who can dissuade him?  
What he desires, that he  
does.  
14 For he will complete what  
he appoints for me;  
and many such things  
are in his mind.  
15 Therefore I am terrified at  
his presence;  
when I consider, I am in  
dread of him.  
16 God has made my heart  
faint;  
the Almighty has  
terrified me;  
17 If only I could vanish in  
darkness,  
and thick darkness would  
cover my face!

*Job Complains of Violence  
on the Earth*

**24** "Why are times not kept  
by the Almighty,

and why do those who  
know him never see his  
days?  
2 The wicked remove  
landmarks;  
they seize flocks and  
pasture them.  
3 They drive away the  
donkey of the orphan;  
they take the widow's ox  
for a pledge.  
4 They thrust the needy off  
the road;  
the poor of the earth all  
hide themselves.  
5 Like wild asses in the  
desert  
they go out to their toil,  
scavenging in the  
wasteland  
food for their young.  
6 They reap in a field not  
their own  
and they glean in the  
vineyard of the wicked.  
7 They lie all night naked,  
without clothing,  
and have no covering in  
the cold.  
8 They are wet with the rain  
of the mountains,  
and cling to the rock for  
want of shelter.

9 "There are those who  
snatch the orphan child  
from the breast,  
and take as a pledge the  
infant of the poor.  
10 They go about naked,  
without clothing;  
though hungry, they  
carry the sheaves;  
11 between their terraces  
they press out oil;  
they tread the wine  
presses, but suffer  
thirst.  
12 From the city the dying  
groan,  
and the throat of the  
wounded cries for  
help;  
yet God pays no  
attention to their  
prayer.  
13 "There are those who  
rebel against the light,  
who are not acquainted  
with its ways,  
and do not stay in its  
paths.  
14 The murderer rises at dusk  
to kill the poor and  
needy,  
and in the night is like a  
thief.



15 The eye of the adulterer  
also waits for the  
twilight,  
saying, 'No eye will see  
me';  
and he disguises his face.  
16 In the dark they dig  
through houses;  
by day they shut  
themselves up;  
they do not know the  
light.  
17 For deep darkness is  
morning to all of them;  
for they are friends with  
the terrors of deep  
darkness.  
18 "Swift are they on the face  
of the waters;  
their portion in the land  
is cursed;  
no treacher turns toward  
their vineyards.  
19 Drought and heat snatch  
away the snow waters;  
so does Sheol those who  
have sinned.  
20 The womb forgets them;  
the worm finds them  
sweet;  
they are no longer  
remembered;  
so wickedness is broken  
like a tree.

21 "They harm the childless  
woman,  
and do no good to the  
widow.  
22 Yet God prolongs the life  
of the mighty by his  
power;  
they rise up when they  
despair of life.  
23 He gives them security,  
and they are  
supported;  
his eyes are upon their  
ways.  
24 They are exalted a little  
while, and then are  
gone;  
they wither and fade like  
the mallow;  
they are cut off like the  
heads of grain.  
25 If it is not so, who will  
prove me a liar,  
and show that there is  
nothing in what I say?"

**2 Corinthians 1:12-22 (NRSV)**

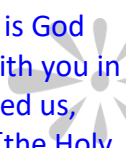
*The Postponement  
of Paul's Visit*

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, this is our boast,  
the testimony of our  
conscience: we have behaved  
in the world with frankness  
and godly sincerity, not by  
earthly wisdom but by the

grace of God—and all the more toward you. <sup>13</sup> For we write you nothing other than what you can read and also understand; I hope you will understand until the end—<sup>14</sup> as you have already understood us in part—that on the day of the Lord Jesus we are your boast even as you are our boast.

<sup>15</sup> Since I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a double favor; <sup>16</sup> I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on to Judea. <sup>17</sup> Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to ordinary human standards, ready to say “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time? <sup>18</sup> As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been “Yes and No.” <sup>19</sup> For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not “Yes and No”; but in him it is always “Yes.” <sup>20</sup> For in him every one of God’s promises is a “Yes.” For this reason it is through him that

we say the “Amen,” to the glory of God. <sup>21</sup> **But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us,** <sup>22</sup> **by putting his seal [the Holy Spirit] on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.**



**Psalm 41:4-13 (NRSV)**

- <sup>4</sup> As for me, I said, “O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you.”
- <sup>5</sup> My enemies wonder in malice when I will die, and my name perish.
- <sup>6</sup> And when they come to see me, they utter empty words, while their hearts gather mischief; when they go out, they tell it abroad.
- <sup>7</sup> All who hate me whisper together about me; they imagine the worst for me.
- <sup>8</sup> They think that a deadly thing has fastened on me, that I will not rise again from where I lie.

9 Even my bosom friend in  
whom I trusted,  
who ate of my bread, has  
lifted the heel against  
me.

10 But you, O LORD, be  
gracious to me,  
and raise me up, that I  
may repay them.

11 By this I know that you are  
pleased with me;  
because my enemy has  
not triumphed over  
me.

12 But you have upheld me  
because of my  
integrity,  
and set me in your  
presence forever.

13 Blessed be the LORD, the  
God of Israel,  
from everlasting to  
everlasting.

Amen and Amen.

### **Proverbs 13:20–23** (NRSV)

20 Whoever walks with the  
wise becomes wise,  
but the companion of  
fools suffers harm.

21 Misfortune pursues  
sinners,  
but prosperity rewards  
the righteous.

22 The good leave an  
inheritance to their  
children's children,  
but the sinner's wealth is  
laid up for the  
righteous.

23 The field of the poor may  
yield much food,  
but it is swept away  
through injustice.

## **April 23**



### **Job 25:1-27:23** (NRSV)

*Bildad Speaks: How Can a  
Mortal Be Righteous Before  
God?*

**25** Then Bildad the Shuhite  
answered:

2 “Dominion and fear are  
with God;  
he makes peace in his  
high heaven.

3 Is there any number to his  
armies?  
Upon whom does his  
light not arise?

4 How then can a mortal be  
righteous before God?

How can one born of  
woman be pure?  
5 If even the moon is not  
bright  
and the stars are not  
pure in his sight,  
6 how much less a mortal,  
who is a maggot,  
and a human being, who  
is a worm!"

*Job Replies: God's Majesty Is  
Unsearchable*

**26** Then Job answered:  
2 "How you have helped one  
who has no power!  
How you have assisted  
the arm that has no  
strength!  
3 How you have counseled  
one who has no  
wisdom,  
and given much good  
advice!  
4 With whose help have you  
uttered words,  
and whose spirit has  
come forth from you?  
5 The shades below tremble,  
the waters and their  
inhabitants.  
6 Sheol is naked before God,  
and Abaddon has no  
covering.

7 He stretches out Zaphon  
over the void,  
and hangs the earth  
upon nothing.  
8 He binds up the waters in  
his thick clouds,  
and the cloud is not torn  
open by them.  
9 He covers the face of the  
full moon,  
and spreads over it his  
cloud.  
10 He has described a circle  
on the face of the  
waters,  
at the boundary  
between light and  
darkness.  
11 The pillars of heaven  
tremble,  
and are astounded at his  
rebuke.  
12 By his power he stilled the  
Sea;  
by his understanding he  
struck down Rahab.  
13 By his wind the heavens  
were made fair;  
his hand pierced the  
fleeing serpent.  
14 These are indeed but the  
outskirts of his ways;  
and how small a whisper  
do we hear of him!

But the thunder of his  
power who can  
understand?"

*Job Maintains His Integrity*

**27** Job again took up his  
discourse and said:

<sup>2</sup> "As God lives, who has  
taken away my right,  
and the Almighty, who  
has made my soul  
bitter,  
<sup>3</sup> as long as my breath is in  
me  
and the spirit of God is in  
my nostrils,  
<sup>4</sup> my lips will not speak  
falsehood,  
and my tongue will not  
utter deceit.  
<sup>5</sup> Far be it from me to say  
that you are right;  
until I die I will not put  
away my integrity from  
me.  
<sup>6</sup> I hold fast my  
righteousness, and will  
not let it go;  
my heart does not  
reproach me for any of  
my days.  
<sup>7</sup> "May my enemy be like  
the wicked,

and may my opponent  
be like the  
unrighteous.

<sup>8</sup> For what is the hope of the  
godless when God cuts  
them off,  
when God takes away  
their lives?  
<sup>9</sup> Will God hear their cry  
when trouble comes  
upon them?  
<sup>10</sup> Will they take delight in  
the Almighty?  
Will they call upon God  
at all times?  
<sup>11</sup> I will teach you concerning  
the hand of God;  
that which is with the  
Almighty I will not  
conceal.  
<sup>12</sup> All of you have seen it  
yourselves;  
why then have you  
become altogether  
vain?  
<sup>13</sup> This is the portion of the  
wicked with God,  
and the heritage that  
oppressors receive  
from the Almighty:  
<sup>14</sup> If their children are  
multiplied, it is for the  
sword;  
and their offspring have  
not enough to eat.

15 Those who survive them  
the pestilence buries,  
and their widows make  
no lamentation.  
16 Though they heap up silver  
like dust,  
and pile up clothing like  
clay—  
17 they may pile it up, but the  
just will wear it,  
and the innocent will  
divide the silver.  
18 They build their houses  
like nests,  
like booths made by  
sentinels of the  
vineyard.  
19 They go to bed with  
wealth, but will do so  
no more;  
they open their eyes, and  
it is gone.  
20 Terrors overtake them like  
a flood;  
in the night a whirlwind  
carries them off.  
21 The east wind lifts them up  
and they are gone;  
it sweeps them out of  
their place.  
22 It hurls at them without  
pity;  
they flee from its power  
in headlong flight.  
23 It claps its hands at them,

and hisses at them from  
its place.

**2 Corinthians 1:23-2:11 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> But I call on God as  
witness against me: it was to  
spare you that I did not come  
again to Corinth. <sup>24</sup> I do not  
mean to imply that we lord it  
over your faith; rather, we are  
workers with you for your joy,  
because you stand firm in the  
faith.

**2** <sup>1</sup> So I made up my mind  
not to make you another  
painful visit. <sup>2</sup> For if I cause you  
pain, who is there to make me  
glad but the one whom I have  
pained? <sup>3</sup> And I wrote as I did,  
so that when I came, I might  
not suffer pain from those  
who should have made me  
rejoice; for I am confident  
about all of you, that my joy  
would be the joy of all of you.  
<sup>4</sup> For I wrote you out of much  
distress and anguish of heart  
and with many tears, not to  
cause you pain, but to let you  
know the abundant love that I  
have for you.

*Forgiveness for the Offender*

<sup>5</sup> But if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but to some extent—not to exaggerate it—to all of you. <sup>6</sup> This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person; <sup>7</sup> so now instead you should forgive and console him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. <sup>8</sup> So I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. <sup>9</sup> I wrote for this reason: to test you and to know whether you are obedient in everything. <sup>10</sup> Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ. <sup>11</sup> And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

**Psalms 42:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Longing for God and His Help  
in Distress*

To the leader. A Maskil of the  
Korahites.

<sup>1</sup> As a deer longs for flowing  
streams,  
so my soul longs for you,  
O God.  
<sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God,

for the living God.  
When shall I come and  
behold  
the face of God?  
<sup>3</sup> My tears have been my  
food  
day and night,  
while people say to me  
continually,  
“Where is your God?”  
<sup>4</sup> These things I remember,  
as I pour out my soul:  
how I went with the  
throng,  
and led them in  
procession to the  
house of God,  
with glad shouts and songs  
of thanksgiving,  
a multitude keeping  
festival.  
<sup>5</sup> **Why are you cast down, O  
my soul,  
and why are you  
disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall  
again praise him,  
my help <sup>6</sup> and my God.**  
My soul is cast down  
within me;  
therefore I remember  
you  
from the land of Jordan  
and of Hermon,  
from Mount Mizar.



7 Deep calls to deep  
 at the thunder of your  
 cataracts;  
 all your waves and your  
 billows  
 have gone over me.

8 By day the LORD commands  
 his steadfast love,  
 and at night his song is  
 with me,  
 a prayer to the God of  
 my life.

**Proverbs 13:24–25 (NRSV)**

24 Those who spare the rod  
 hate their children,  
 but those who love them  
 are diligent to  
 discipline them.

25 The righteous have enough  
 to satisfy their  
 appetite,  
 but the belly of the  
 wicked is empty.

**April 24**



**Job 28:1-29:17 (NRSV)**

*Interlude: Where Wisdom Is Found*

**28** “Surely there is a mine for  
 silver,  
 and a place for gold to be  
 refined.

2 Iron is taken out of the  
 earth,  
 and copper is smelted  
 from ore.

3 Miners put an end to  
 darkness,  
 and search out to the  
 farthest bound  
 the ore in gloom and  
 deep darkness.

4 They open shafts in a  
 valley away from  
 human habitation;  
 they are forgotten by  
 travelers,  
 they sway suspended,  
 remote from people.

5 As for the earth, out of it  
 comes bread;  
 but underneath it is  
 turned up as by fire.

6 Its stones are the place of  
 sapphires,  
 and its dust contains  
 gold.

7 “That path no bird of prey  
 knows,  
 and the falcon’s eye has  
 not seen it.



8 The proud wild animals  
 have not trodden it;  
 the lion has not passed  
 over it.  
 9 "They put their hand to  
 the flinty rock,  
 and overturn mountains  
 by the roots.  
 10 They cut out channels in  
 the rocks,  
 and their eyes see every  
 precious thing.  
 11 The sources of the rivers  
 they probe;  
 hidden things they bring  
 to light.  
 12 "But where shall wisdom  
 be found?  
 And where is the place of  
 understanding?  
 13 Mortals do not know the  
 way to it,  
 and it is not found in the  
 land of the living.  
 14 The deep says, 'It is not in  
 me,'  
 and the sea says, 'It is  
 not with me.'  
 15 It cannot be gotten for  
 gold,  
 and silver cannot be  
 weighed out as its  
 price.  
 16 It cannot be valued in the  
 gold of Ophir,  
 in precious onyx or  
 sapphire.  
 17 Gold and glass cannot  
 equal it,  
 nor can it be exchanged  
 for jewels of fine gold.  
 18 No mention shall be made  
 of coral or of crystal;  
 the price of wisdom is  
 above pearls.  
 19 The chrysolite of Ethiopia  
 cannot compare with  
 it,  
 nor can it be valued in  
 pure gold.  
 20 "Where then does wisdom  
 come from?  
 And where is the place of  
 understanding?  
 21 It is hidden from the eyes  
 of all living,  
 and concealed from the  
 birds of the air.  
 22 Abaddon and Death say,  
 'We have heard a rumor  
 of it with our ears.'  
 23 "God understands the way  
 to it,  
 and he knows its place.  
 24 For he looks to the ends of  
 the earth,  
 and sees everything  
 under the heavens.  
 25 When he gave to the wind  
 its weight,

and apportioned out the  
waters by measure;  
26 when he made a decree  
for the rain,  
and a way for the  
thunderbolt;  
27 then he saw it and  
declared it;  
he established it, and  
searched it out.  
28 And he said to humankind,  
'Truly, the fear of the Lord,  
that is wisdom;  
and to depart from evil is  
understanding.' "

*Job Finishes His Defense*

**29** Job again took up his  
discourse and said:  
2 "O that I were as in the  
months of old,  
as in the days when God  
watched over me;  
3 when his lamp shone over  
my head,  
and by his light I walked  
through darkness;  
4 when I was in my prime,  
when the friendship of  
God was upon my tent;  
5 when the Almighty was  
still with me,  
when my children were  
around me;

6 when my steps were  
washed with milk,  
and the rock poured out  
for me streams of oil!  
7 When I went out to the  
gate of the city,  
when I took my seat in  
the square,  
8 the young men saw me  
and withdrew,  
and the aged rose up and  
stood;  
9 the nobles refrained from  
talking,  
and laid their hands on  
their mouths;  
10 the voices of princes were  
hushed,  
and their tongues stuck  
to the roof of their  
mouths.  
11 When the ear heard, it  
commended me,  
and when the eye saw, it  
approved;  
12 because I delivered the  
poor who cried,  
and the orphan who had  
no helper.  
13 The blessing of the  
wretched came upon  
me,  
and I caused the widow's  
heart to sing for joy.

<sup>14</sup> I put on righteousness, and  
it clothed me;  
my justice was like a  
robe and a turban.  
<sup>15</sup> I was eyes to the blind,  
and feet to the lame.  
<sup>16</sup> I was a father to the  
needy,  
and I championed the  
cause of the stranger.  
<sup>17</sup> I broke the fangs of the  
unrighteous,  
and made them drop  
their prey from their  
teeth.

**2 Corinthians 2:12-14** (NRSV)

*Paul's Anxiety in Troas*

<sup>12</sup> When I came to Troas to  
proclaim the good news of  
Christ, a door was opened for  
me in the Lord; <sup>13</sup> but my mind  
could not rest because I did  
not find my brother Titus  
there. So I said farewell to  
them and went on to  
Macedonia.

<sup>14</sup> But thanks be to God,  
who in Christ always leads us  
in triumphal procession, and  
through us spreads in every  
place the fragrance that  
comes from knowing him.

**Psalms 42:9-11** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> I say to God, my rock,  
“Why have you forgotten  
me?  
Why must I walk about  
mournfully  
because the enemy  
oppresses me?”  
<sup>10</sup> As with a deadly wound in  
my body,  
my adversaries taunt me,  
while they say to me  
continually,  
“Where is your God?”  
<sup>11</sup> Why are you cast down, O  
my soul,  
and why are you  
disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall  
again praise him,  
my help and my God.

**Proverbs 14:1-2** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> The wise woman builds  
her house,  
but the foolish tears it  
down with her own  
hands.  
<sup>2</sup> Those who walk uprightly  
fear the LORD,  
but one who is devious  
in conduct despises  
him.

April 25



**Job 29:18-30:31** (NRSV)

18 Then I thought, 'I shall die  
in my nest,  
and I shall multiply my  
days like the phoenix;  
19 my roots spread out to the  
waters,  
with the dew all night on  
my branches;  
20 my glory was fresh with  
me,  
and my bow ever new in  
my hand.'  
21 "They listened to me, and  
waited,  
and kept silence for my  
counsel.  
22 After I spoke they did not  
speak again,  
and my word dropped  
upon them like dew.  
23 They waited for me as for  
the rain;  
they opened their  
mouths as for the  
spring rain.  
24 I smiled on them when  
they had no  
confidence;

and the light of my  
countenance they did  
not extinguish.

25 I chose their way, and sat  
as chief,  
and I lived like a king  
among his troops,  
like one who comforts  
mourners.

**30** "But now they make  
sport of me,  
those who are younger  
than I,  
whose fathers I would  
have disdained  
to set with the dogs of  
my flock.  
2 What could I gain from the  
strength of their  
hands?  
All their vigor is gone.  
3 Through want and hard  
hunger  
they gnaw the dry and  
desolate ground,  
4 they pick mallow and the  
leaves of bushes,  
and to warm themselves  
the roots of broom.  
5 They are driven out from  
society;  
people shout after them  
as after a thief.

6 In the gullies of wadis they  
must live,  
in holes in the ground,  
and in the rocks.  
7 Among the bushes they  
bray;  
under the nettles they  
huddle together.  
8 A senseless, disreputable  
brood,  
they have been whipped  
out of the land.  
9 "And now they mock me in  
song;  
I am a byword to them.  
10 They abhor me, they keep  
aloof from me;  
they do not hesitate to  
spit at the sight of me.  
11 Because God has loosed  
my bowstring and  
humbled me,  
they have cast off  
restraint in my  
presence.  
12 On my right hand the  
rabble rise up;  
they send me sprawling,  
and build roads for my  
ruin.  
13 They break up my path,  
they promote my  
calamity;  
no one restrains them.

14 As through a wide breach  
they come;  
amid the crash they roll  
on.  
15 Terrors are turned upon  
me;  
my honor is pursued as  
by the wind,  
and my prosperity has  
passed away like a  
cloud.  
16 "And now my soul is  
poured out within me;  
days of affliction have  
taken hold of me.  
17 The night racks my bones,  
and the pain that gnaws  
me takes no rest.  
18 With violence he seizes my  
garment;  
he grasps me by the  
collar of my tunic.  
19 He has cast me into the  
mire,  
and I have become like  
dust and ashes.  
20 I cry to you and you do not  
answer me;  
I stand, and you merely  
look at me.  
21 You have turned cruel to  
me;  
with the might of your  
hand you persecute  
me.

22 You lift me up on the wind,  
you make me ride on  
it,  
and you toss me about in  
the roar of the storm.  
23 I know that you will bring  
me to death,  
and to the house  
appointed for all living.  
24 "Surely one does not turn  
against the needy,  
when in disaster they cry  
for help.  
25 Did I not weep for those  
whose day was hard?  
Was not my soul grieved  
for the poor?  
26 But when I looked for  
good, evil came;  
and when I waited for  
light, darkness came.  
27 My inward parts are in  
turmoil, and are never  
still;  
days of affliction come to  
meet me.  
28 I go about in sunless  
gloom;  
I stand up in the  
assembly and cry for  
help.  
29 I am a brother of jackals,  
and a companion of  
ostriches.

30 My skin turns black and  
falls from me,  
and my bones burn with  
heat.  
31 My lyre is turned to  
mourning,  
and my pipe to the voice  
of those who weep.

## **2 Corinthians 2:15-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> For we are the aroma of  
Christ to God among those  
who are being saved and  
among those who are  
perishing; <sup>16</sup> to the one a  
fragrance from death to death,  
to the other a fragrance from  
life to life. Who is sufficient for  
these things? <sup>17</sup> For we are not  
peddlers of God's word like so  
many; but in Christ we speak  
as persons of sincerity, as  
persons sent from God and  
standing in his presence.

## **Psalm 43:1-4 (NRSV)**

### *Prayer to God in Time of Trouble*

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O God, and  
defend my cause  
against an ungodly  
people;  
from those who are  
deceitful and unjust  
deliver me!

<sup>2</sup> For you are the God in  
whom I take refuge;  
why have you cast me  
off?

Why must I walk about  
mournfully  
because of the  
oppression of the  
enemy?

<sup>3</sup> O send out your light and  
your truth;  
let them lead me;  
let them bring me to your  
holy hill  
and to your dwelling.

<sup>4</sup> Then I will go to the altar  
of God,  
to God my exceeding joy;  
and I will praise you with  
the harp,  
O God, my God.

**Proverbs 14:3–4 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> The talk of fools is a rod for  
their backs,  
but the lips of the wise  
preserve them.

<sup>4</sup> Where there are no oxen,  
there is no grain;  
abundant crops come by  
the strength of the ox.

**April 26**



**Job 31:-32:1 (NRSV)**

**31** “I have made a covenant  
with my eyes;  
how then could I look  
upon a virgin?  
<sup>2</sup> What would be my portion  
from God above,  
and my heritage from  
the Almighty on high?  
<sup>3</sup> Does not calamity befall  
the unrighteous,  
and disaster the workers  
of iniquity?  
<sup>4</sup> Does he not see my ways,  
and number all my  
steps?  
<sup>5</sup> “If I have walked with  
falsehood,  
and my foot has hurried  
to deceit—  
<sup>6</sup> let me be weighed in a just  
balance,  
and let God know my  
integrity!—  
<sup>7</sup> if my step has turned aside  
from the way,  
and my heart has  
followed my eyes,  
and if any spot has clung  
to my hands;

8 then let me sow, and  
another eat;  
and let what grows for  
me be rooted out.  
9 “If my heart has been  
enticed by a woman,  
and I have lain in wait at  
my neighbor’s door;  
10 then let my wife grind for  
another,  
and let other men kneel  
over her.  
11 For that would be a  
heinous crime;  
that would be a criminal  
offense;  
12 for that would be a fire  
consuming down to  
Abaddon,  
and it would burn to the  
root all my harvest.  
13 “If I have rejected the  
cause of my male or  
female slaves,  
when they brought a  
complaint against me;  
14 what then shall I do when  
God rises up?  
When he makes inquiry,  
what shall I answer  
him?  
15 Did not he who made me  
in the womb make  
them?

And did not one fashion  
us in the womb?  
16 “If I have withheld  
anything that the poor  
desired,  
or have caused the eyes  
of the widow to fail,  
17 or have eaten my morsel  
alone,  
and the orphan has not  
eaten from it—  
18 for from my youth I reared  
the orphan like a  
father,  
and from my mother’s  
womb I guided the  
widow—  
19 if I have seen anyone  
perish for lack of  
clothing,  
or a poor person without  
covering,  
20 whose loins have not  
blessed me,  
and who was not  
warmed with the  
fleece of my sheep;  
21 if I have raised my hand  
against the orphan,  
because I saw I had  
supporters at the gate;  
22 then let my shoulder blade  
fall from my shoulder,  
and let my arm be  
broken from its socket.



23 For I was in terror of  
calamity from God,  
and I could not have  
faced his majesty.  
24 “If I have made gold my  
trust,  
or called fine gold my  
confidence;  
25 if I have rejoiced because  
my wealth was great,  
or because my hand had  
gotten much;  
26 if I have looked at the sun  
when it shone,  
or the moon moving in  
splendor,  
27 and my heart has been  
secretly enticed,  
and my mouth has kissed  
my hand;  
28 this also would be an  
iniquity to be punished  
by the judges,  
for I should have been  
false to God above.  
29 “If I have rejoiced at the  
ruin of those who  
hated me,  
or exulted when evil  
overtook them—  
30 I have not let my mouth  
sin  
by asking for their lives  
with a curse—

31 if those of my tent ever  
said,  
‘O that we might be  
sated with his flesh!’—  
32 the stranger has not  
lodged in the street;  
I have opened my doors  
to the traveler—  
33 if I have concealed my  
transgressions as  
others do,  
by hiding my iniquity in  
my bosom,  
34 because I stood in great  
fear of the multitude,  
and the contempt of  
families terrified me,  
so that I kept silence,  
and did not go out of  
doors—  
35 O that I had one to hear  
me!  
(Here is my signature!  
Let the Almighty  
answer me!)  
O that I had the  
indictment written by  
my adversary!  
36 Surely I would carry it on  
my shoulder;  
I would bind it on me like  
a crown;  
37 I would give him an  
account of all my steps;

like a prince I would approach him.

<sup>38</sup> “If my land has cried out against me, and its furrows have wept together;  
<sup>39</sup> if I have eaten its yield without payment, and caused the death of its owners;  
<sup>40</sup> let thorns grow instead of wheat, and foul weeds instead of barley.”

The words of Job are ended.

#### *Elihu Rebukes Job's Friends*

**32** So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

#### **2 Corinthians 3:1-11** (NRSV) *Ministers of the New Covenant* *(Cp Jer 31:31-34)*

**3** Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we? <sup>2</sup>You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be

known and read by all; <sup>3</sup> and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

<sup>4</sup>Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. <sup>5</sup>Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, <sup>6</sup>who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

<sup>7</sup>Now if the ministry of death, chiseled in letters on stone tablets, came in glory so that the people of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of the glory of his face, a glory now set aside, <sup>8</sup>how much more will the ministry of the Spirit come in glory? <sup>9</sup>For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, much more does the ministry of justification abound in glory! <sup>10</sup>Indeed, what once had glory has lost its glory because of the greater glory; <sup>11</sup>for if what

was set aside came through glory, much more has the permanent come in glory!

**Psalms 43:5** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,  
my help and my God.

**Proverbs 14:5-6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> A faithful witness does not lie,  
but a false witness breathes out lies.  
<sup>6</sup> A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain,  
but knowledge is easy for one who understands.

**April 27**



**Job 32:2-33:33** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of

Ram, became angry. He was angry at Job because he justified himself rather than God; <sup>3</sup> he was angry also at Job's three friends because they had found no answer, though they had declared Job to be in the wrong. <sup>4</sup> Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job, because they were older than he. <sup>5</sup> But when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouths of these three men, he became angry.

<sup>6</sup> Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite answered:

"I am young in years,  
and you are aged;  
therefore I was timid and afraid  
to declare my opinion to you.

<sup>7</sup> I said, 'Let days speak,  
and many years teach wisdom.'

<sup>8</sup> But truly it is the spirit in a mortal,  
the breath of the Almighty, that makes for understanding.

<sup>9</sup> It is not the old that are wise,  
nor the aged that understand what is right.

10 Therefore I say, 'Listen to me;  
let me also declare my opinion.'  
11 "See, I waited for your words,  
I listened for your wise sayings,  
while you searched out what to say.  
12 I gave you my attention,  
but there was in fact no one that confuted Job,  
no one among you that answered his words.  
13 Yet do not say, 'We have found wisdom;  
God may vanquish him, not a human.'  
14 He has not directed his words against me,  
and I will not answer him with your speeches.  
15 "They are dismayed, they answer no more;  
they have not a word to say.  
16 And am I to wait, because they do not speak,  
because they stand there, and answer no more?  
17 I also will give my answer;  
I also will declare my opinion.

18 For I am full of words;  
the spirit within me constrains me.  
19 My heart is indeed like wine that has no vent;  
like new wineskins, it is ready to burst.  
20 I must speak, so that I may find relief;  
I must open my lips and answer.  
21 I will not show partiality to any person  
or use flattery toward anyone.  
22 For I do not know how to flatter—  
or my Maker would soon put an end to me!

*Elihu Rebukes Job*

**33** But now, hear my speech,  
O Job,  
and listen to all my words.  
2 See, I open my mouth;  
the tongue in my mouth speaks.  
3 My words declare the uprightness of my heart,  
and what my lips know they speak sincerely.  
4 The spirit of God has made me,

and the breath of the  
Almighty gives me life.  
5 Answer me, if you can;  
set your words in order  
before me; take your  
stand.  
6 See, before God I am as  
you are;  
I too was formed from a  
piece of clay.  
7 No fear of me need terrify  
you;  
my pressure will not be  
heavy on you.  
8 "Surely, you have spoken  
in my hearing,  
and I have heard the  
sound of your words.  
9 You say, 'I am clean,  
without transgression;  
I am pure, and there is  
no iniquity in me.  
10 Look, he finds occasions  
against me,  
he counts me as his  
enemy;  
11 he puts my feet in the  
stocks,  
and watches all my  
paths.'  
12 "But in this you are not  
right. I will answer you:  
God is greater than any  
mortal.

13 Why do you contend  
against him,  
saying, 'He will answer  
none of my words'?  
14 For God speaks in one way,  
and in two, though  
people do not perceive  
it.  
15 In a dream, in a vision of  
the night,  
when deep sleep falls on  
mortals,  
while they slumber on  
their beds,  
16 then he opens their ears,  
and terrifies them with  
warnings,  
17 that he may turn them  
aside from their deeds,  
and keep them from  
pride,  
18 to spare their souls from  
the Pit,  
their lives from  
traversing the River.  
19 They are also chastened  
with pain upon their  
beds,  
and with continual strife  
in their bones,  
20 so that their lives loathe  
bread,  
and their appetites  
dainty food.

21 Their flesh is so wasted  
away that it cannot be  
seen;  
and their bones, once  
invisible, now stick out.  
22 Their souls draw near the  
Pit,  
and their lives to those  
who bring death.  
23 Then, if there should be for  
one of them an angel,  
a mediator, one of a  
thousand,  
one who declares a  
person upright,  
24 and he is gracious to that  
person, and says,  
'Deliver him from going  
down into the Pit;  
I have found a ransom;  
25 let his flesh become fresh  
with youth;  
let him return to the  
days of his youthful  
vigor';  
26 then he prays to God, and  
is accepted by him,  
he comes into his  
presence with joy,  
and God repays him for his  
righteousness.  
27 That person sings to  
others and says,  
'I sinned, and perverted  
what was right,

and it was not paid back  
to me.  
28 He has redeemed my soul  
from going down to  
the Pit,  
and my life shall see the  
light.'  
29 "God indeed does all these  
things,  
twice, three times, with  
mortals,  
30 to bring back their souls  
from the Pit,  
so that they may see the  
light of life.  
31 Pay heed, Job, listen to  
me;  
be silent, and I will  
speak.  
32 If you have anything to  
say, answer me;  
speak, for I desire to  
justify you.  
33 If not, listen to me;  
be silent, and I will teach  
you wisdom."

## **2 Corinthians 3:12-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> Since, then, we have  
such a hope, we act with great  
boldness, <sup>13</sup> not like Moses,  
who put a veil over his face to  
keep the people of Israel from  
gazing at the end of the glory  
that was being set aside. <sup>14</sup> But

their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; <sup>16</sup> but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. <sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> **And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.**

**Psalms 44:1-3 (NRSV)**

*National Lament and Prayer  
for Help*

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A  
Maskil.

<sup>1</sup> We have heard with our  
ears, O God,  
our ancestors have told  
us,  
what deeds you performed  
in their days,  
in the days of old:

<sup>2</sup> you with your own hand  
drove out the nations,  
but them you planted;  
you afflicted the peoples,  
but them you set free;  
<sup>3</sup> for not by their own sword  
did they win the land,  
nor did their own arm  
give them victory;  
but your right hand, and  
your arm,  
and the light of your  
countenance,  
for you delighted in  
them.

**Proverbs 14:7-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Leave the presence of a  
fool,  
for there you do not find  
words of knowledge.  
<sup>8</sup> It is the wisdom of the  
clever to understand  
where they go,  
but the folly of fools  
misleads.

April 28



Job 34:1-37 (NRSV)

*Elihu Proclaims God's Justice*

**34** Then Elihu continued and said:

<sup>2</sup> "Hear my words, you wise men,  
and give ear to me, you who know;  
<sup>3</sup> for the ear tests words  
as the palate tastes food.  
<sup>4</sup> Let us choose what is right;  
let us determine among ourselves what is good.  
<sup>5</sup> For Job has said, 'I am innocent,  
and God has taken away my right;  
<sup>6</sup> in spite of being right I am counted a liar;  
my wound is incurable,  
though I am without transgression.'  
<sup>7</sup> Who is there like Job,  
who drinks up scoffing like water,  
<sup>8</sup> who goes in company with evildoers  
and walks with the wicked?  
<sup>9</sup> For he has said, 'It profits one nothing

to take delight in God.'  
<sup>10</sup> "Therefore, hear me, you who have sense,  
far be it from God that he should do wickedness,  
and from the Almighty that he should do wrong.  
<sup>11</sup> For according to their deeds he will repay them,  
and according to their ways he will make it befall them.  
<sup>12</sup> Of a truth, God will not do wickedly,  
and the Almighty will not pervert justice.  
<sup>13</sup> Who gave him charge over the earth  
and who laid on him the whole world?  
<sup>14</sup> If he should take back his spirit to himself,  
and gather to himself his breath,  
<sup>15</sup> all flesh would perish together,  
and all mortals return to dust.  
<sup>16</sup> "If you have understanding, hear this;  
listen to what I say.



17 Shall one who hates justice  
govern?  
Will you condemn one  
who is righteous and  
mighty,  
18 who says to a king, 'You  
scoundrel!'  
and to princes, 'You  
wicked men!';  
19 who shows no partiality to  
nobles,  
nor regards the rich  
more than the poor,  
for they are all the work  
of his hands?  
20 In a moment they die;  
at midnight the people  
are shaken and pass  
away,  
and the mighty are taken  
away by no human  
hand.  
21 "For his eyes are upon the  
ways of mortals,  
and he sees all their  
steps.  
22 There is no gloom or deep  
darkness  
where evildoers may  
hide themselves.  
23 For he has not appointed a  
time for anyone  
to go before God in  
judgment.

24 He shatters the mighty  
without investigation,  
and sets others in their  
place.  
25 Thus, knowing their works,  
he overturns them in the  
night, and they are  
crushed.  
26 He strikes them for their  
wickedness  
while others look on,  
27 because they turned aside  
from following him,  
and had no regard for  
any of his ways,  
28 so that they caused the cry  
of the poor to come to  
him,  
and he heard the cry of  
the afflicted—  
29 When he is quiet, who can  
condemn?  
When he hides his face,  
who can behold him,  
whether it be a nation or  
an individual?—  
30 so that the godless should  
not reign,  
or those who ensnare  
the people.  
31 "For has anyone said to  
God,  
'I have endured  
punishment; I will not  
offend any more;

32 teach me what I do not  
see;  
if I have done iniquity, I  
will do it no more’?  
33 Will he then pay back to  
suit you,  
because you reject it?  
For you must choose, and  
not I;  
therefore declare what  
you know.  
34 Those who have sense will  
say to me,  
and the wise who hear  
me will say,  
35 ‘Job speaks without  
knowledge,  
his words are without  
insight.’  
36 Would that Job were tried  
to the limit,  
because his answers are  
those of the wicked.  
37 For he adds rebellion to his  
sin;  
he claps his hands  
among us,  
and multiplies his words  
against God.”

**2 Corinthians 4:1-4** (NRSV)  
*Treasure in Clay Jars*

**4** Therefore, since it is by  
God’s mercy that we are  
engaged in this ministry, we

do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> We have  
renounced the shameful  
things that one hides; we  
refuse to practice cunning or  
to falsify God’s word; but by  
the open statement of the  
truth we commend ourselves  
to the conscience of everyone  
in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup> And even  
if our gospel is veiled, it is  
veiled to those who are  
perishing. <sup>4</sup> In their case the  
god of this world has blinded  
the minds of the unbelievers,  
to keep them from seeing the  
light of the gospel of the glory  
of Christ, who is the image of  
God.

**Psalms 44:4-8** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> You are my King and my  
God;  
you command victories  
for Jacob.  
<sup>5</sup> Through you we push  
down our foes;  
through your name we  
tread down our  
assailants.  
<sup>6</sup> For not in my bow do I  
trust,  
nor can my sword save  
me.  
<sup>7</sup> But you have saved us  
from our foes,

and have put to  
confusion those who  
hate us.

<sup>8</sup> In God we have boasted  
continually,  
and we will give thanks  
to your name forever.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 14:9–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Fools mock at the guilt  
offering,  
but the upright enjoy  
God’s favor.  
<sup>10</sup> The heart knows its own  
bitterness,  
and no stranger shares  
its joy.

**April 29**



**Job 35:1-36:33 (NRSV)**

*Elihu Condemns Self-  
Righteousness*

**35** Elihu continued and said:

<sup>2</sup> “Do you think this to be  
just?  
You say, ‘I am in the right  
before God.’

<sup>3</sup> If you ask, ‘What  
advantage have I?  
How am I better off than  
if I had sinned?’

<sup>4</sup> I will answer you  
and your friends with  
you.

<sup>5</sup> Look at the heavens and  
see;  
observe the clouds,  
which are higher than  
you.

<sup>6</sup> If you have sinned, what  
do you accomplish  
against him?  
And if your  
transgressions are  
multiplied, what do  
you do to him?

<sup>7</sup> If you are righteous, what  
do you give to him;  
or what does he receive  
from your hand?

<sup>8</sup> Your wickedness affects  
others like you,  
and your righteousness,  
other human beings.

<sup>9</sup> “Because of the multitude  
of oppressions people  
cry out;  
they call for help  
because of the arm of  
the mighty.

<sup>10</sup> But no one says, ‘Where is  
God my Maker,

who gives strength in the  
night,  
11 who teaches us more than  
the animals of the  
earth,  
and makes us wiser than  
the birds of the air?’  
12 There they cry out, but he  
does not answer,  
because of the pride of  
evildoers.  
13 Surely God does not hear  
an empty cry,  
nor does the Almighty  
regard it.  
14 How much less when you  
say that you do not see  
him,  
that the case is before  
him, and you are  
waiting for him!  
15 And now, because his  
anger does not punish,  
and he does not greatly  
heed transgression,  
16 Job opens his mouth in  
empty talk,  
he multiplies words  
without knowledge.”

*Elihu Exalts God's Goodness*

**36** Elihu continued and said:  
2 “Bear with me a little, and  
I will show you,

for I have yet something  
to say on God's behalf.  
3 I will bring my knowledge  
from far away,  
and ascribe  
righteousness to my  
Maker.  
4 For truly my words are not  
false;  
one who is perfect in  
knowledge is with you.  
5 “Surely God is mighty and  
does not despise any;  
he is mighty in strength  
of understanding.  
6 He does not keep the  
wicked alive,  
but gives the afflicted  
their right.  
7 He does not withdraw his  
eyes from the  
righteous,  
but with kings on the  
throne  
he sets them forever,  
and they are exalted.  
8 And if they are bound in  
feters  
and caught in the cords  
of affliction,  
9 then he declares to them  
their work  
and their transgressions,  
that they are behaving  
arrogantly.

10 He opens their ears to  
instruction,  
and commands that they  
return from iniquity.  
11 If they listen, and serve  
him,  
they complete their days  
in prosperity,  
and their years in  
pleasantness.  
12 But if they do not listen,  
they shall perish by the  
sword,  
and die without  
knowledge.  
13 "The godless in heart  
cherish anger;  
they do not cry for help  
when he binds them.  
14 They die in their youth,  
and their life ends in  
shame.  
15 He delivers the afflicted by  
their affliction,  
and opens their ear by  
adversity.  
16 He also allured you out of  
distress  
into a broad place where  
there was no  
constraint,  
and what was set on  
your table was full of  
fatness.

17 "But you are obsessed  
with the case of the  
wicked;  
judgment and justice  
seize you.  
18 Beware that wrath does  
not entice you into  
scoffing,  
and do not let the  
greatness of the  
ransom turn you aside.  
19 Will your cry avail to keep  
you from distress,  
or will all the force of  
your strength?  
20 Do not long for the night,  
when peoples are cut off  
in their place.  
21 Beware! Do not turn to  
iniquity;  
because of that you have  
been tried by affliction.  
22 See, God is exalted in his  
power;  
who is a teacher like  
him?  
23 Who has prescribed for  
him his way,  
or who can say, 'You  
have done wrong'?

*Elihu Proclaims God's Majesty*

24 "Remember to extol his  
work,

of which mortals have  
sung.

- 25 All people have looked on  
it;  
everyone watches it  
from far away.
- 26 Surely God is great, and we  
do not know him;  
the number of his years  
is unsearchable.
- 27 For he draws up the drops  
of water;  
he distills his mist in rain,  
28 which the skies pour down  
and drop upon mortals  
abundantly.
- 29 Can anyone understand  
the spreading of the  
clouds,  
the thunderings of his  
pavilion?
- 30 See, he scatters his  
lightning around him  
and covers the roots of  
the sea.
- 31 For by these he governs  
peoples;  
he gives food in  
abundance.
- 32 He covers his hands with  
the lightning,  
and commands it to  
strike the mark.
- 33 Its crashing tells about  
him;

he is jealous with anger  
against iniquity.

## 2 Corinthian 4:5-12 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> For we do not proclaim  
ourselves; we proclaim Jesus  
Christ as Lord and ourselves as  
your slaves for Jesus' sake.

<sup>6</sup> For it is the God who said,  
"Let light shine out of  
darkness," who has shone in  
our hearts to give the light of  
the knowledge of the glory of  
God in the face of Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure  
in clay jars, so that it may be  
made clear that this  
extraordinary power belongs  
to God and does not come  
from us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in  
every way, but not crushed;  
perplexed, but not driven to  
despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not  
forsaken; struck down, but not  
destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always **carrying  
in the body the death of Jesus,  
so that the life of Jesus may  
also be made visible in our  
bodies.** <sup>11</sup> For while we live, we  
are always being given up to  
death for Jesus' sake, so that  
the life of Jesus may be made  
visible in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup> So  
death is at work in us, but life  
in you.

**Psalms 44:9-22 (NRSV)**

9 Yet you have rejected us  
and abased us,  
and have not gone out  
with our armies.  
10 You made us turn back  
from the foe,  
and our enemies have  
gotten spoil.  
11 You have made us like  
sheep for slaughter,  
and have scattered us  
among the nations.  
12 You have sold your people  
for a trifle,  
demanding no high price  
for them.  
13 You have made us the  
taunt of our neighbors,  
the derision and scorn of  
those around us.  
14 You have made us a  
byword among the  
nations,  
a laughingstock among  
the peoples.  
15 All day long my disgrace is  
before me,  
and shame has covered  
my face  
16 at the words of the  
taunters and revilers,  
at the sight of the enemy  
and the avenger.  
17 All this has come upon us,

yet we have not  
forgotten you,  
or been false to your  
covenant.

18 Our heart has not turned  
back,  
nor have our steps  
departed from your  
way,  
19 yet you have broken us in  
the haunt of jackals,  
and covered us with  
deep darkness.  
20 If we had forgotten the  
name of our God,  
or spread out our hands  
to a strange god,  
21 would not God discover  
this?  
For he knows the secrets  
of the heart.  
22 Because of you we are  
being killed all day  
long,  
and accounted as sheep  
for the slaughter.

**Proverbs 14:11-12 (NRSV)**

11 The house of the wicked is  
destroyed,  
but the tent of the  
upright flourishes.  
12 There is a way that seems  
right to a person,

but its end is the way to  
death.

## April 30



### Job 37:1-24 (NRSV)

“At this also my heart  
trembles,  
and leaps out of its  
place.  
2 Listen, listen to the  
thunder of his voice  
and the rumbling that  
comes from his mouth.  
3 Under the whole heaven  
he lets it loose,  
and his lightning to the  
corners of the earth.  
4 After it his voice roars;  
he thunders with his  
majestic voice  
and he does not restrain  
the lightnings when his  
voice is heard.  
5 God thunders wondrously  
with his voice;  
he does great things that  
we cannot  
comprehend.

6 For to the snow he says,  
‘Fall on the earth’;  
and the shower of rain,  
his heavy shower of  
rain,  
7 serves as a sign on  
everyone’s hand,  
so that all whom he has  
made may know it.  
8 Then the animals go into  
their lairs  
and remain in their dens.  
9 From its chamber comes  
the whirlwind,  
and cold from the  
scattering winds.  
10 By the breath of God ice is  
given,  
and the broad waters are  
frozen fast.  
11 He loads the thick cloud  
with moisture;  
the clouds scatter his  
lightning.  
12 They turn round and round  
by his guidance,  
to accomplish all that he  
commands them  
on the face of the  
habitable world.  
13 Whether for correction, or  
for his land,  
or for love, he causes it  
to happen.  
14 “Hear this, O Job;



stop and consider the  
wondrous works of  
God.  
15 Do you know how God lays  
his command upon  
them,  
and causes the lightning  
of his cloud to shine?  
16 Do you know the  
balancings of the  
clouds,  
the wondrous works of  
the one whose  
knowledge is perfect,  
17 you whose garments are  
hot  
when the earth is still  
because of the south  
wind?  
18 Can you, like him, spread  
out the skies,  
hard as a molten mirror?  
19 Teach us what we shall say  
to him;  
we cannot draw up our  
case because of  
darkness.  
20 Should he be told that I  
want to speak?  
Did anyone ever wish to  
be swallowed up?  
21 Now, no one can look on  
the light  
when it is bright in the  
skies,

when the wind has  
passed and cleared  
them.  
22 Out of the north comes  
golden splendor;  
around God is awesome  
majesty.  
23 The Almighty—we cannot  
find him;  
he is great in power and  
justice,  
and abundant  
righteousness he will  
not violate.  
24 Therefore mortals fear  
him;  
he does not regard any  
who are wise in their  
own conceit.”

## **2 Corinthians 4:13-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> But just as we have the  
same spirit of faith that is in  
accordance with scripture—“I  
believed, and so I spoke”—we  
also believe, and so we speak,  
<sup>14</sup> because we know that the  
one who raised the Lord Jesus  
will raise us also with Jesus,  
and will bring us with you into  
his presence. <sup>15</sup> Yes, everything  
is for your sake, so that grace,  
as it extends to more and  
more people, may increase

thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

*Living by Faith*

<sup>16</sup> So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, <sup>18</sup> **because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.**

**Psalm 44:23-26** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord?  
Awake, do not cast us off forever!  
<sup>24</sup> Why do you hide your face?  
Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?  
<sup>25</sup> For we sink down to the dust;  
our bodies cling to the ground.  
<sup>26</sup> Rise up, come to our help.

Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love.

**Proverbs 14:13–14** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Even in laughter the heart is sad,  
and the end of joy is grief.  
<sup>14</sup> The perverse get what their ways deserve,  
and the good, what their deeds deserve.

**May 1**



**Job 38:1-39:30** (NRSV)

*The LORD Answers Job  
(Cp Gen 1:1–10)*

**38** Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:

<sup>2</sup> “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?  
<sup>3</sup> Gird up your loins like a man,  
I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

4 “Where were you when I  
laid the foundation of  
the earth?  
Tell me, if you have  
understanding.  
5 Who determined its  
measurements—surely  
you know!  
Or who stretched the  
line upon it?  
6 On what were its bases  
sunk,  
or who laid its  
cornerstone  
7 when the morning stars  
sang together  
and all the heavenly  
beings shouted for joy?  
8 “Or who shut in the sea  
with doors  
when it burst out from  
the womb?—  
9 when I made the clouds its  
garment,  
and thick darkness its  
swaddling band,  
10 and prescribed bounds for  
it,  
and set bars and doors,  
11 and said, ‘Thus far shall  
you come, and no  
farther,  
and here shall your  
proud waves be  
stopped’?

12 “Have you commanded  
the morning since your  
days began,  
and caused the dawn to  
know its place,  
13 so that it might take hold  
of the skirts of the  
earth,  
and the wicked be  
shaken out of it?  
14 It is changed like clay  
under the seal,  
and it is dyed like a  
garment.  
15 Light is withheld from the  
wicked,  
and their uplifted arm is  
broken.  
16 “Have you entered into the  
springs of the sea,  
or walked in the recesses  
of the deep?  
17 Have the gates of death  
been revealed to you,  
or have you seen the  
gates of deep  
darkness?  
18 Have you comprehended  
the expanse of the  
earth?  
Declare, if you know all  
this.  
19 “Where is the way to the  
dwelling of light,

and where is the place of  
darkness,  
20 that you may take it to its  
territory  
and that you may discern  
the paths to its home?  
21 Surely you know, for you  
were born then,  
and the number of your  
days is great!  
22 "Have you entered the  
storehouses of the  
snow,  
or have you seen the  
storehouses of the hail,  
23 which I have reserved for  
the time of trouble,  
for the day of battle and  
war?  
24 What is the way to the  
place where the light is  
distributed,  
or where the east wind is  
scattered upon the  
earth?  
25 "Who has cut a channel for  
the torrents of rain,  
and a way for the  
thunderbolt,  
26 to bring rain on a land  
where no one lives,  
on the desert, which is  
empty of human life,  
27 to satisfy the waste and  
desolate land,

and to make the ground  
put forth grass?  
28 "Has the rain a father,  
or who has begotten the  
drops of dew?  
29 From whose womb did the  
ice come forth,  
and who has given birth  
to the hoarfrost of  
heaven?  
30 The waters become hard  
like stone,  
and the face of the deep  
is frozen.  
31 "Can you bind the chains  
of the Pleiades,  
or loose the cords of  
Orion?  
32 Can you lead forth the  
Mazzaroth in their  
season,  
or can you guide the  
Bear with its children?  
33 Do you know the  
ordinances of the  
heavens?  
Can you establish their  
rule on the earth?  
34 "Can you lift up your voice  
to the clouds,  
so that a flood of waters  
may cover you?  
35 Can you send forth  
lightnings, so that they  
may go

and say to you, 'Here we  
are'?

<sup>36</sup> Who has put wisdom in  
the inward parts,  
or given understanding  
to the mind?

<sup>37</sup> Who has the wisdom to  
number the clouds?  
Or who can tilt the  
waterskins of the  
heavens,  
<sup>38</sup> when the dust runs into a  
mass  
and the clods cling  
together?

<sup>39</sup> "Can you hunt the prey for  
the lion,  
or satisfy the appetite of  
the young lions,  
<sup>40</sup> when they crouch in their  
dens,  
or lie in wait in their  
covert?

<sup>41</sup> Who provides for the  
raven its prey,  
when its young ones cry  
to God,  
and wander about for  
lack of food?

**39** "Do you know when the  
mountain goats give  
birth?  
Do you observe the  
calving of the deer?

<sup>2</sup> Can you number the  
months that they fulfill,  
and do you know the  
time when they give  
birth,  
<sup>3</sup> when they crouch to give  
birth to their offspring,  
and are delivered of their  
young?

<sup>4</sup> Their young ones become  
strong, they grow up in  
the open;  
they go forth, and do not  
return to them.

<sup>5</sup> "Who has let the wild ass  
go free?  
Who has loosed the  
bonds of the swift ass,  
<sup>6</sup> to which I have given the  
steppe for its home,  
the salt land for its  
dwelling place?

<sup>7</sup> It scorns the tumult of the  
city;  
it does not hear the  
shouts of the driver.

<sup>8</sup> It ranges the mountains as  
its pasture,  
and it searches after  
every green thing.

<sup>9</sup> "Is the wild ox willing to  
serve you?  
Will it spend the night at  
your crib?

10 Can you tie it in the furrow  
with ropes,  
or will it harrow the  
valleys after you?  
11 Will you depend on it  
because its strength is  
great,  
and will you hand over  
your labor to it?  
12 Do you have faith in it that  
it will return,  
and bring your grain to  
your threshing floor?  
13 “The ostrich’s wings flap  
wildly,  
though its pinions lack  
plumage.  
14 For it leaves its eggs to the  
earth,  
and lets them be  
warmed on the  
ground,  
15 forgetting that a foot may  
crush them,  
and that a wild animal  
may trample them.  
16 It deals cruelly with its  
young, as if they were  
not its own;  
though its labor should  
be in vain, yet it has no  
fear;  
17 because God has made it  
forget wisdom,

and given it no share in  
understanding.  
18 When it spreads its plumes  
aloft,  
it laughs at the horse and  
its rider.  
19 “Do you give the horse its  
might?  
Do you clothe its neck  
with mane?  
20 Do you make it leap like  
the locust?  
Its majestic snorting is  
terrible.  
21 It paws violently, exults  
mightily;  
it goes out to meet the  
weapons.  
22 It laughs at fear, and is not  
dismayed;  
it does not turn back  
from the sword.  
23 Upon it rattle the quiver,  
the flashing spear, and  
the javelin.  
24 With fierceness and rage it  
swallows the ground;  
it cannot stand still at  
the sound of the  
trumpet.  
25 When the trumpet sounds,  
it says ‘Aha!’  
From a distance it smells  
the battle,

the thunder of the  
captains, and the  
shouting.

<sup>26</sup> “Is it by your wisdom that  
the hawk soars,  
and spreads its wings  
toward the south?

<sup>27</sup> Is it at your command that  
the eagle mounts up  
and makes its nest on  
high?

<sup>28</sup> It lives on the rock and  
makes its home  
in the fastness of the  
rocky crag.

<sup>29</sup> From there it spies the  
prey;  
its eyes see it from far  
away.

<sup>30</sup> Its young ones suck up  
blood;  
and where the slain are,  
there it is.”

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 (NRSV)

**5** For we know that if the  
earthly tent we live in is  
destroyed, we have a building  
from God, a house not made  
with hands, eternal in the  
heavens. <sup>2</sup> For in this tent we  
groan, longing to be clothed  
with our heavenly dwelling—  
<sup>3</sup> if indeed, when we have  
taken it off we will not be

found naked. <sup>4</sup> For while we  
are still in this tent, we groan  
under our burden, because we  
wish not to be unclothed but  
to be further clothed, so that  
what is mortal may be  
swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup> He who  
has prepared us for this very  
thing is God, who has given us  
the Spirit as a guarantee.

<sup>6</sup> So we are always  
confident; even though we  
know that while we are at  
home in the body we are away  
from the Lord— <sup>7</sup> for we walk  
by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> Yes, we  
do have confidence, and we  
would rather be away from  
the body and at home with  
the Lord. <sup>9</sup> So whether we are  
at home or away, we make it  
our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup> For  
all of us must appear before  
the judgment seat of Christ, so  
that each may receive  
recompense for what has  
been done in the body,  
whether good or evil.

## Psalms 45:1-6 (NRSV)

### *Ode for a Royal Wedding*

To the leader: according to Lilies. Of  
the Korahites. A Maskil. A love song.

<sup>1</sup> My heart overflows with a  
goodly theme;

I address my verses to  
the king;  
my tongue is like the pen  
of a ready scribe.

<sup>2</sup> You are the most  
handsome of men;  
grace is poured upon  
your lips;  
therefore God has  
blessed you forever.

<sup>3</sup> Gird your sword on your  
thigh, O mighty one,  
in your glory and  
majesty.

<sup>4</sup> In your majesty ride on  
victoriously  
for the cause of truth  
and to defend the  
right;

let your right hand teach  
you dread deeds.

<sup>5</sup> Your arrows are sharp  
in the heart of the king's  
enemies;  
the peoples fall under  
you.

<sup>6</sup> Your throne, O God,  
endures forever and  
ever.

Your royal scepter is a  
scepter of equity;

**Proverbs 14:15–16** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> The simple believe  
everything,

but the clever consider  
their steps.

<sup>16</sup> The wise are cautious and  
turn away from evil,  
but the fool throws off  
restraint and is  
careless.

## May 2



**Job 40:1-41:34** (NRSV)

And the LORD said to Job:

<sup>2</sup> “Shall a faultfinder  
contend with the  
Almighty?  
Anyone who argues with  
God must respond.”

*Job's Response to God*

<sup>3</sup> Then Job answered the  
LORD:

<sup>4</sup> “See, I am of small  
account; what shall I  
answer you?

I lay my hand on my  
mouth.

<sup>5</sup> I have spoken once, and I  
will not answer;



twice, but will proceed  
no further.”

*God’s Challenge to Job*

<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD answered  
Job out of the whirlwind:  
<sup>7</sup> “Gird up your loins like a  
man;  
I will question you, and  
you declare to me.  
<sup>8</sup> Will you even put me in  
the wrong?  
Will you condemn me  
that you may be  
justified?  
<sup>9</sup> Have you an arm like God,  
and can you thunder  
with a voice like his?  
<sup>10</sup> “Deck yourself with  
majesty and dignity;  
clothe yourself with glory  
and splendor.  
<sup>11</sup> Pour out the overflowings  
of your anger,  
and look on all who are  
proud, and abase  
them.  
<sup>12</sup> Look on all who are proud,  
and bring them low;  
tread down the wicked  
where they stand.  
<sup>13</sup> Hide them all in the dust  
together;  
bind their faces in the  
world below.

<sup>14</sup> Then I will also  
acknowledge to you  
that your own right hand  
can give you victory.  
<sup>15</sup> “Look at Behemoth,  
which I made just as I  
made you;  
it eats grass like an ox.  
<sup>16</sup> Its strength is in its loins,  
and its power in the  
muscles of its belly.  
<sup>17</sup> It makes its tail stiff like a  
cedar;  
the sinews of its thighs  
are knit together.  
<sup>18</sup> Its bones are tubes of  
bronze,  
its limbs like bars of iron.  
<sup>19</sup> “It is the first of the great  
acts of God—  
only its Maker can  
approach it with the  
sword.  
<sup>20</sup> For the mountains yield  
food for it  
where all the wild  
animals play.  
<sup>21</sup> Under the lotus plants it  
lies,  
in the covert of the reeds  
and in the marsh.  
<sup>22</sup> The lotus trees cover it for  
shade;  
the willows of the wadi  
surround it.

23 Even if the river is  
turbulent, it is not  
frightened;  
it is confident though  
Jordan rushes against  
its mouth.  
24 Can one take it with hooks  
or pierce its nose with a  
snare?

**41** “Can you draw out  
Leviathan with a  
fishhook,  
or press down its tongue  
with a cord?  
2 Can you put a rope in its  
nose,  
or pierce its jaw with a  
hook?  
3 Will it make many  
supplications to you?  
Will it speak soft words  
to you?  
4 Will it make a covenant  
with you  
to be taken as your  
servant forever?  
5 Will you play with it as  
with a bird,  
or will you put it on leash  
for your girls?  
6 Will traders bargain over  
it?  
Will they divide it up  
among the merchants?

7 Can you fill its skin with  
harpoons,  
or its head with fishing  
spears?  
8 Lay hands on it;  
think of the battle; you  
will not do it again!  
9 Any hope of capturing it  
will be disappointed;  
were not even the gods  
overwhelmed at the  
sight of it?  
10 No one is so fierce as to  
dare to stir it up.  
Who can stand before it?  
11 Who can confront it and  
be safe?  
—under the whole  
heaven, who?  
12 “I will not keep silence  
concerning its limbs,  
or its mighty strength, or  
its splendid frame.  
13 Who can strip off its outer  
garment?  
Who can penetrate its  
double coat of mail?  
14 Who can open the doors of  
its face?  
There is terror all around  
its teeth.  
15 Its back is made of shields  
in rows,  
shut up closely as with a  
seal.

- 16 One is so near to another  
that no air can come  
between them.
- 17 They are joined one to  
another;  
they clasp each other  
and cannot be  
separated.
- 18 Its sneezes flash forth light,  
and its eyes are like the  
eyelids of the dawn.
- 19 From its mouth go flaming  
torches;  
sparks of fire leap out.
- 20 Out of its nostrils comes  
smoke,  
as from a boiling pot and  
burning rushes.
- 21 Its breath kindles coals,  
and a flame comes out of  
its mouth.
- 22 In its neck abides strength,  
and terror dances before  
it.
- 23 The folds of its flesh cling  
together;  
it is firmly cast and  
immovable.
- 24 Its heart is as hard as  
stone,  
as hard as the lower  
millstone.
- 25 When it raises itself up the  
gods are afraid;
- at the crashing they are  
beside themselves.
- 26 Though the sword reaches  
it, it does not avail,  
nor does the spear, the  
dart, or the javelin.
- 27 It counts iron as straw,  
and bronze as rotten  
wood.
- 28 The arrow cannot make it  
flee;  
slingstones, for it, are  
turned to chaff.
- 29 Clubs are counted as chaff;  
it laughs at the rattle of  
javelins.
- 30 Its underparts are like  
sharp potsherds;  
it spreads itself like a  
threshing sledge on the  
mire.
- 31 It makes the deep boil like  
a pot;  
it makes the sea like a  
pot of ointment.
- 32 It leaves a shining wake  
behind it;  
one would think the  
deep to be white-  
haired.
- 33 On earth it has no equal,  
a creature without fear.
- 34 It surveys everything that  
is lofty;

it is king over all that are proud.”

**2 Corinthians 5:11-14** (NRSV)  
*The Ministry of Reconciliation*

<sup>11</sup>Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. <sup>12</sup>We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. <sup>13</sup>For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. <sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died.

**Psalms 45:7-17** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> you love righteousness and hate wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;

<sup>8</sup> your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia. From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad; <sup>9</sup> daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor; at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir. <sup>10</sup> Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house, <sup>11</sup> and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him; <sup>12</sup> the people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the people <sup>13</sup> with all kinds of wealth. The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes; <sup>14</sup> in many-colored robes she is led to the king; behind her the virgins, her companions, follow.

15 With joy and gladness they  
are led along  
as they enter the palace  
of the king.  
16 In the place of ancestors  
you, O king, shall have  
sons;  
you will make them  
princes in all the earth.  
17 I will cause your name to  
be celebrated in all  
generations;  
therefore the peoples  
will praise you forever  
and ever.

**Proverbs 14:17–19** (NRSV)

17 One who is quick-  
tempered acts  
foolishly,  
and the schemer is  
hated.  
18 The simple are adorned  
with folly,  
but the clever are  
crowned with  
knowledge.  
19 The evil bow down before  
the good,  
the wicked at the gates of the  
righteous.

## May 3



**Job 42:1-17** (NRSV)

*Job Is Humbled and Satisfied*

**42** Then Job answered the

LORD:

2 “I know that you can do all  
things,  
and that no purpose of  
yours can be thwarted.

3 ‘Who is this that hides  
counsel without  
knowledge?’

Therefore I have uttered  
what I did not  
understand,  
things too wonderful for  
me, which I did not  
know.

4 ‘Hear, and I will speak;  
I will question you, and  
you declare to me.’

5 I had heard of you by the  
hearing of the ear,  
but now my eye sees  
you;

6 therefore I despise myself,  
and repent in dust and  
ashes.”

*Job’s Friends Are Humiliated*

7 After the LORD had  
spoken these words to Job,

the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends; for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.<sup>8</sup> Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly; for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has done."<sup>9</sup> So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the LORD had told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer.

### *Job's Fortunes*

#### *Are Restored Twofold*

<sup>10</sup> And the LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he had prayed for his friends; and the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

<sup>11</sup> Then there came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and they ate bread with him in

his house; they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him; and each of them gave him a piece of money and a gold ring.

<sup>12</sup> The LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand donkeys.<sup>13</sup> He also had seven sons and three daughters.

<sup>14</sup> He named the first Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch.<sup>15</sup> In all the land there were no women so beautiful as Job's daughters; and their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers.

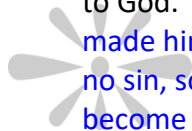
<sup>16</sup> After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children, and his children's children, four generations.<sup>17</sup> And Job died, old and full of days.

### **2 Corinthians 5:15-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> And he [Christ] died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.



<sup>16</sup> From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup> So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. <sup>20</sup> So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> **For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**



**Psalms 46:1-7 (NRSV)**  
*God's Defense of His City and People*

To the leader. Of the Korahites.  
 According to Alamoth. A Song.

<sup>1</sup> **God is our refuge and strength,  
 a very present help in trouble.**

<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear,  
 though the earth should change,  
 though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam,  
 though the mountains tremble with its tumult. *Selah*

<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
 the holy habitation of the Most High.

<sup>5</sup> God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
 God will help it when the morning dawns.

<sup>6</sup> The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter;  
 he utters his voice, the earth melts.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD of hosts is with us;  
 the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

**Proverbs 14:20–21** (NRSV)

- <sup>20</sup> The poor are disliked even  
by their neighbors,  
but the rich have many  
friends.
- <sup>21</sup> Those who despise their  
neighbors are sinners,  
but happy are those who  
are kind to the poor.

**May 4**



**Ecclesiastes 1:1–2:23** (NRSV)

*Reflections of a Royal  
Philosopher*

- 1** The words of the Teacher,  
the son of David, king in  
Jerusalem.
- <sup>2</sup> Vanity of vanities, says the  
Teacher,  
vanity of vanities! All is  
vanity.
- <sup>3</sup> What do people gain from  
all the toil  
at which they toil under  
the sun?
- <sup>4</sup> A generation goes, and a  
generation comes,  
but the earth remains  
forever.

- <sup>5</sup> The sun rises and the sun  
goes down,  
and hurries to the place  
where it rises.
- <sup>6</sup> The wind blows to the  
south,  
and goes around to the  
north;  
round and round goes the  
wind,  
and on its circuits the  
wind returns.
- <sup>7</sup> All streams run to the sea,  
but the sea is not full;  
to the place where the  
streams flow,  
there they continue to  
flow.
- <sup>8</sup> All things are wearisome;  
more than one can  
express;  
the eye is not satisfied  
with seeing,  
or the ear filled with  
hearing.
- <sup>9</sup> What has been is what will  
be,  
and what has been done  
is what will be done;  
there is nothing new  
under the sun.
- <sup>10</sup> Is there a thing of which it  
is said,  
“See, this is new”?  
It has already been,



in the ages before us.  
<sup>11</sup> The people of long ago are  
not remembered,  
nor will there be any  
remembrance  
of people yet to come  
by those who come after  
them.

*The Futility of Seeking Wisdom*

<sup>12</sup> I, the Teacher, when king  
over Israel in Jerusalem,  
<sup>13</sup> applied my mind to seek and  
to search out by wisdom all  
that is done under heaven; it is  
an unhappy business that God  
has given to human beings to  
be busy with. <sup>14</sup> I saw all the  
deeds that are done under the  
sun; and see, all is vanity and a  
chasing after wind.

<sup>15</sup> What is crooked cannot be  
made straight,  
and what is lacking  
cannot be counted.

<sup>16</sup> I said to myself, "I have  
acquired great wisdom,  
surpassing all who were over  
Jerusalem before me; and my  
mind has had great experience  
of wisdom and knowledge."

<sup>17</sup> And I applied my mind to  
know wisdom and to know  
madness and folly. I perceived

that this also is but a chasing  
after wind.

<sup>18</sup> For in much wisdom is  
much vexation,  
and those who increase  
knowledge increase  
sorrow.

*The Futility of Self-Indulgence*

(Cp 1 Kings 4:20–28)

**2** I said to myself, "Come now,  
I will make a test of pleasure;  
enjoy yourself." But again, this  
also was vanity. <sup>2</sup> I said of  
laughter, "It is mad," and of  
pleasure, "What use is it?" <sup>3</sup> I  
searched with my mind how to  
cheer my body with wine—my  
mind still guiding me with  
wisdom—and how to lay hold  
on folly, until I might see what  
was good for mortals to do  
under heaven during the few  
days of their life. <sup>4</sup> I made  
great works; I built houses and  
planted vineyards for myself;  
<sup>5</sup> I made myself gardens and  
parks, and planted in them all  
kinds of fruit trees. <sup>6</sup> I made  
myself pools from which to  
water the forest of growing  
trees. <sup>7</sup> I bought male and  
female slaves, and had slaves  
who were born in my house; I  
also had great possessions of

herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and of the provinces; I got singers, both men and women, and delights of the flesh, and many concubines.

<sup>9</sup> So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me.

<sup>10</sup> Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. <sup>11</sup> Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and again, all was vanity and a chasing after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

*Wisdom and Joy Given to One  
Who Pleases God*

<sup>12</sup> So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly; for what can the one do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done. <sup>13</sup> Then I saw that

wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.

<sup>14</sup> The wise have eyes in their head,  
but fools walk in darkness.

Yet I perceived that the same fate befalls all of them.

<sup>15</sup> Then I said to myself, "What happens to the fool will happen to me also; why then have I been so very wise?"

And I said to myself that this also is vanity. <sup>16</sup> For there is no enduring remembrance of the wise or of fools, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How can the wise die just like fools?

<sup>17</sup> So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

<sup>18</sup> I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me

<sup>19</sup> —and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. <sup>20</sup> So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil

of my labors under the sun,  
<sup>21</sup> because sometimes one  
who has toiled with wisdom  
and knowledge and skill must  
leave all to be enjoyed by  
another who did not toil for it.  
This also is vanity and a great  
evil. <sup>22</sup> What do mortals get  
from all the toil and strain with  
which they toil under the sun?  
<sup>23</sup> For all their days are full of  
pain, and their work is a  
vexation; even at night their  
minds do not rest. This also is  
vanity.

## 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NRSV)

**6** As we work together with  
him, we urge you also not to  
accept the grace of God in  
vain. <sup>2</sup> For he says,  
“At an acceptable time I  
have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation  
I have helped you.”  
See, now is the acceptable  
time; see, now is the day of  
salvation!

## Psalms 46:8-11 (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Come, behold the works of  
the LORD;  
see what desolations he  
has brought on the  
earth.

<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to  
the end of the earth;  
he breaks the bow, and  
shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with  
fire.  
<sup>10</sup> “Be still, and know that I  
am God!  
I am exalted among the  
nations,  
I am exalted in the  
earth.”  
<sup>11</sup> The LORD of hosts is with  
us;  
the God of Jacob is our  
refuge. *Selah*

## Proverbs 14:22-24 (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Do they not err that plan  
evil?  
Those who plan good  
find loyalty and  
faithfulness.  
<sup>23</sup> In all toil there is profit,  
but mere talk leads only  
to poverty.  
<sup>24</sup> The crown of the wise is  
their wisdom,  
but folly is the garland of  
fools.

# May 5



## Ecclesiastes 2:24–3:22 (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup>There is nothing better for mortals than to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in their toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God; <sup>25</sup>for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? <sup>26</sup>For to the one who pleases him God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he gives the work of gathering and heaping, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.

*Everything Has Its Time*

**3** For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

- <sup>2</sup> a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
<sup>3</sup> a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
<sup>4</sup> a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

- a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
<sup>5</sup> a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
<sup>6</sup> a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
<sup>7</sup> a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
<sup>8</sup> a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.

### *The God-Given Task*

<sup>9</sup>What gain have the workers from their toil? <sup>10</sup>I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. <sup>11</sup>He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. <sup>12</sup>I know that there is nothing better for them than to be

happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; <sup>13</sup> moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. <sup>14</sup> I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. <sup>15</sup> That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.

*Judgment and the Future  
Belong to God*

<sup>16</sup> Moreover I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, wickedness was there as well. <sup>17</sup> I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work. <sup>18</sup> I said in my heart with regard to human beings that God is testing them to show that they are but animals. <sup>19</sup> For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the

other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity. <sup>20</sup> All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. <sup>21</sup> Who knows whether the human spirit goes upward and the spirit of animals goes downward to the earth? <sup>22</sup> So I saw that there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their work, for that is their lot; who can bring them to see what will be after them?

**Corinthians 6:3-13** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup> but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup> beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup> by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup> truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right

hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup> in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup> as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup> as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. <sup>11</sup> We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. <sup>12</sup> There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. <sup>13</sup> In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

### **Psalms 47:1-7 (NRSV)**

*God's Rule over the Nations*  
To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
shout to God with loud songs of joy.  
<sup>2</sup> For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.  
<sup>3</sup> He subdued peoples under us,

and nations under our feet.  
<sup>4</sup> He chose our heritage for us,  
the pride of Jacob whom he loves. *Selah*  
<sup>5</sup> God has gone up with a shout,  
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.  
<sup>6</sup> Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
sing praises to our King, sing praises.  
<sup>7</sup> For God is the king of all the earth;  
sing praises with a psalm.

### **Proverbs 14:25 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> A truthful witness saves lives,  
but one who utters lies is a betrayer.

## **May 6**



### **Ecclesiastes 4:1–5:9 (NRSV)**

Again I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the

oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them. <sup>2</sup> And I thought the dead, who have already died, more fortunate than the living, who are still alive; <sup>3</sup> but better than both is the one who has not yet been, and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

<sup>4</sup> Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from one person's envy of another. This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.

<sup>5</sup> Fools fold their hands and consume their own flesh.

<sup>6</sup> Better is a handful with quiet than two handfuls with toil, and a chasing after wind.

<sup>7</sup> Again, I saw vanity under the sun: <sup>8</sup> the case of solitary individuals, without sons or brothers; yet there is no end to all their toil, and their eyes are never satisfied with riches. "For whom am I toiling," they ask, "and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.

### *The Value of a Friend*

<sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. <sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. <sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

<sup>13</sup> Better is a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king, who will no longer take advice. <sup>14</sup> One can indeed come out of prison to reign, even though born poor in the kingdom. <sup>15</sup> I saw all the living who, moving about under the sun, follow that youth who replaced the king; <sup>16</sup> there was no end to all those people whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a chasing after wind.

### *Reverence, Humility, and Contentment*

**5** Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to

draw near to listen is better than the sacrifice offered by fools; for they do not know how to keep from doing evil.<sup>2</sup> Never be rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be quick to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few.

<sup>3</sup> For dreams come with many cares, and a fool's voice with many words.

<sup>4</sup> When you make a vow to God, do not delay fulfilling it; for he has no pleasure in fools. Fulfill what you vow.<sup>5</sup> It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not fulfill it.<sup>6</sup> Do not let your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake; why should God be angry at your words, and destroy the work of your hands?

<sup>7</sup> With many dreams come vanities and a multitude of words; but fear God.

<sup>8</sup> If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and right, do not be amazed at the matter; for the high official is

watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them.<sup>9</sup> But all things considered, this is an advantage for a land: a king for a plowed field.

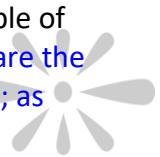
**Corinthians 6:14-7:1** (NRSV)

*The Temple of the Living God*

<sup>14</sup> Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness?<sup>15</sup> What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?<sup>16</sup> What agreement has the temple of God with idols? **For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,**

**“I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean;





<sup>18</sup> then I will welcome you,  
and I will be your father,  
and you shall be my sons  
and daughters,  
says the Lord Almighty.”

**Psalms 47:8-9** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> God is king over the  
nations;  
God sits on his holy  
throne.  
<sup>9</sup> The princes of the peoples  
gather  
as the people of the God  
of Abraham.  
For the shields of the earth  
belong to God;  
he is highly exalted.

**Proverbs 14:26-27** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> In the fear of the LORD one  
has strong confidence,  
and one's children will  
have a refuge.

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the LORD is a  
fountain of life,  
so that one may avoid  
the snares of death.

## May 7



**Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:12** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> The lover of money will  
not be satisfied with money;  
nor the lover of wealth, with  
gain. This also is vanity.

<sup>11</sup> When goods increase,  
those who eat them increase;  
and what gain has their owner  
but to see them with his eyes?

<sup>12</sup> Sweet is the sleep of  
laborers, whether they eat  
little or much; but the surfeit  
of the rich will not let them  
sleep.

<sup>13</sup> There is a grievous ill  
that I have seen under the  
sun: riches were kept by their  
owners to their hurt, <sup>14</sup> and  
those riches were lost in a bad  
venture; though they are  
parents of children, they have  
nothing in their hands. <sup>15</sup> As  
they came from their mother's  
womb, so they shall go again,  
naked as they came; they shall  
take nothing for their toil,  
which they may carry away  
with their hands. <sup>16</sup> This also is  
a grievous ill: just as they  
came, so shall they go; and  
what gain do they have from  
toiling for the wind?

<sup>17</sup> Besides, all their days they eat in darkness, in much vexation and sickness and resentment.

<sup>18</sup> This is what I have seen to be good: it is fitting to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of the life God gives us; for this is our lot. <sup>19</sup> Likewise all to whom God gives wealth and possessions and whom he enables to enjoy them, and to accept their lot and find enjoyment in their toil—this is the gift of God. <sup>20</sup> For they will scarcely brood over the days of their lives, because God keeps them occupied with the joy of their hearts.

### *The Frustration of Desires*

**6** There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy upon humankind: <sup>2</sup> those to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that they lack nothing of all that they desire, yet God does not enable them to enjoy these things, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous ill. <sup>3</sup> A man may beget a hundred

children, and live many years; but however many are the days of his years, if he does not enjoy life's good things, or has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. <sup>4</sup> For it comes into vanity and goes into darkness, and in darkness its name is covered; <sup>5</sup> moreover it has not seen the sun or known anything; yet it finds rest rather than he. <sup>6</sup> Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to one place?

<sup>7</sup> All human toil is for the mouth, yet the appetite is not satisfied. <sup>8</sup> For what advantage have the wise over fools? And what do the poor have who know how to conduct themselves before the living? <sup>9</sup> Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of desire; this also is vanity and a chasing after wind.

<sup>10</sup> Whatever has come to be has already been named, and it is known what human beings are, and that they are not able to dispute with those who are stronger. <sup>11</sup> The more words, the more vanity, so how is one the better? <sup>12</sup> For

who knows what is good for mortals while they live the few days of their vain life, which they pass like a shadow? For who can tell them what will be after them under the sun?

**Corinthians 7:2-7 (NRSV)**

*Paul's Joy at the Church's  
Repentance*

<sup>2</sup> Make room in your hearts for us; we have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. <sup>3</sup> I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. <sup>4</sup> I often boast about you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with consolation; I am overjoyed in all our affliction.

<sup>5</sup> For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way—disputes without and fears within. <sup>6</sup> But God, who consoles the downcast, consoled us by the arrival of Titus, <sup>7</sup> and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was consoled about you, as he told

us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

**Psalm 48:1-8 (NRSV)**

*The Glory and Strength of Zion*

A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites.

- <sup>1</sup> Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. His holy mountain, <sup>2</sup> beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. <sup>3</sup> Within its citadels God has shown himself a sure defense. <sup>4</sup> Then the kings assembled, they came on together. <sup>5</sup> As soon as they saw it, they were astounded; they were in panic, they took to flight; <sup>6</sup> trembling took hold of them there, pains as of a woman in labor, <sup>7</sup> as when an east wind shatters the ships of Tarshish. <sup>8</sup> As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts,

in the city of our God,  
which God establishes  
forever. *Selah*

**Proverbs 14:28–29** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> The glory of a king is a  
multitude of people;  
without people a prince  
is ruined.

<sup>29</sup> Whoever is slow to anger  
has great  
understanding,  
but one who has a hasty  
temper exalts folly.

**May 8**



**Ecclesiastes 7:1–8:8** (NRSV)

*A Disillusioned View of Life*

**7** A good name is better  
than precious  
ointment,  
and the day of death,  
than the day of birth.

<sup>2</sup> It is better to go to the  
house of mourning  
than to go to the house  
of feasting;  
for this is the end of  
everyone,

and the living will lay it  
to heart.

<sup>3</sup> Sorrow is better than  
laughter,  
for by sadness of  
countenance the heart  
is made glad.

<sup>4</sup> The heart of the wise is in  
the house of mourning;  
but the heart of fools is  
in the house of mirth.

<sup>5</sup> It is better to hear the  
rebuke of the wise  
than to hear the song of  
fools.

<sup>6</sup> For like the crackling of  
thorns under a pot,  
so is the laughter of  
fools;  
this also is vanity.

<sup>7</sup> Surely oppression makes  
the wise foolish,  
and a bribe corrupts the  
heart.

<sup>8</sup> Better is the end of a thing  
than its beginning;  
the patient in spirit are  
better than the proud  
in spirit.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be quick to anger,  
for anger lodges in the  
bosom of fools.

<sup>10</sup> Do not say, “Why were the  
former days better  
than these?”

For it is not from wisdom  
that you ask this.

<sup>11</sup> Wisdom is as good as an  
inheritance,  
an advantage to those  
who see the sun.

<sup>12</sup> For the protection of  
wisdom is like the  
protection of money,  
and the advantage of  
knowledge is that  
wisdom gives life to  
the one who possesses  
it.

<sup>13</sup> Consider the work of God;  
who can make straight  
what he has made  
crooked?

<sup>14</sup> In the day of prosperity  
be joyful, and in the day of  
adversity consider; God has  
made the one as well as the  
other, so that mortals may not  
find out anything that will  
come after them.

### *The Riddles of Life*

<sup>15</sup> In my vain life I have  
seen everything; there are  
righteous people who perish in  
their righteousness, and there  
are wicked people who  
prolong their life in their  
evildoing. <sup>16</sup> Do not be too  
righteous, and do not act too

wise; why should you destroy  
yourself? <sup>17</sup> Do not be too  
wicked, and do not be a fool;  
why should you die before  
your time? <sup>18</sup> It is good that  
you should take hold of the  
one, without letting go of the  
other; for the one who fears  
God shall succeed with both.

<sup>19</sup> Wisdom gives strength  
to the wise more than ten  
rulers that are in a city.

<sup>20</sup> Surely there is no one on  
earth so righteous as to do  
good without ever sinning.

<sup>21</sup> Do not give heed to  
everything that people say, or  
you may hear your servant  
cursing you; <sup>22</sup> your heart  
knows that many times you  
have yourself cursed others.

<sup>23</sup> All this I have tested by  
wisdom; I said, "I will be wise,"  
but it was far from me. <sup>24</sup> That  
which is, is far off, and deep,  
very deep; who can find it  
out? <sup>25</sup> I turned my mind to  
know and to search out and to  
seek wisdom and the sum of  
things, and to know that  
wickedness is folly and that  
foolishness is madness. <sup>26</sup> I  
found more bitter than death  
the woman who is a trap,  
whose heart is snares and

nets, whose hands are fetters; one who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her.<sup>27</sup> See, this is what I found, says the Teacher, adding one thing to another to find the sum,<sup>28</sup> which my mind has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I have not found.<sup>29</sup> See, this alone I found, that God made human beings straightforward, but they have devised many schemes.

*Obey the King and Enjoy  
Yourself*

**8** Who is like the wise man?  
And who knows the  
interpretation of a  
thing?  
Wisdom makes one's face  
shine,  
and the hardness of  
one's countenance is  
changed.  
<sup>2</sup> Keep the king's command  
because of your sacred oath.  
<sup>3</sup> Do not be terrified; go from  
his presence, do not delay  
when the matter is  
unpleasant, for he does  
whatever he pleases.<sup>4</sup> For the

word of the king is powerful,  
and who can say to him,  
"What are you doing?"  
<sup>5</sup> Whoever obeys a command  
will meet no harm, and the  
wise mind will know the time  
and way.<sup>6</sup> For every matter  
has its time and way, although  
the troubles of mortals lie  
heavy upon them.<sup>7</sup> Indeed,  
they do not know what is to  
be, for who can tell them how  
it will be?<sup>8</sup> No one has power  
over the wind to restrain the  
wind, or power over the day of  
death; there is no discharge  
from the battle, nor does  
wickedness deliver those who  
practice it.

**Corinthians 7:8-10** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> For even if I made you sorry  
with my letter, I do not regret  
it (though I did regret it, for I  
see that I grieved you with  
that letter, though only  
briefly).<sup>9</sup> Now I rejoice, not  
because you were grieved, but  
because your grief led to  
repentance; for you felt a  
godly grief, so that you were  
not harmed in any way by us.  
<sup>10</sup> For godly grief produces a  
repentance that leads to  
salvation and brings no regret,

but worldly grief produces death.

**Psalms 48:9-14** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> We ponder your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple.

<sup>10</sup> Your name, O God, like your praise, reaches to the ends of the earth.

Your right hand is filled with victory.

<sup>11</sup> Let Mount Zion be glad, let the towns of Judah rejoice

because of your judgments.

<sup>12</sup> Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers,

<sup>13</sup> consider well its ramparts; go through its citadels, that you may tell the next generation

<sup>14</sup> that this is God, **our God forever and ever. He will be our guide forever.**

**Proverbs 14:30-31** (NRSV)

<sup>30</sup> A tranquil mind gives life to the flesh,

but passion makes the bones rot.

<sup>31</sup> Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him.

## May 9



**Ecclesiastes 8:9-9:18** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> All this I observed, applying my mind to all that is done under the sun, while one person exercises authority over another to the other's hurt.

*God's Ways Are Inscrutable*

<sup>10</sup> Then I saw the wicked buried; they used to go in and out of the holy place, and were praised in the city where they had done such things. This also is vanity. <sup>11</sup> Because sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the human heart is fully set to do

evil. <sup>12</sup> Though sinners do evil a hundred times and prolong their lives, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God, because they stand in fear before him, <sup>13</sup> but it will not be well with the wicked, neither will they prolong their days like a shadow, because they do not stand in fear before God.

<sup>14</sup> There is a vanity that takes place on earth, that there are righteous people who are treated according to the conduct of the wicked, and there are wicked people who are treated according to the conduct of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity. <sup>15</sup> So I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun.

<sup>16</sup> When I applied my mind to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on earth, how one's eyes see sleep neither day nor night, <sup>17</sup> then I saw all the work of God, that no one can find out

what is happening under the sun. However much they may toil in seeking, they will not find it out; even though those who are wise claim to know, they cannot find it out.

### *Take Life as It Comes*

**9** All this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God; whether it is love or hate one does not know. Everything that confronts them <sup>2</sup> is vanity, since the same fate comes to all, to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to those who sacrifice and those who do not sacrifice. As are the good, so are the sinners; those who swear are like those who shun an oath. <sup>3</sup> This is an evil in all that happens under the sun, that the same fate comes to everyone. Moreover, the hearts of all are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead. <sup>4</sup> But whoever is joined with all the living has hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.



<sup>5</sup> The living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no more reward, and even the memory of them is lost. <sup>6</sup> Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished; never again will they have any share in all that happens under the sun.

<sup>7</sup> Go, eat your bread with enjoyment, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has long ago approved what you do. <sup>8</sup> Let your garments always be white; do not let oil be lacking on your head. <sup>9</sup> Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that are given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. <sup>10</sup> Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your might; for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

<sup>11</sup> Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to the skillful; but time and chance happen to

them all. <sup>12</sup> For no one can anticipate the time of disaster. Like fish taken in a cruel net, and like birds caught in a snare, so mortals are snared at a time of calamity, when it suddenly falls upon them.

*Wisdom Superior to Folly*

<sup>13</sup> I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. <sup>14</sup> There was a little city with few people in it. A great king came against it and besieged it, building great siegeworks against it. <sup>15</sup> Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. <sup>16</sup> So I said, "Wisdom is better than might; yet the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heeded."

<sup>17</sup> The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouting of a ruler among fools.

<sup>18</sup> Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one bungler destroys much good.

**Corinthians 7:11-16** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves guiltless in the matter. <sup>12</sup> So although I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong, nor on account of the one who was wronged, but in order that your zeal for us might be made known to you before God. <sup>13</sup> In this we find comfort.

In addition to our own consolation, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his mind has been set at rest by all of you. <sup>14</sup> For if I have been somewhat boastful about you to him, I was not disgraced; but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved true as well. <sup>15</sup> And his heart goes out all the more to you, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. <sup>16</sup> I rejoice,

because I have complete confidence in you.

**Psalms 49:1-9** (NRSV)

*The Folly of Trust in Riches*

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

- 1 Hear this, all you peoples;  
give ear, all inhabitants  
of the world,
- 2 both low and high,  
rich and poor together.
- 3 My mouth shall speak  
wisdom;  
the meditation of my  
heart shall be  
understanding.
- 4 I will incline my ear to a  
proverb;  
I will solve my riddle to  
the music of the harp.
- 5 Why should I fear in times  
of trouble,  
when the iniquity of my  
persecutors surrounds  
me,
- 6 those who trust in their  
wealth  
and boast of the  
abundance of their  
riches?
- 7 Truly, no ransom avails for  
one's life,  
there is no price one can  
give to God for it.

8 For the ransom of life is  
costly,  
and can never suffice,  
9 that one should live on  
forever  
and never see the grave.

**Proverbs 14:32–33** (NRSV)

32 The wicked are  
overthrown by their  
evildoing,  
but the righteous find a  
refuge in their  
integrity.

33 Wisdom is at home in the  
mind of one who has  
understanding,  
but it is not known in the  
heart of fools.

**May 10**



**Ecclesiastes 10:1–11:10** (NRSV)  
*Miscellaneous Observations*

**10** Dead flies make the  
perfumer's ointment give off a  
foul odor;  
so a little folly outweighs  
wisdom and honor.

2 The heart of the wise  
inclines to the right,  
but the heart of a fool to  
the left.

3 Even when fools walk on  
the road, they lack  
sense,  
and show to everyone  
that they are fools.

4 If the anger of the ruler  
rises against you, do  
not leave your post,  
for calmness will undo  
great offenses.

5 There is an evil that I  
have seen under the sun, as  
great an error as if it  
proceeded from the ruler:  
6 folly is set in many high  
places, and the rich sit in a low  
place. 7 I have seen slaves on  
horseback, and princes  
walking on foot like slaves.

8 Whoever digs a pit will fall  
into it;  
and whoever breaks  
through a wall will be  
bitten by a snake.

9 Whoever quarries stones  
will be hurt by them;  
and whoever splits logs  
will be endangered by  
them.

10 If the iron is blunt, and one  
does not whet the  
edge,  
then more strength must  
be exerted;  
but wisdom helps one to  
succeed.

11 If the snake bites before it  
is charmed,  
there is no advantage in  
a charmer.

12 Words spoken by the wise  
bring them favor,  
but the lips of fools  
consume them.

13 The words of their mouths  
begin in foolishness,  
and their talk ends in  
wicked madness;  
14 yet fools talk on and on.  
No one knows what is to  
happen,  
and who can tell anyone  
what the future holds?

15 The toil of fools wears  
them out,  
for they do not even  
know the way to town.

16 Alas for you, O land, when  
your king is a servant,  
and your princes feast in  
the morning!

17 Happy are you, O land,  
when your king is a  
nobleman,

and your princes feast at  
the proper time—  
for strength, and not for  
drunkenness!

18 Through sloth the roof  
sinks in,  
and through indolence  
the house leaks.

19 Feasts are made for  
laughter;  
wine gladdens life,  
and money meets every  
need.

20 Do not curse the king,  
even in your thoughts,  
or curse the rich, even in  
your bedroom;  
for a bird of the air may  
carry your voice,  
or some winged creature  
tell the matter.

*The Value of Diligence*

**11** Send out your bread  
upon the waters,  
for after many days you  
will get it back.

2 Divide your means seven  
ways, or even eight,  
for you do not know  
what disaster may  
happen on earth.

3 When clouds are full,  
they empty rain on the  
earth;

whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie.

<sup>4</sup> Whoever observes the wind will not sow; and whoever regards the clouds will not reap.

<sup>5</sup> Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother's womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything.

<sup>6</sup> In the morning sow your seed, and at evening do not let your hands be idle; for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.

#### *Youth and Old Age*

<sup>7</sup> Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.

<sup>8</sup> Even those who live many years should rejoice in them all; yet let them remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

<sup>9</sup> Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the

days of your youth. Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

<sup>10</sup> Banish anxiety from your mind, and put away pain from your body; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

#### **Corinthians 8:1-9** (NRSV)

##### *Encouragement to Be Generous*

**8** We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; <sup>2</sup> for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. <sup>3</sup> For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, <sup>4</sup> begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints— <sup>5</sup> and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, <sup>6</sup> so that we might urge Titus

that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you. <sup>7</sup> Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.

<sup>8</sup> I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. <sup>9</sup> For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

**Psalms 49:10-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> When we look at the wise,  
they die;  
fool and dolt perish  
together  
and leave their wealth to  
others.

<sup>11</sup> Their graves are their  
homes forever,  
their dwelling places to  
all generations,  
though they named  
lands their own.

<sup>12</sup> Mortals cannot abide in  
their pomp;  
they are like the animals  
that perish.

<sup>13</sup> Such is the fate of the  
foolhardy,  
the end of those who are  
pleased with their lot.  
*Selah*

<sup>14</sup> Like sheep they are  
appointed for Sheol;  
Death shall be their  
shepherd;  
straight to the grave they  
descend,  
and their form shall  
waste away;  
Sheol shall be their  
home.

<sup>15</sup> But God will ransom my  
soul from the power of  
Sheol,  
for he will receive me.  
*Selah*

<sup>16</sup> Do not be afraid when  
some become rich,  
when the wealth of their  
houses increases.

<sup>17</sup> For when they die they will  
carry nothing away;  
their wealth will not go  
down after them.

<sup>18</sup> Though in their lifetime  
they count themselves  
happy

—for you are praised  
when you do well for  
yourself—

<sup>19</sup> they will go to the  
company of their  
ancestors,  
who will never again see  
the light.

<sup>20</sup> Mortals cannot abide in  
their pomp;  
they are like the animals  
that perish.

### **Proverbs 14:34–35 (NRSV)**

<sup>34</sup> Righteousness exalts a  
nation,  
but sin is a reproach to  
any people.

<sup>35</sup> A servant who deals wisely  
has the king's favor,  
but his wrath falls on one  
who acts shamefully.

## **May 11**



### **Ecclesiastes 12:1-14 (NRSV)**

Remember your creator in the  
days of your youth, before the  
days of trouble come, and the

years draw near when you will  
say, “I have no pleasure in  
them”; <sup>2</sup> before the sun and  
the light and the moon and  
the stars are darkened and the  
clouds return with the rain; <sup>3</sup> in  
the day when the guards of  
the house tremble, and the  
strong men are bent, and the  
women who grind cease  
working because they are few,  
and those who look through  
the windows see dimly; <sup>4</sup> when  
the doors on the street are  
shut, and the sound of the  
grinding is low, and one rises  
up at the sound of a bird, and  
all the daughters of song are  
brought low; <sup>5</sup> when one is  
afraid of heights, and terrors  
are in the road; the almond  
tree blossoms, the  
grasshopper drags itself along  
and desire fails; because all  
must go to their eternal home,  
and the mourners will go  
about the streets; <sup>6</sup> before the  
silver cord is snapped, and the  
golden bowl is broken, and the  
pitcher is broken at the  
fountain, and the wheel  
broken at the cistern, <sup>7</sup> and the  
dust returns to the earth as it  
was, and the breath returns to  
God who gave it. <sup>8</sup> Vanity of

vanities, says the Teacher; all is vanity.

### *Epilogue*

<sup>9</sup> Besides being wise, the Teacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs. <sup>10</sup> The Teacher sought to find pleasing words, and he wrote words of truth plainly.

<sup>11</sup> The sayings of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings that are given by one shepherd. <sup>12</sup> Of anything beyond these, my child, beware. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

<sup>13</sup> The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for that is the whole duty of everyone. <sup>14</sup> For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

### **Corinthians 8:10-15** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who

began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something— <sup>11</sup> now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. <sup>12</sup> For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. <sup>13</sup> I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between <sup>14</sup> your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance.

<sup>15</sup> As it is written,

“The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.”

### **Psalm 50:1-6** (NRSV)

#### *The Acceptable Sacrifice*

A Psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> The mighty one, God the LORD,  
speaks and summons the earth  
from the rising of the sun  
to its setting.



<sup>2</sup> Out of Zion, the perfection  
of beauty,  
God shines forth.  
<sup>3</sup> Our God comes and does  
not keep silence,  
before him is a  
devouring fire,  
and a mighty tempest all  
around him.  
<sup>4</sup> He calls to the heavens  
above  
and to the earth, that he  
may judge his people:  
<sup>5</sup> “Gather to me my faithful  
ones,  
who made a covenant  
with me by sacrifice!”  
<sup>6</sup> The heavens declare his  
righteousness,  
for God himself is judge.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 15:1–3 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> A soft answer turns away  
wrath,  
but a harsh word stirs up  
anger.  
<sup>2</sup> The tongue of the wise  
dispenses knowledge,  
but the mouths of fools  
pour out folly.  
<sup>3</sup> **The eyes of the LORD are in  
every place,  
keeping watch on the  
evil and the good.**

**May 12**



**Song of Solomon 1:1–2:17**  
(NRSV)

The Song of Songs,  
which is Solomon’s.  
*Colloquy of Bride and Friends*  
<sup>2</sup> Let him kiss me with the  
kisses of his mouth!  
For your love is better than  
wine,  
<sup>3</sup> your anointing oils are  
fragrant,  
your name is perfume  
poured out;  
therefore the maidens  
love you.  
<sup>4</sup> Draw me after you, let us  
make haste.  
The king has brought me  
into his chambers.  
We will exult and rejoice in  
you;  
we will extol your love  
more than wine;  
rightly do they love you.  
<sup>5</sup> I am black and beautiful,  
O daughters of  
Jerusalem,  
like the tents of Kedar,  
like the curtains of  
Solomon.  
<sup>6</sup> Do not gaze at me because  
I am dark,

because the sun has  
gazed on me.

My mother's sons were  
angry with me;  
they made me keeper of  
the vineyards,  
but my own vineyard I  
have not kept!

7 Tell me, you whom my  
soul loves,  
where you pasture your  
flock,  
where you make it lie  
down at noon;  
for why should I be like  
one who is veiled  
beside the flocks of your  
companions?

8 If you do not know,  
O fairest among women,  
follow the tracks of the  
flock,  
and pasture your kids  
beside the shepherds'  
tents.

*Colloquy of Bridegroom,  
Friends, and Bride*

9 I compare you, my love,  
to a mare among  
Pharaoh's chariots.

10 Your cheeks are comely  
with ornaments,  
your neck with strings of  
jewels.

11 We will make you  
ornaments of gold,  
studded with silver.

12 While the king was on his  
couch,  
my nard gave forth its  
fragrance.

13 My beloved is to me a bag  
of myrrh  
that lies between my  
breasts.

14 My beloved is to me a  
cluster of henna  
blossoms  
in the vineyards of En-  
gedi.

15 Ah, you are beautiful, my  
love;  
ah, you are beautiful;  
your eyes are doves.

16 Ah, you are beautiful, my  
beloved,  
truly lovely.

Our couch is green;  
17 the beams of our house  
are cedar,  
our rafters are pine.

**2** I am a rose of Sharon,  
a lily of the valleys.

2 As a lily among brambles,  
so is my love among  
maidens.

3 As an apple tree among  
the trees of the wood,

so is my beloved among  
young men.

With great delight I sat in  
his shadow,  
and his fruit was sweet  
to my taste.

4 He brought me to the  
banqueting house,  
and his intention toward  
me was love.

5 Sustain me with raisins,  
refresh me with apples;  
for I am faint with love.

6 O that his left hand were  
under my head,  
and that his right hand  
embraced me!

7 I adjure you, O daughters  
of Jerusalem,  
by the gazelles or the  
wild does:

do not stir up or awaken  
love  
until it is ready!

*Springtime Rhapsody*

8 The voice of my beloved!  
Look, he comes,  
leaping upon the  
mountains,  
bounding over the hills.

9 My beloved is like a gazelle  
or a young stag.  
Look, there he stands  
behind our wall,

gazing in at the windows,  
looking through the  
lattice.

10 My beloved speaks and  
says to me:

“Arise, my love, my fair  
one,  
and come away;

11 for now the winter is past,  
the rain is over and gone.

12 The flowers appear on the  
earth;

the time of singing has  
come,  
and the voice of the  
turtledove  
is heard in our land.

13 The fig tree puts forth its  
figs,

and the vines are in  
blossom;  
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away.

14 O my dove, in the clefts of  
the rock,

in the covert of the cliff,  
let me see your face,  
let me hear your voice;  
for your voice is sweet,  
and your face is lovely.

15 Catch us the foxes,  
the little foxes,  
that ruin the vineyards—

for our vineyards are in blossom.”

<sup>16</sup> My beloved is mine and I am his;  
he pastures his flock among the lilies.

<sup>17</sup> Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle or a young stag on the cleft mountains.

**Corinthians 8:16-20** (NRSV)

*Commendation of Titus*

<sup>16</sup> But thanks be to God who put in the heart of Titus the same eagerness for you that I myself have. <sup>17</sup> For he not only accepted our appeal, but since he is more eager than ever, he is going to you of his own accord. <sup>18</sup> With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his proclaiming the good news; <sup>19</sup> and not only that, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our goodwill. <sup>20</sup> We intend that no one should blame us about

this generous gift that we are administering,

**Psalms 50:7-23** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> “Hear, O my people, and I will speak,  
O Israel, I will testify against you.  
I am God, your God.  
<sup>8</sup> Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;  
your burnt offerings are continually before me.  
<sup>9</sup> I will not accept a bull from your house,  
or goats from your folds.  
<sup>10</sup> For every wild animal of the forest is mine,  
the cattle on a thousand hills.  
<sup>11</sup> I know all the birds of the air,  
and all that moves in the field is mine.  
<sup>12</sup> “If I were hungry, I would not tell you,  
for the world and all that is in it is mine.  
<sup>13</sup> Do I eat the flesh of bulls,  
or drink the blood of goats?  
<sup>14</sup> Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
and pay your vows to the Most High.

15 Call on me in the day of  
trouble;  
I will deliver you, and  
you shall glorify me.”

16 But to the wicked God  
says:  
“What right have you to  
recite my statutes,  
or take my covenant on  
your lips?

17 For you hate discipline,  
and you cast my words  
behind you.

18 You make friends with a  
thief when you see  
one,  
and you keep company  
with adulterers.

19 “You give your mouth free  
rein for evil,  
and your tongue frames  
deceit.

20 You sit and speak against  
your kin;  
you slander your own  
mother’s child.

21 These things you have  
done and I have been  
silent;  
you thought that I was  
one just like yourself.  
But now I rebuke you, and  
lay the charge before  
you.

22 “Mark this, then, you who  
forget God,  
or I will tear you apart,  
and there will be no  
one to deliver.

23 Those who bring  
thanksgiving as their  
sacrifice honor me;  
to those who go the right  
way  
I will show the salvation  
of God.”

#### **Proverbs 15:4 (NRSV)**

4 A gentle tongue is a tree of  
life,  
but perverseness in it  
breaks the spirit.

## **May 13**



#### **Song of Solomon 3:1–4:16 (NRSV)**

##### *Love’s Dream*

**3** Upon my bed at night  
I sought him whom my  
soul loves;  
I sought him, but found  
him not;

I called him, but he gave  
no answer.  
2 "I will rise now and go  
about the city,  
in the streets and in the  
squares;  
I will seek him whom my  
soul loves."  
I sought him, but found  
him not.  
3 The sentinels found me,  
as they went about in  
the city.  
"Have you seen him whom  
my soul loves?"  
4 Scarcely had I passed  
them,  
when I found him whom  
my soul loves.  
I held him, and would not  
let him go  
until I brought him into  
my mother's house,  
and into the chamber of  
her that conceived me.  
5 I adjure you, O daughters  
of Jerusalem,  
by the gazelles or the  
wild does:  
do not stir up or awaken  
love  
until it is ready!

*The Groom and His Party  
Approach*

6 What is that coming up  
from the wilderness,  
like a column of smoke,  
perfumed with myrrh and  
frankincense,  
with all the fragrant  
powders of the  
merchant?  
7 Look, it is the litter of  
Solomon!  
Around it are sixty mighty  
men  
of the mighty men of  
Israel,  
8 all equipped with swords  
and expert in war,  
each with his sword at his  
thigh  
because of alarms by  
night.  
9 King Solomon made  
himself a palanquin  
from the wood of  
Lebanon.  
10 He made its posts of silver,  
its back of gold, its seat  
of purple;  
its interior was inlaid with  
love.  
Daughters of Jerusalem,  
11 come out.  
Look, O daughters of Zion,  
at King Solomon,

at the crown with which  
his mother crowned  
him  
on the day of his  
wedding,  
on the day of the  
gladness of his heart.

*The Bride's Beauty Extolled*

**4** How beautiful you are,  
my love,  
how very beautiful!  
Your eyes are doves  
behind your veil.  
Your hair is like a flock of  
goats,  
moving down the slopes  
of Gilead.  
<sup>2</sup> Your teeth are like a flock  
of shorn ewes  
that have come up from  
the washing,  
all of which bear twins,  
and not one among them  
is bereaved.  
<sup>3</sup> Your lips are like a crimson  
thread,  
and your mouth is lovely.  
Your cheeks are like halves  
of a pomegranate  
behind your veil.  
<sup>4</sup> Your neck is like the tower  
of David,  
built in courses;

on it hang a thousand  
bucklers,  
all of them shields of  
warriors.  
<sup>5</sup> Your two breasts are like  
two fawns,  
twins of a gazelle,  
that feed among the  
lilies.  
<sup>6</sup> Until the day breathes  
and the shadows flee,  
I will hasten to the  
mountain of myrrh  
and the hill of  
frankincense.  
<sup>7</sup> You are altogether  
beautiful, my love;  
there is no flaw in you.  
<sup>8</sup> Come with me from  
Lebanon, my bride;  
come with me from  
Lebanon.  
Depart from the peak of  
Amana,  
from the peak of Senir  
and Hermon,  
from the dens of lions,  
from the mountains of  
leopards.  
<sup>9</sup> You have ravished my  
heart, my sister, my  
bride,  
you have ravished my  
heart with a glance of  
your eyes,

with one jewel of your  
necklace.  
10 How sweet is your love,  
my sister, my bride!  
how much better is your  
love than wine,  
and the fragrance of  
your oils than any  
spice!

11 Your lips distill nectar, my  
bride;  
honey and milk are  
under your tongue;  
the scent of your  
garments is like the  
scent of Lebanon.

12 A garden locked is my  
sister, my bride,  
a garden locked, a  
fountain sealed.

13 Your channel is an orchard  
of pomegranates  
with all choicest fruits,  
henna with nard,  
14 nard and saffron, calamus  
and cinnamon,  
with all trees of  
frankincense,  
myrrh and aloes,  
with all chief spices—

15 a garden fountain, a well  
of living water,  
and flowing streams  
from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O north wind,

and come, O south wind!  
Blow upon my garden  
that its fragrance may be  
wafted abroad.  
Let my beloved come to  
his garden,  
and eat its choicest  
fruits.

**Corinthians 8:21-24** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup>for we intend to do what is  
right not only in the Lord's  
sight but also in the sight of  
others. <sup>22</sup>And with them we  
are sending our brother whom  
we have often tested and  
found eager in many matters,  
but who is now more eager  
than ever because of his great  
confidence in you. <sup>23</sup>As for  
Titus, he is my partner and co-  
worker in your service; as for  
our brothers, they are  
messengers of the churches,  
the glory of Christ.

<sup>24</sup>Therefore openly before the  
churches, show them the  
proof of your love and of our  
reason for boasting about you.

**Psalm 51:1-9** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Cleansing and  
Pardon*

To the leader. A Psalm of David,  
when the prophet Nathan came to



him, after he had gone in to  
Bathsheba.

1 Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your  
steadfast love;  
according to your  
abundant mercy  
blot out my  
transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from  
my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my  
sin.

3 For I know my  
transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before  
me.

4 Against you, you alone,  
have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in  
your sight,  
so that you are justified in  
your sentence  
and blameless when you  
pass judgment.

5 Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my  
mother conceived me.

6 You desire truth in the  
inward being;  
therefore teach me  
wisdom in my secret  
heart.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and  
I shall be clean;

wash me, and I shall be  
whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and  
gladness;  
let the bones that you  
have crushed rejoice.  
9 Hide your face from my  
sins,  
and blot out all my  
iniquities.

**Proverbs 15:5–7 (NRSV)**

5 A fool despises a parent's  
instruction,  
but the one who heeds  
admonition is prudent.

6 In the house of the  
righteous there is  
much treasure,  
but trouble befalls the  
income of the wicked.

7 The lips of the wise spread  
knowledge; not so the  
minds of fools.

May 14



**Song of Solomon 5:1–6:13**  
(NRSV)

**5** I come to my garden, my  
sister, my bride;  
I gather my myrrh with  
my spice,  
I eat my honeycomb with  
my honey,  
I drink my wine with my  
milk.  
Eat, friends, drink,  
and be drunk with love.

*Another Dream*

<sup>2</sup> I slept, but my heart was  
awake.  
Listen! my beloved is  
knocking.  
“Open to me, my sister,  
my love,  
my dove, my perfect  
one;  
for my head is wet with  
dew,  
my locks with the drops  
of the night.”  
<sup>3</sup> I had put off my garment;  
how could I put it on  
again?  
I had bathed my feet;  
how could I soil them?

<sup>4</sup> My beloved thrust his  
hand into the opening,  
and my inmost being  
yearned for him.

<sup>5</sup> I arose to open to my  
beloved,  
and my hands dripped  
with myrrh,  
my fingers with liquid  
myrrh,  
upon the handles of the  
bolt.

<sup>6</sup> I opened to my beloved,  
but my beloved had  
turned and was gone.  
My soul failed me when he  
spoke.

I sought him, but did not  
find him;  
I called him, but he gave  
no answer.

<sup>7</sup> Making their rounds in the  
city  
the sentinels found me;  
they beat me, they  
wounded me,  
they took away my  
mantle,  
those sentinels of the  
walls.

<sup>8</sup> I adjure you, O daughters  
of Jerusalem,  
if you find my beloved,  
tell him this:  
I am faint with love.

*Colloquy of Friends  
and Bride*

9 What is your beloved more  
than another beloved,  
O fairest among women?  
What is your beloved more  
than another beloved,  
that you thus adjure us?  
10 My beloved is all radiant  
and ruddy,  
distinguished among ten  
thousand.  
11 His head is the finest gold;  
his locks are wavy,  
black as a raven.  
12 His eyes are like doves  
beside springs of water,  
bathed in milk,  
fitly set.  
13 His cheeks are like beds of  
spices,  
yielding fragrance.  
His lips are lilies,  
distilling liquid myrrh.  
14 His arms are rounded gold,  
set with jewels.  
His body is ivory work,  
encrusted with  
sapphires.  
15 His legs are alabaster  
columns,  
set upon bases of gold.  
His appearance is like  
Lebanon,  
choice as the cedars.

16 His speech is most sweet,  
and he is altogether  
desirable.  
This is my beloved and this  
is my friend,  
O daughters of  
Jerusalem.

**6** Where has your beloved  
gone,  
O fairest among women?  
Which way has your  
beloved turned,  
that we may seek him  
with you?  
2 My beloved has gone  
down to his garden,  
to the beds of spices,  
to pasture his flock in the  
gardens,  
and to gather lilies.  
3 I am my beloved's and my  
beloved is mine;  
he pastures his flock  
among the lilies.

*The Bride's Matchless Beauty*

4 You are beautiful as Tirzah,  
my love,  
comely as Jerusalem,  
terrible as an army with  
banners.  
5 Turn away your eyes from  
me,  
for they overwhelm me!

Your hair is like a flock of  
goats,  
moving down the slopes  
of Gilead.  
6 Your teeth are like a flock  
of ewes,  
that have come up from  
the washing;  
all of them bear twins,  
and not one among them  
is bereaved.  
7 Your cheeks are like halves  
of a pomegranate  
behind your veil.  
8 There are sixty queens and  
eighty concubines,  
and maidens without  
number.  
9 My dove, my perfect one,  
is the only one,  
the darling of her  
mother,  
flawless to her that bore  
her.  
The maidens saw her and  
called her happy;  
the queens and  
concubines also, and  
they praised her.  
10 “Who is this that looks  
forth like the dawn,  
fair as the moon, bright  
as the sun,  
terrible as an army with  
banners?”

11 I went down to the nut  
orchard,  
to look at the blossoms  
of the valley,  
to see whether the vines  
had budded,  
whether the  
pomegranates were in  
bloom.  
12 Before I was aware, my  
fancy set me  
in a chariot beside my  
prince.  
13 Return, return, O  
Shulammitte!  
Return, return, that we  
may look upon you.  
Why should you look upon  
the Shulammitte,  
as upon a dance before  
two armies?

**Corinthians 9:1-8 (NRSV)**  
*The Collection for  
Christians at Jerusalem*

**9** Now it is not necessary for  
me to write you about the  
ministry to the saints, <sup>2</sup>for I  
know your eagerness, which is  
the subject of my boasting  
about you to the people of  
Macedonia, saying that Achaia  
has been ready since last year;  
and your zeal has stirred up  
most of them. <sup>3</sup>But I am

sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be; <sup>4</sup> otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—in this undertaking. <sup>5</sup> So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion.

<sup>6</sup> The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup> Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> **And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.**

**Psalm 51:10-19 (NRSV)**

- <sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart,  
O God,  
and put a new and right  
spirit within me.
- <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from  
your presence,  
and do not take your  
holy spirit from me.
- <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of  
your salvation,  
and sustain in me a  
willing spirit.
- <sup>13</sup> Then I will teach  
transgressors your  
ways,  
and sinners will return to  
you.
- <sup>14</sup> Deliver me from  
bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing  
aloud of your  
deliverance.
- <sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will  
declare your praise.
- <sup>16</sup> For you have no delight in  
sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt  
offering, you would not  
be pleased.
- <sup>17</sup> The sacrifice acceptable to  
God is a broken spirit;

a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

- 18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,  
19 then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

**Proverbs 15:8–10 (NRSV)**

- 8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.  
9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but he loves the one who pursues righteousness.  
10 There is severe discipline for one who forsakes the way, but one who hates a rebuke will die.

## May 15



**Song of Solomon 7:1–8:14 (NRSV)**

*Expressions of Praise*

- 7 How graceful are your feet in sandals, O queenly maiden! Your rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of a master hand.  
2 Your navel is a rounded bowl that never lacks mixed wine. Your belly is a heap of wheat, encircled with lilies.  
3 Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.  
4 Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim. Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon, overlooking Damascus.  
5 Your head crowns you like Carmel,

and your flowing locks  
are like purple;  
a king is held captive in  
the tresses.  
6 How fair and pleasant you  
are,  
O loved one, delectable  
maiden!  
7 You are stately as a palm  
tree,  
and your breasts are like  
its clusters.  
8 I say I will climb the palm  
tree  
and lay hold of its  
branches.  
O may your breasts be like  
clusters of the vine,  
and the scent of your  
breath like apples,  
9 and your kisses like the  
best wine  
that goes down  
smoothly,  
gliding over lips and  
teeth.  
10 I am my beloved's,  
and his desire is for me.  
11 Come, my beloved,  
let us go forth into the  
fields,  
and lodge in the villages;  
12 let us go out early to the  
vineyards,

and see whether the  
vines have budded,  
whether the grape  
blossoms have opened  
and the pomegranates  
are in bloom.  
There I will give you my  
love.  
13 The mandrakes give forth  
fragrance,  
and over our doors are  
all choice fruits,  
new as well as old,  
which I have laid up for  
you, O my beloved.

**8** O that you were like a  
brother to me,  
who nursed at my  
mother's breast!  
If I met you outside, I  
would kiss you,  
and no one would  
despise me.  
2 I would lead you and bring  
you  
into the house of my  
mother,  
and into the chamber of  
the one who bore me.  
I would give you spiced  
wine to drink,  
the juice of my  
pomegranates.  
3 O that his left hand were  
under my head,

and that his right hand  
embraced me!

4 I adjure you, O daughters  
of Jerusalem,  
do not stir up or awaken  
love  
until it is ready!

*Homecoming*

5 Who is that coming up  
from the wilderness,  
leaning upon her  
beloved?  
Under the apple tree I  
awakened you.  
There your mother was in  
labor with you;  
there she who bore you  
was in labor.  
6 Set me as a seal upon your  
heart,  
as a seal upon your arm;  
for love is strong as death,  
passion fierce as the  
grave.  
Its flashes are flashes of  
fire,  
a raging flame.  
7 Many waters cannot  
quench love,  
neither can floods drown  
it.  
If one offered for love  
all the wealth of one's  
house,

it would be utterly  
scorned.

8 We have a little sister,  
and she has no breasts.  
What shall we do for our  
sister,  
on the day when she is  
spoken for?  
9 If she is a wall,  
we will build upon her a  
battlement of silver;  
but if she is a door,  
we will enclose her with  
boards of cedar.  
10 I was a wall,  
and my breasts were like  
towers;  
then I was in his eyes  
as one who brings peace.  
11 Solomon had a vineyard at  
Baal-hamon;  
he entrusted the  
vineyard to keepers;  
each one was to bring for  
its fruit a thousand  
pieces of silver.  
12 My vineyard, my very own,  
is for myself;  
you, O Solomon, may  
have the thousand,  
and the keepers of the  
fruit two hundred!  
13 O you who dwell in the  
gardens,



my companions are  
listening for your voice;  
let me hear it.

<sup>14</sup> Make haste, my beloved,  
and be like a gazelle  
or a young stag  
upon the mountains of  
spices!

**Corinthians 9:9-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> As it is written,  
“He scatters abroad, he  
gives to the poor;  
his righteousness  
endures forever.”

<sup>10</sup> He who supplies seed to the  
sower and bread for food will  
supply and multiply your seed  
for sowing and increase the  
harvest of your righteousness.

<sup>11</sup> You will be enriched in every  
way for your great generosity,  
which will produce  
thanksgiving to God through  
us; <sup>12</sup> for the rendering of this  
ministry not only supplies the  
needs of the saints but also  
overflows with many  
thanksgivings to God.

<sup>13</sup> Through the testing of this  
ministry you glorify God by  
your obedience to the  
confession of the gospel of  
Christ and by the generosity of  
your sharing with them and

with all others, <sup>14</sup> while they  
long for you and pray for you  
because of the surpassing  
grace of God that he has given  
you. <sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for  
his indescribable gift!

**Psalms 52:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Judgment on the Deceitful*

To the leader. A Maskil of David,  
when Doeg the Edomite came to  
Saul and said to him, “David has  
come to the house of Ahimelech.”

<sup>1</sup> Why do you boast, O  
mighty one,  
of mischief done against  
the godly?  
All day long <sup>2</sup> you are  
plotting destruction.  
Your tongue is like a sharp  
razor,  
you worker of treachery.  
<sup>3</sup> You love evil more than  
good,  
and lying more than  
speaking the truth.  
*Selah*  
<sup>4</sup> You love all words that  
devour,  
O deceitful tongue.  
<sup>5</sup> But God will break you  
down forever;  
he will snatch and tear  
you from your tent;

he will uproot you from  
the land of the living.

*Selah*

6 The righteous will see, and  
fear,  
and will laugh at the  
evildoer, saying,  
7 “See the one who would  
not take  
refuge in God,  
but trusted in abundant  
riches,  
and sought refuge in  
wealth!”

**Proverbs 15:11 (NRSV)**

11 **Sheol and Abaddon lie  
open before the LORD,  
how much more human  
hearts!**

**May 16**



**Isaiah 1:1–31 (NRSV)**

The vision of Isaiah son of  
Amoz, which he saw  
concerning Judah and  
Jerusalem in the days of  
Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and  
Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

*The Wickedness of Judah*

2 Hear, O heavens, and  
listen, O earth;  
for the LORD has spoken:  
I reared children and  
brought them up,  
but they have rebelled  
against me.  
3 The ox knows its owner,  
and the donkey its  
master’s crib;  
but Israel does not know,  
my people do not  
understand.  
4 Ah, sinful nation,  
people laden with  
iniquity,  
offspring who do evil,  
children who deal  
corruptly,  
who have forsaken the  
LORD,  
who have despised the  
Holy One of Israel,  
who are utterly  
estranged!  
5 Why do you seek further  
beatings?  
Why do you continue to  
rebel?  
The whole head is sick,  
and the whole heart  
faint.  
6 From the sole of the foot  
even to the head,

there is no soundness in  
it,  
but bruises and sores  
and bleeding wounds;  
they have not been  
drained, or bound up,  
or softened with oil.  
7 Your country lies desolate,  
your cities are burned  
with fire;  
in your very presence  
aliens devour your land;  
it is desolate, as  
overthrown by  
foreigners.  
8 And daughter Zion is left  
like a booth in a  
vineyard,  
like a shelter in a  
cucumber field,  
like a besieged city.  
9 If the LORD of hosts  
had not left us a few  
survivors,  
we would have been like  
Sodom,  
and become like  
Gomorrah.  
10 Hear the word of the LORD,  
you rulers of Sodom!  
Listen to the teaching of  
our God,  
you people of Gomorrah!

11 What to me is the  
multitude of your  
sacrifices?  
says the LORD;  
I have had enough of burnt  
offerings of rams  
and the fat of fed beasts;  
I do not delight in the  
blood of bulls,  
or of lambs, or of goats.  
12 When you come to appear  
before me,  
who asked this from your  
hand?  
Trample my courts no  
more;  
13 bringing offerings is futile;  
incense is an  
abomination to me.  
New moon and sabbath  
and calling of  
convocation—  
I cannot endure solemn  
assemblies with  
iniquity.  
14 Your new moons and your  
appointed festivals  
my soul hates;  
they have become a  
burden to me,  
I am weary of bearing  
them.  
15 When you stretch out your  
hands,

I will hide my eyes from  
you;  
even though you make  
many prayers,  
I will not listen;  
your hands are full of  
blood.  
16 Wash yourselves; make  
yourselves clean;  
remove the evil of your  
doings  
from before my eyes;  
cease to do evil,  
17 learn to do good;  
seek justice,  
rescue the oppressed,  
defend the orphan,  
plead for the widow.  
18 Come now, let us argue it  
out,  
says the LORD:  
though your sins are like  
scarlet,  
they shall be like snow;  
though they are red like  
crimson,  
they shall become like  
wool.  
19 If you are willing and  
obedient,  
you shall eat the good of  
the land;  
20 but if you refuse and rebel,  
you shall be devoured by  
the sword;

for the mouth of the  
LORD has spoken.

*The Degenerate City*  
21 How the faithful city  
has become a whore!  
She that was full of  
justice,  
righteousness lodged in  
her—  
but now murderers!  
22 Your silver has become  
dross,  
your wine is mixed with  
water.  
23 Your princes are rebels  
and companions of  
thieves.  
Everyone loves a bribe  
and runs after gifts.  
They do not defend the  
orphan,  
and the widow's cause  
does not come before  
them.  
24 Therefore says the  
Sovereign, the LORD of  
hosts, the Mighty One  
of Israel:  
Ah, I will pour out my  
wrath on my enemies,  
and avenge myself on my  
foes!  
25 I will turn my hand against  
you;

I will smelt away your  
dross as with lye  
and remove all your  
alloy.  
26 And I will restore your  
judges as at the first,  
and your counselors as  
at the beginning.  
Afterward you shall be  
called the city of  
righteousness,  
the faithful city.  
27 Zion shall be redeemed by  
justice,  
and those in her who  
repent, by  
righteousness.  
28 But rebels and sinners shall  
be destroyed together,  
and those who forsake  
the LORD shall be  
consumed.  
29 For you shall be ashamed  
of the oaks  
in which you delighted;  
and you shall blush for the  
gardens  
that you have chosen.  
30 For you shall be like an oak  
whose leaf withers,  
and like a garden  
without water.  
31 The strong shall become  
like tinder,

and their work like a  
spark;  
they and their work shall  
burn together,  
with no one to quench  
them.

**Corinthians 10:1-12** (NRSV)

*Paul Defends His Ministry*

**10** I myself, Paul, appeal to you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!—<sup>2</sup> I ask that when I am present I need not show boldness by daring to oppose those who think we are acting according to human standards.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards;<sup>4</sup> for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments<sup>5</sup> and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.<sup>6</sup> We are ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete.

<sup>7</sup> Look at what is before your eyes. If you are confident that you belong to Christ, remind yourself of this, that just as you belong to Christ, so also do we. <sup>8</sup> Now, even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it. <sup>9</sup> I do not want to seem as though I am trying to frighten you with my letters. <sup>10</sup> For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." <sup>11</sup> Let such people understand that what we say by letter when absent, we will also do when present.

<sup>12</sup> We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another, they do not show good sense.

**Psalms 52:8-9** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> But I am like a green olive tree  
in the house of God.

I trust in the steadfast love of God  
forever and ever.

<sup>9</sup> I will thank you forever,  
because of what you have done.

In the presence of the faithful

I will proclaim your name, for it is good.

**Proverbs 15:12-14** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Scoffers do not like to be rebuked;  
they will not go to the wise.

<sup>13</sup> A glad heart makes a cheerful countenance,  
but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.

<sup>14</sup> The mind of one who has understanding seeks knowledge,  
but the mouths of fools feed on folly.

# May 17



**Isaiah 2:1–22** (NRSV)

*The Future House of God*  
(*Mic 4:1–5*)

**2** The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> In days to come  
the mountain of the  
LORD's house  
shall be established as the  
highest of the  
mountains,  
and shall be raised above  
the hills;  
all the nations shall stream  
to it.

<sup>3</sup> Many peoples shall come  
and say,  
"Come, let us go up to the  
mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God  
of Jacob;  
that he may teach us his  
ways  
and that we may walk in  
his paths."

For out of Zion shall go  
forth instruction,  
and the word of the LORD  
from Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> He shall judge between the  
nations,

and shall arbitrate for  
many peoples;  
they shall beat their  
swords into  
plowshares,  
and their spears into  
pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up  
sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn  
war any more.

*Judgment Pronounced on  
Arrogance*

<sup>5</sup> O house of Jacob,  
come, let us walk  
in the light of the LORD!  
<sup>6</sup> For you have forsaken the  
ways of your people,  
O house of Jacob.  
Indeed they are full of  
diviners from the east  
and of soothsayers like  
the Philistines,  
and they clasp hands  
with foreigners.  
<sup>7</sup> Their land is filled with  
silver and gold,  
and there is no end to  
their treasures;  
their land is filled with  
horses,  
and there is no end to  
their chariots.

<p>8 Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.</p> <p>9 And so people are humbled, and everyone is brought low— do not forgive them!</p> <p>10 Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust from the terror of the LORD, and from the glory of his majesty.</p> <p>11 The haughty eyes of people shall be brought low, and the pride of everyone shall be humbled; and the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.</p> <p>12 For the LORD of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up and high;</p> <p>13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up;</p>	<p>and against all the oaks of Bashan;</p> <p>14 against all the high mountains, and against all the lofty hills;</p> <p>15 against every high tower, and against every fortified wall;</p> <p>16 against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all the beautiful craft.</p> <p>17 The haughtiness of people shall be humbled, and the pride of everyone shall be brought low; and the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.</p> <p>18 The idols shall utterly pass away.</p> <p>19 Enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from the terror of the LORD, and from the glory of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth.</p> <p>20 On that day people will throw away</p>
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to the moles and to the  
 bats  
 their idols of silver and  
 their idols of gold,  
 which they made for  
 themselves to worship,  
 21 to enter the caverns of the  
 rocks  
 and the clefts in the  
 crags,  
 from the terror of the  
 LORD,  
 and from the glory of his  
 majesty,  
 when he rises to terrify  
 the earth.  
 22 Turn away from mortals,  
 who have only breath in  
 their nostrils,  
 for of what account are  
 they?

**Corinthians 10:13-18** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup>We, however, will not boast  
 beyond limits, but will keep  
 within the field that God has  
 assigned to us, to reach out  
 even as far as you. <sup>14</sup>For we  
 were not overstepping our  
 limits when we reached you;  
 we were the first to come all  
 the way to you with the good  
 news of Christ. <sup>15</sup>We do not  
 boast beyond limits, that is, in  
 the labors of others; but our

hope is that, as your faith  
 increases, our sphere of action  
 among you may be greatly  
 enlarged, <sup>16</sup>so that we may  
 proclaim the good news in  
 lands beyond you, without  
 boasting of work already done  
 in someone else's sphere of  
 action. <sup>17</sup>"Let the one who  
 boasts, boast in the Lord."  
<sup>18</sup>For it is not those who  
 commend themselves that are  
 approved, but those whom  
 the Lord commends.

**Psalm 53:1-5** (NRSV)

*Denunciation of Godlessness*

*(Ps 14:1-7)*

To the leader: according to  
 Mahalath. A Maskil of David.

1 Fools say in their hearts,  
 "There is no God."  
 They are corrupt, they  
 commit abominable  
 acts;  
 there is no one who does  
 good.  
 2 God looks down from  
 heaven on humankind  
 to see if there are any  
 who are wise,  
 who seek after God.  
 3 They have all fallen away,  
 they are all alike  
 perverse;

there is no one who does  
good,  
no, not one.

4 Have they no knowledge,  
those evildoers,  
who eat up my people as  
they eat bread,  
and do not call upon  
God?

5 There they shall be in great  
terror,  
in terror such as has not  
been.

For God will scatter the  
bones of the ungodly;  
they will be put to  
shame, for God has  
rejected them.

### **Proverbs 15:15–17** (NRSV)

15 All the days of the poor are  
hard,  
but a cheerful heart has  
a continual feast.

16 Better is a little with the  
fear of the LORD  
than great treasure and  
trouble with it.

17 Better is a dinner of  
vegetables where love  
is  
than a fatted ox and  
hatred with it.

## **May 18**



### **Isaiah 3:1–4:6** (NRSV)

**3** For now the Sovereign,  
the LORD of hosts,  
is taking away from  
Jerusalem and from  
Judah  
support and staff—  
all support of bread,  
and all support of  
water—  
2 warrior and soldier,  
judge and prophet,  
diviner and elder,  
3 captain of fifty  
and dignitary,  
counselor and skillful  
magician  
and expert enchanter.  
4 And I will make boys their  
princes,  
and babes shall rule over  
them.  
5 The people will be  
oppressed,  
everyone by another  
and everyone by a  
neighbor;  
the youth will be insolent  
to the elder,  
and the base to the  
honorable.

6 Someone will even seize a  
relative,  
a member of the clan,  
saying,  
“You have a cloak;  
you shall be our leader,  
and this heap of ruins  
shall be under your rule.”

7 But the other will cry out  
on that day, saying,  
“I will not be a healer;  
in my house there is  
neither bread nor  
cloak;  
you shall not make me  
leader of the people.”

8 For Jerusalem has  
stumbled  
and Judah has fallen,  
because their speech and  
their deeds are against  
the LORD,  
defying his glorious  
presence.

9 The look on their faces  
bears witness against  
them;  
they proclaim their sin  
like Sodom,  
they do not hide it.  
Woe to them!  
For they have brought  
evil on themselves.

10 Tell the innocent how  
fortunate they are,

for they shall eat the  
fruit of their labors.

11 Woe to the guilty! How  
unfortunate they are,  
for what their hands  
have done shall be  
done to them.

12 My people—children are  
their oppressors,  
and women rule over  
them.

O my people, your leaders  
mislead you,  
and confuse the course  
of your paths.

13 The LORD rises to argue his  
case;  
he stands to judge the  
peoples.

14 The LORD enters into  
judgment  
with the elders and  
princes of his people:

It is you who have  
devoured the vineyard;  
the spoil of the poor is in  
your houses.

15 What do you mean by  
crushing my people,  
by grinding the face of  
the poor? says the Lord  
GOD of hosts.

16 The LORD said:  
Because the daughters of  
Zion are haughty

and walk with  
outstretched necks,  
glancing wantonly with  
their eyes,  
mincing along as they go,  
tinkling with their feet;  
<sup>17</sup> the Lord will afflict with  
scabs  
the heads of the  
daughters of Zion,  
and the LORD will lay bare  
their secret parts.

<sup>18</sup> In that day the Lord will  
take away the finery of the  
anklets, the headbands, and  
the crescents; <sup>19</sup> the pendants,  
the bracelets, and the scarfs;  
<sup>20</sup> the headdresses, the  
armlets, the sashes, the  
perfume boxes, and the  
amulets; <sup>21</sup> the signet rings and  
nose rings; <sup>22</sup> the festal robes,  
the mantles, the cloaks, and  
the handbags; <sup>23</sup> the garments  
of gauze, the linen garments,  
the turbans, and the veils.

<sup>24</sup> Instead of perfume there  
will be a stench;  
and instead of a sash, a  
rope;  
and instead of well-set  
hair, baldness;  
and instead of a rich  
robe, a binding of  
sackcloth;

instead of beauty,  
shame.

<sup>25</sup> Your men shall fall by the  
sword  
and your warriors in  
battle.

<sup>26</sup> And her gates shall lament  
and mourn;  
ravaged, she shall sit  
upon the ground.

**4** Seven women shall take  
hold of one man in that day,  
saying,

“We will eat our own  
bread and wear our  
own clothes;  
just let us be called by your  
name;  
take away our disgrace.”

*The Future Glory of the  
Survivors in Zion*

<sup>2</sup> On that day the branch of  
the LORD shall be beautiful and  
glorious, and the fruit of the  
land shall be the pride and  
glory of the survivors of Israel.

<sup>3</sup> Whoever is left in Zion and  
remains in Jerusalem will be  
called holy, everyone who has  
been recorded for life in  
Jerusalem, <sup>4</sup> once the Lord has  
washed away the filth of the  
daughters of Zion and

cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning. <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over its places of assembly a cloud by day and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night. Indeed over all the glory there will be a canopy. <sup>6</sup> It will serve as a pavilion, a shade by day from the heat, and a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.

**Corinthians 11:1-6** (NRSV)

*Paul and the False Apostles*

**11** I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! <sup>2</sup> I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. <sup>3</sup> But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by its cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. <sup>4</sup> For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different

gospel from the one you accepted, you submit to it readily enough. <sup>5</sup> I think that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. <sup>6</sup> I may be untrained in speech, but not in knowledge; certainly in every way and in all things we have made this evident to you.

**Psalm 53:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!

When God restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

**Proverbs 15:18–19** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Those who are hot-tempered stir up strife, but those who are slow to anger calm contention.

<sup>19</sup> The way of the lazy is overgrown with thorns, but the path of the upright is a level highway.

# May 19



**Isaiah 5:1–30** (NRSV)

## *The Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard*

**5** Let me sing for my beloved  
my love-song concerning his vineyard:  
My beloved had a vineyard  
on a very fertile hill.  
<sup>2</sup> He dug it and cleared it of stones,  
and planted it with choice vines;  
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,  
and hewed out a wine vat in it;  
he expected it to yield grapes,  
but it yielded wild grapes.  
<sup>3</sup> And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem  
and people of Judah,  
judge between me and my vineyard.  
<sup>4</sup> What more was there to do for my vineyard  
that I have not done in it?  
When I expected it to yield grapes,

why did it yield wild grapes?  
<sup>5</sup> And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.  
I will remove its hedge,  
and it shall be devoured;  
I will break down its wall,  
and it shall be trampled down.  
<sup>6</sup> I will make it a waste;  
it shall not be pruned or hoed,  
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;  
I will also command the clouds  
that they rain no rain upon it.  
<sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts  
is the house of Israel,  
and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting;  
he expected justice, but saw bloodshed;  
righteousness, but heard a cry!

### *Social Injustice Denounced*

<sup>8</sup> Ah, you who join house to house,  
who add field to field,  
until there is room for no one but you,

and you are left to live  
alone  
in the midst of the land!  
9 The LORD of hosts has  
sworn in my hearing:  
Surely many houses shall  
be desolate,  
large and beautiful  
houses, without  
inhabitant.  
10 For ten acres of vineyard  
shall yield but one  
bath,  
and a homer of seed  
shall yield a mere  
ephah.  
11 Ah, you who rise early in  
the morning  
in pursuit of strong drink,  
who linger in the evening  
to be inflamed by wine,  
12 whose feasts consist of  
lyre and harp,  
tambourine and flute  
and wine,  
but who do not regard the  
deeds of the LORD,  
or see the work of his  
hands!  
13 Therefore my people go  
into exile without  
knowledge;  
their nobles are dying of  
hunger,

and their multitude is  
parched with thirst.  
14 Therefore Sheol has  
enlarged its appetite  
and opened its mouth  
beyond measure;  
the nobility of Jerusalem  
and her multitude go  
down,  
her throng and all who  
exult in her.  
15 People are bowed down,  
everyone is brought  
low,  
and the eyes of the  
haughty are humbled.  
16 But the LORD of hosts is  
exalted by justice,  
and the Holy God shows  
himself holy by  
righteousness.  
17 Then the lambs shall graze  
as in their pasture,  
fatlings and kids shall  
feed among the ruins.  
18 Ah, you who drag iniquity  
along with cords of  
falsehood,  
who drag sin along as  
with cart ropes,  
19 who say, "Let him make  
haste,  
let him speed his work  
that we may see it;

let the plan of the Holy  
One of Israel hasten to  
fulfillment,  
that we may know it!"  
20 Ah, you who call evil good  
and good evil,  
who put darkness for light  
and light for darkness,  
who put bitter for sweet  
and sweet for bitter!  
21 Ah, you who are wise in  
your own eyes,  
and shrewd in your own  
sight!  
22 Ah, you who are heroes in  
drinking wine  
and valiant at mixing  
drink,  
23 who acquit the guilty for a  
bribe,  
and deprive the innocent  
of their rights!

*Foreign Invasion Predicted*

24 Therefore, as the tongue  
of fire devours the  
stubble,  
and as dry grass sinks  
down in the flame,  
so their root will become  
rotten,  
and their blossom go up  
like dust;

for they have rejected the  
instruction of the LORD  
of hosts,  
and have despised the  
word of the Holy One  
of Israel.  
25 Therefore the anger of the  
LORD was kindled  
against his people,  
and he stretched out his  
hand against them and  
struck them;  
the mountains quaked,  
and their corpses were like  
refuse  
in the streets.  
For all this his anger has  
not turned away,  
and his hand is stretched  
out still.  
26 He will raise a signal for a  
nation far away,  
and whistle for a people  
at the ends of the  
earth;  
Here they come, swiftly,  
speedily!  
27 None of them is weary,  
none stumbles,  
none slumbers or sleeps,  
not a loin-cloth is loose,  
not a sandal-thong  
broken;  
28 their arrows are sharp,  
all their bows bent,



their horses' hoofs seem  
like flint,  
and their wheels like the  
whirlwind.

<sup>29</sup> Their roaring is like a lion,  
like young lions they  
roar;  
they growl and seize their  
prey,  
they carry it off, and no  
one can rescue.

<sup>30</sup> They will roar over it on  
that day,  
like the roaring of the  
sea.  
And if one look to the  
land—  
only darkness and  
distress;  
and the light grows dark  
with clouds.

**Corinthians 11:7-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Did I commit a sin by  
humbling myself so that you  
might be exalted, because I  
proclaimed God's good news  
to you free of charge? <sup>8</sup> I  
robbed other churches by  
accepting support from them  
in order to serve you. <sup>9</sup> And  
when I was with you and was  
in need, I did not burden  
anyone, for my needs were  
supplied by the friends who

came from Macedonia. So I  
refrained and will continue to  
refrain from burdening you in  
any way. <sup>10</sup> As the truth of  
Christ is in me, this boast of  
mine will not be silenced in  
the regions of Achaia. <sup>11</sup> And  
why? Because I do not love  
you? God knows I do!

<sup>12</sup> And what I do I will also  
continue to do, in order to  
deny an opportunity to those  
who want an opportunity to  
be recognized as our equals in  
what they boast about. <sup>13</sup> For  
such boasters are false  
apostles, deceitful workers,  
disguising themselves as  
apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And no  
wonder! Even Satan disguises  
himself as an angel of light.  
<sup>15</sup> So it is not strange if his  
ministers also disguise  
themselves as ministers of  
righteousness. Their end will  
match their deeds.

**Psalm 54:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Vindication*

To the leader: with stringed  
instruments. A Maskil of David,  
when the Ziphites went and told  
Saul, "David is in hiding among us."

<sup>1</sup> Save me, O God, by your  
name,

and vindicate me by your  
might.

<sup>2</sup> Hear my prayer, O God;  
give ear to the words of  
my mouth.

<sup>3</sup> For the insolent have risen  
against me,  
the ruthless seek my life;  
they do not set God  
before them. *Selah*

<sup>4</sup> **But surely, God is my  
helper;  
the Lord is the upholder  
of my life.**

**Proverbs 15:20–21** (NRSV)

<sup>20</sup> A wise child makes a glad  
father,  
but the foolish despise  
their mothers.

<sup>21</sup> Folly is a joy to one who  
has no sense,  
but a person of  
understanding walks  
straight ahead.

**May 20**



**Isaiah 6:1–7:9** (NRSV)

*A Vision of God in the Temple  
(Cp Ezek 1:4–28)*

**6** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. <sup>3</sup> And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

<sup>4</sup> The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

<sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. <sup>7</sup> The

seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out."<sup>8</sup> Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"<sup>9</sup> And he said, "Go and say to this people:

'Keep listening, but do not comprehend;  
keep looking, but do not understand.'

<sup>10</sup> Make the mind of this people dull,  
and stop their ears,  
and shut their eyes,  
so that they may not look with their eyes,  
and listen with their ears,  
and comprehend with their minds,  
and turn and be healed."

<sup>11</sup> Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said:  
"Until cities lie waste without inhabitant,  
and houses without people,  
and the land is utterly desolate;

<sup>12</sup> until the LORD sends everyone far away,

and vast is the emptiness in the midst of the land.

<sup>13</sup> Even if a tenth part remain in it,  
it will be burned again,  
like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains standing when it is felled."  
The holy seed is its stump.

*Isaiah Reassures King Ahaz  
(2 Kings 16:5; 2 Chr 28:5–15)*

**7** In the days of Ahaz son of Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel went up to attack Jerusalem, but could not mount an attack against it.<sup>2</sup> When the house of David heard that Aram had allied itself with Ephraim, the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said to Isaiah, Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field,<sup>4</sup> and say to him, Take

heed, be quiet, do not fear,  
and do not let your heart be  
faint because of these two  
smoldering stumps of  
firebrands, because of the  
fierce anger of Rezin and Aram  
and the son of Remaliah.

<sup>5</sup> Because Aram—with  
Ephraim and the son of  
Remaliah—has plotted evil  
against you, saying, <sup>6</sup> Let us go  
up against Judah and cut off  
Jerusalem and conquer it for  
ourselves and make the son of  
Tabeel king in it; <sup>7</sup> therefore  
thus says the Lord GOD:

It shall not stand,  
and it shall not come to  
pass.

<sup>8</sup> For the head of Aram is  
Damascus,  
and the head of  
Damascus is Rezin.  
(Within sixty-five years  
Ephraim will be  
shattered, no longer a  
people.)

<sup>9</sup> The head of Ephraim is  
Samaria,  
and the head of Samaria  
is the son of Remaliah.  
If you do not stand firm in  
faith,  
you shall not stand at all.

**Corinthians 11:16-21a** (NRSV)  
*Paul's Sufferings as an Apostle*

<sup>16</sup> I repeat, let no one think  
that I am a fool; but if you do,  
then accept me as a fool, so  
that I too may boast a little.

<sup>17</sup> What I am saying in regard  
to this boastful confidence, I  
am saying not with the Lord's  
authority, but as a fool;

<sup>18</sup> since many boast according  
to human standards, I will also  
boast. <sup>19</sup> For you gladly put up  
with fools, being wise

yourselves! <sup>20</sup> For you put up  
with it when someone makes  
slaves of you, or preys upon  
you, or takes advantage of  
you, or puts on airs, or gives  
you a slap in the face. <sup>21</sup> To my  
shame, I must say, we were  
too weak for that!

**Psalms 54:5-7** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> He will repay my enemies  
for their evil.

In your faithfulness, put  
an end to them.

<sup>6</sup> With a freewill offering I  
will sacrifice to you;  
I will give thanks to your  
name, O LORD, for it is  
good.

<sup>7</sup> For he has delivered me  
from every trouble,

and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

**Proverbs 15:22–23** (NRSV)

- <sup>22</sup> Without counsel, plans go wrong,  
but with many advisers they succeed.
- <sup>23</sup> To make an apt answer is a joy to anyone,  
and a word in season, how good it is!

**May 21**



**Isaiah 7:10–25** (NRSV)

*Isaiah Gives Ahaz  
the Sign of Immanuel*

<sup>10</sup> Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the

Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted. <sup>17</sup> The LORD will bring on you and on your people and on your ancestral house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria.”

<sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD will whistle for the fly that is at the sources of the streams of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. <sup>19</sup> And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.

<sup>20</sup> On that day the Lord will shave with a razor hired beyond the River—with the king of Assyria—the head and the hair of the feet, and it will take off the beard as well.

<sup>21</sup> On that day one will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, <sup>22</sup> and will eat curds because of the abundance of milk that they give; for everyone that is left in the land shall eat curds and honey.

<sup>23</sup> On that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth a thousand shekels of silver, will become briers and thorns.

<sup>24</sup> With bow and arrows one will go there, for all the land will be briers and thorns;

<sup>25</sup> and as for all the hills that used to be hoed with a hoe, you will not go there for fear of briers and thorns; but they will become a place where cattle are let loose and where sheep tread.

### **Corinthians 11:21b-33** (NRSV)

But whatever anyone dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. <sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. <sup>23</sup> Are they ministers of Christ? I am talking like a madman—I am a better one:

with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup> Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.

<sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup> on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters; <sup>27</sup> in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. <sup>28</sup> And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?

<sup>30</sup> If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. <sup>31</sup> The God and Father of the Lord Jesus (blessed be he forever!) knows

that I do not lie. <sup>32</sup> In  
Damascus, the governor under  
King Aretas guarded the city of  
Damascus in order to seize  
me, <sup>33</sup> but I was let down in a  
basket through a window in  
the wall, and escaped from his  
hands.

**Psalms 55:1-11 (NRSV)**

*Complaint about a Friend's  
Treachery*

To the leader: with stringed  
instruments. A Maskil of David.

1 Give ear to my prayer, O  
God;  
do not hide yourself  
from my supplication.  
2 Attend to me, and answer  
me;  
I am troubled in my  
complaint.  
I am distraught <sup>3</sup> by the  
noise of the enemy,  
because of the clamor of  
the wicked.  
For they bring trouble  
upon me,  
and in anger they cherish  
enmity against me.  
4 My heart is in anguish  
within me,  
the terrors of death have  
fallen upon me.  
5 Fear and trembling come  
upon me,

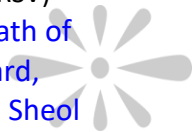
and horror overwhelms  
me.

6 And I say, "O that I had  
wings like a dove!  
I would fly away and be  
at rest;  
7 truly, I would flee far  
away;  
I would lodge in the  
wilderness; *Selah*  
8 I would hurry to find a  
shelter for myself  
from the raging wind and  
tempest."  
9 Confuse, O Lord, confound  
their speech;  
for I see violence and  
strife in the city.  
10 Day and night they go  
around it  
on its walls,  
and iniquity and trouble  
are within it;  
11 ruin is in its midst;  
oppression and fraud  
do not depart from its  
marketplace.

**Proverbs 15:24-26 (NRSV)**

24 For the wise the path of  
life leads upward,  
in order to avoid Sheol  
below.

25 The LORD tears down the  
house of the proud,



but maintains the  
widow's boundaries.

<sup>26</sup> Evil plans are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
but gracious words are  
pure.

## May 22



### Isaiah 8:1–22 (NRSV)

*Isaiah's Son a Sign of the  
Assyrian Invasion*

**8** Then the LORD said to me,  
Take a large tablet and write  
on it in common characters,  
“Belonging to Maher-shalal-  
hash-baz,” <sup>2</sup> and have it  
attested for me by reliable  
witnesses, the priest Uriah and  
Zechariah son of Jeberechiah.  
<sup>3</sup> And I went to the  
prophetess, and she conceived  
and bore a son. Then the LORD  
said to me, Name him Maher-  
shalal-hash-baz; <sup>4</sup> for before  
the child knows how to call  
“My father” or “My mother,”  
the wealth of Damascus and  
the spoil of Samaria will be

carried away by the king of  
Assyria.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD spoke to me  
again: <sup>6</sup> Because this people  
has refused the waters of  
Shiloah that flow gently, and  
melt in fear before Rezin and  
the son of Remaliah;  
<sup>7</sup> therefore, the Lord is  
bringing up against it the  
mighty flood waters of the  
River, the king of Assyria and  
all his glory; it will rise above  
all its channels and overflow  
all its banks; <sup>8</sup> it will sweep on  
into Judah as a flood, and,  
pouring over, it will reach up  
to the neck; and its outspread  
wings will fill the breadth of  
your land, O Immanuel.

<sup>9</sup> Band together, you  
peoples, and be  
dismayed;  
listen, all you far  
countries;  
gird yourselves and be  
dismayed;  
gird yourselves and be  
dismayed!  
<sup>10</sup> Take counsel together, but  
it shall be brought to  
naught;  
speak a word, but it will  
not stand,  
for God is with us.



<sup>11</sup> For the LORD spoke thus to me while his hand was strong upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: <sup>12</sup> Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what it fears, or be in dread. <sup>13</sup> But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. <sup>14</sup> He will become a sanctuary, a stone one strikes against; for both houses of Israel he will become a rock one stumbles over—a trap and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>15</sup> And many among them shall stumble; they shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken.

#### *Disciples of Isaiah*

<sup>16</sup> Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples. <sup>17</sup> I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. <sup>18</sup> See, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. <sup>19</sup> Now if people

say to you, “Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that chirp and mutter; should not a people consult their gods, the dead on behalf of the living, <sup>20</sup> for teaching and for instruction?” surely, those who speak like this will have no dawn! <sup>21</sup> They will pass through the land, greatly distressed and hungry; when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will curse their king and their gods. They will turn their faces upward, <sup>22</sup> or they will look to the earth, but will see only distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be thrust into thick darkness.

#### **Corinthians 12:1-7a** (NRSV)

##### *Paul’s Visions and Revelations*

**12** It is necessary to boast; nothing is to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. <sup>2</sup> I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. <sup>3</sup> And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do

not know; God knows—<sup>4</sup> was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat.<sup>5</sup> On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses.<sup>6</sup> But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me,<sup>7</sup> even considering the exceptional character of the revelations.

**Psalms 55:12-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> It is not enemies who taunt me—  
I could bear that;  
it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—  
I could hide from them.  
<sup>13</sup> But it is you, my equal,  
my companion, my familiar friend,  
<sup>14</sup> with whom I kept pleasant company;  
we walked in the house of God with the throng.  
<sup>15</sup> Let death come upon them;

let them go down alive to Sheol;  
for evil is in their homes and in their hearts.  
<sup>16</sup> But I call upon God,  
and the LORD will save me.  
<sup>17</sup> Evening and morning and at noon  
I utter my complaint and moan,  
and he will hear my voice.  
<sup>18</sup> He will redeem me unharmed  
from the battle that I wage,  
for many are arrayed against me.  
<sup>19</sup> God, who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*  
will hear, and will humble them—  
because they do not change,  
and do not fear God.  
<sup>20</sup> My companion laid hands on a friend  
and violated a covenant with me  
<sup>21</sup> with speech smoother than butter,  
but with a heart set on war;

with words that were  
softer than oil,  
but in fact were drawn  
swords.

<sup>22</sup> Cast your burden on the  
LORD,  
and he will sustain you;  
he will never permit  
the righteous to be  
moved.

<sup>23</sup> But you, O God, will cast  
them down  
into the lowest pit;  
the bloodthirsty and  
treacherous  
shall not live out half  
their days.  
But I will trust in you.

**Proverbs 15:27–28** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Those who are greedy for  
unjust gain make  
trouble for their  
households,  
but those who hate  
bribes will live.  
<sup>28</sup> The mind of the righteous  
ponders how to  
answer, but the mouth  
of the wicked pours  
out evil.

## May 23



**Isaiah 9:1–21** (NRSV)

*The Righteous Reign of the  
Coming King  
(Isa 11:1–9)*

**9** But there will be no gloom  
for those who were in anguish.  
In the former time he brought  
into contempt the land of  
Zebulun and the land of  
Naphtali, but in the latter time  
he will make glorious the way  
of the sea, the land beyond  
the Jordan, Galilee of the  
nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in  
darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land  
of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the  
nation,  
you have increased its  
joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the  
harvest,  
as people exult when  
dividing plunder.  
<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their  
burden,

and the bar across their  
shoulders,  
the rod of their  
oppressor,  
you have broken as on  
the day of Midian.

5 For all the boots of the  
tramping warriors  
and all the garments  
rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel  
for the fire.

6 For a child has been born  
for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his  
shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince  
of Peace.

7 His authority shall grow  
continually,  
and there shall be  
endless peace  
for the throne of David and  
his kingdom.

He will establish and  
uphold it  
with justice and with  
righteousness  
from this time onward  
and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of  
hosts will do this.

*Judgment on Arrogance  
and Oppression*

8 The Lord sent a word  
against Jacob,  
and it fell on Israel;  
9 and all the people knew  
it—

Ephraim and the  
inhabitants of  
Samaria—  
but in pride and  
arrogance of heart  
they said:

10 “The bricks have fallen,  
but we will build with  
dressed stones;  
the sycamores have been  
cut down,  
but we will put cedars in  
their place.”

11 So the LORD raised  
adversaries against  
them,  
and stirred up their  
enemies,

12 the Arameans on the east  
and the Philistines on  
the west,  
and they devoured Israel  
with open mouth.  
For all this his anger has  
not turned away;

his hand is stretched out  
still.  
13 The people did not turn to  
him who struck them,  
or seek the LORD of hosts.  
14 So the LORD cut off from  
Israel head and tail,  
palm branch and reed in  
one day—  
15 elders and dignitaries are  
the head,  
and prophets who teach  
lies are the tail;  
16 for those who led this  
people led them  
astray,  
and those who were led  
by them were left in  
confusion.  
17 That is why the Lord did  
not have pity on their  
young people,  
or compassion on their  
orphans and widows;  
for everyone was godless  
and an evildoer,  
and every mouth spoke  
folly.  
For all this his anger has  
not turned away;  
his hand is stretched out  
still.  
18 For wickedness burned like  
a fire,

consuming briars and  
thorns;  
it kindled the thickets of  
the forest,  
and they swirled upward  
in a column of smoke.  
19 Through the wrath of the  
LORD of hosts  
the land was burned,  
and the people became  
like fuel for the fire;  
no one spared another.  
20 They gorged on the right,  
but still were hungry,  
and they devoured on  
the left, but were not  
satisfied;  
they devoured the flesh of  
their own kindred;  
21 Manasseh devoured  
Ephraim, and Ephraim  
Manasseh,  
and together they were  
against Judah.  
For all this his anger has  
not turned away;  
his hand is stretched out  
still.

**Corinthians 12:7b-10** (NRSV)

Therefore, to keep me from  
being too elated, a thorn was  
given me in the flesh, a  
messenger of Satan to  
torment me, to keep me from

being too elated. <sup>8</sup> Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

**Psalms 56:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Trust in God under Persecution*

To the leader: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. Of David. A Miktam, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

<sup>1</sup> Be gracious to me, O God,  
for people trample on me;  
all day long foes oppress me;  
<sup>2</sup> my enemies trample on me all day long,  
for many fight against me.  
O Most High, <sup>3</sup> when I am afraid,  
I put my trust in you.

<sup>4</sup> In God, whose word I praise,  
in God I trust; I am not afraid;  
what can flesh do to me?  
<sup>5</sup> All day long they seek to injure my cause;  
all their thoughts are against me for evil.  
<sup>6</sup> They stir up strife, they lurk,  
they watch my steps.  
As they hoped to have my life,  
<sup>7</sup> so repay them for their crime;  
in wrath cast down the peoples, O God!  
<sup>8</sup> You have kept count of my tossings;  
put my tears in your bottle.  
Are they not in your record?  
<sup>9</sup> Then my enemies will retreat  
in the day when I call.  
This I know, that God is for me.

**Proverbs 15:29–30 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup> The LORD is far from the wicked,  
but he hears the prayer of the righteous.



30 The light of the eyes  
rejoices the heart,  
and good news refreshes  
the body.

## May 24



**Isaiah 10:1–23** (NRSV)

**10** Ah, you who make  
iniquitous decrees,  
who write oppressive  
statutes,  
2 to turn aside the needy  
from justice  
and to rob the poor of  
my people of their  
right,  
that widows may be your  
spoil,  
and that you may make  
the orphans your prey!  
3 What will you do on the  
day of punishment,  
in the calamity that will  
come from far away?  
To whom will you flee for  
help,  
and where will you leave  
your wealth,

4 so as not to crouch among  
the prisoners  
or fall among the slain?  
For all this his anger has  
not turned away;  
his hand is stretched out  
still.

*Arrogant Assyria Also Judged*

5 Ah, Assyria, the rod of my  
anger—  
the club in their hands is  
my fury!  
6 Against a godless nation I  
send him,  
and against the people of  
my wrath I command  
him,  
to take spoil and seize  
plunder,  
and to tread them down  
like the mire of the  
streets.  
7 But this is not what he  
intends,  
nor does he have this in  
mind;  
but it is in his heart to  
destroy,  
and to cut off nations not  
a few.  
8 For he says:  
“Are not my commanders  
all kings?”

9 Is not Calno like  
Carchemish?  
Is not Hamath like  
Arpad?  
Is not Samaria like  
Damascus?  
10 As my hand has reached to  
the kingdoms of the  
idols  
whose images were  
greater than those of  
Jerusalem and Samaria,  
11 shall I not do to Jerusalem  
and her idols  
what I have done to  
Samaria and her  
images?"  
12 When the Lord has  
finished all his work on Mount  
Zion and on Jerusalem, he will  
punish the arrogant boasting  
of the king of Assyria and his  
haughty pride. <sup>13</sup> For he says:  
"By the strength of my  
hand I have done it,  
and by my wisdom, for I  
have understanding;  
I have removed the  
boundaries of peoples,  
and have plundered their  
treasures;  
like a bull I have brought  
down those who sat on  
thrones.

14 My hand has found, like a  
nest,  
the wealth of the  
peoples;  
and as one gathers eggs  
that have been  
forsaken,  
so I have gathered all the  
earth;  
and there was none that  
moved a wing,  
or opened its mouth, or  
chirped."  
15 Shall the ax vaunt itself  
over the one who  
wields it,  
or the saw magnify itself  
against the one who  
handles it?  
As if a rod should raise the  
one who lifts it up,  
or as if a staff should lift  
the one who is not  
wood!  
16 Therefore the Sovereign,  
the LORD of hosts,  
will send wasting  
sickness among his  
stout warriors,  
and under his glory a  
burning will be kindled,  
like the burning of fire.  
17 The light of Israel will  
become a fire,



and his Holy One a  
flame;

and it will burn and devour  
his thorns and briars in  
one day.

<sup>18</sup> The glory of his forest and  
his fruitful land  
the LORD will destroy,  
both soul and body,  
and it will be as when an  
invalid wastes away.

<sup>19</sup> The remnant of the trees  
of his forest will be so  
few  
that a child can write  
them down.

*The Repentant*

*Remnant of Israel*

<sup>20</sup> On that day the remnant  
of Israel and the survivors of  
the house of Jacob will no  
more lean on the one who  
struck them, but will lean on  
the LORD, the Holy One of  
Israel, in truth. <sup>21</sup> A remnant  
will return, the remnant of  
Jacob, to the mighty God.

<sup>22</sup> For though your people  
Israel were like the sand of the  
sea, only a remnant of them  
will return. Destruction is  
decreed, overflowing with  
righteousness. <sup>23</sup> For the Lord  
GOD of hosts will make a full

end, as decreed, in all the  
earth.

**Corinthians 12:11-15** (NRSV)

*Paul's Concern for the  
Corinthian Church*

<sup>11</sup> I [Paul] have been a fool!  
You forced me to it. Indeed  
you should have been the  
ones commending me, for I  
am not at all inferior to these  
super-apostles, even though I  
am nothing. <sup>12</sup> The signs of a  
true apostle were performed  
among you with utmost  
patience, signs and wonders  
and mighty works. <sup>13</sup> How have  
you been worse off than the  
other churches, except that I  
myself did not burden you?  
Forgive me this wrong!

<sup>14</sup> Here I am, ready to  
come to you this third time.  
And I will not be a burden,  
because I do not want what is  
yours but you; for children  
ought not to lay up for their  
parents, but parents for their  
children. <sup>15</sup> I will most gladly  
spend and be spent for you. If  
I love you more, am I to be  
loved less?

**Psalms 56:10-13** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> In God, whose word I  
praise,  
in the LORD, whose word  
I praise,  
<sup>11</sup> in God I trust; I am not  
afraid.  
What can a mere mortal  
do to me?  
<sup>12</sup> My vows to you I must  
perform, O God;  
I will render thank  
offerings to you.  
<sup>13</sup> For you have delivered my  
soul from death,  
and my feet from falling,  
so that I may walk before  
God  
in the light of life.

**Proverbs 15:31-32** (NRSV)

<sup>31</sup> The ear that heeds  
wholesome  
admonition  
will lodge among the  
wise.  
<sup>32</sup> Those who ignore  
instruction despise  
themselves,  
but those who heed  
admonition gain  
understanding.

**May 25**



**Isaiah 10:24-11:16** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> Therefore thus says the  
Lord GOD of hosts: O my  
people, who live in Zion, do  
not be afraid of the Assyrians  
when they beat you with a rod  
and lift up their staff against  
you as the Egyptians did. <sup>25</sup> For  
in a very little while my  
indignation will come to an  
end, and my anger will be  
directed to their destruction.  
<sup>26</sup> The LORD of hosts will wield  
a whip against them, as when  
he struck Midian at the rock of  
Oreb; his staff will be over the  
sea, and he will lift it as he did  
in Egypt. <sup>27</sup> On that day his  
burden will be removed from  
your shoulder, and his yoke  
will be destroyed from your  
neck.  
He has gone up from  
Rimmon,  
<sup>28</sup> he has come to Aiath;  
he has passed through  
Migron,  
at Michmash he stores  
his baggage;  
<sup>29</sup> they have crossed over the  
pass,

at Geba they lodge for  
the night;  
Ramah trembles,  
Gibeah of Saul has fled.  
30 Cry aloud, O daughter  
Gallim!  
Listen, O Laishah!  
Answer her, O Anathoth!  
31 Madmenah is in flight,  
the inhabitants of Gebim  
flee for safety.  
32 This very day he will halt at  
Nob,  
he will shake his fist  
at the mount of daughter  
Zion,  
the hill of Jerusalem.  
33 Look, the Sovereign, the  
LORD of hosts,  
will lop the boughs with  
terrifying power;  
the tallest trees will be cut  
down,  
and the lofty will be  
brought low.  
34 He will hack down the  
thickets of the forest  
with an ax,  
and Lebanon with its  
majestic trees will fall.

*The Peaceful Kingdom*  
(Isa 9:1-7)

**11** A shoot shall come out  
from the stump of  
Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow  
out of his roots.  
2 The spirit of the LORD shall  
rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and  
understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and  
might,  
the spirit of knowledge  
and the fear of the  
LORD.  
3 His delight shall be in the  
fear of the LORD.  
He shall not judge by what  
his eyes see,  
or decide by what his  
ears hear;  
4 but with righteousness he  
shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity  
for the meek of the  
earth;  
he shall strike the earth  
with the rod of his  
mouth,  
and with the breath of  
his lips he shall kill the  
wicked.  
5 Righteousness shall be the  
belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt  
around his loins.

6 The wolf shall live with the  
lamb,  
the leopard shall lie  
down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and  
the fatling together,  
and a little child shall  
lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall  
graze,  
their young shall lie  
down together;  
and the lion shall eat  
straw like the ox.

8 The nursing child shall play  
over the hole of the  
asp,  
and the weaned child  
shall put its hand on  
the adder's den.

9 They will not hurt or  
destroy  
on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of  
the knowledge of the  
LORD  
as the waters cover the  
sea.

*Return of the Remnant of  
Israel and Judah*

<sup>10</sup> On that day the root of  
Jesse shall stand as a signal to  
the peoples; the nations shall

inquire of him, and his  
dwelling shall be glorious.

<sup>11</sup> On that day the Lord will  
extend his hand yet a second  
time to recover the remnant  
that is left of his people, from  
Assyria, from Egypt, from  
Pathros, from Ethiopia, from  
Elam, from Shinar, from  
Hamath, and from the  
coastlands of the sea.

<sup>12</sup> He will raise a signal for  
the nations,  
and will assemble the  
outcasts of Israel,  
and gather the dispersed  
of Judah  
from the four corners of  
the earth.

<sup>13</sup> The jealousy of Ephraim  
shall depart,  
the hostility of Judah  
shall be cut off;  
Ephraim shall not be  
jealous of Judah,  
and Judah shall not be  
hostile towards  
Ephraim.

<sup>14</sup> But they shall swoop down  
on the backs of the  
Philistines in the west,  
together they shall  
plunder the people of  
the east.

They shall put forth their  
hand against Edom and  
Moab,  
and the Ammonites shall  
obey them.

- <sup>15</sup> And the LORD will utterly  
destroy  
the tongue of the sea of  
Egypt;  
and will wave his hand  
over the River  
with his scorching wind;  
and will split it into seven  
channels,  
and make a way to cross  
on foot;  
<sup>16</sup> so there shall be a highway  
from Assyria  
for the remnant that is  
left of his people,  
as there was for Israel  
when they came up from  
the land of Egypt.

**Corinthians 12:16-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> Let it be assumed that I did  
not burden you. Nevertheless  
(you say) since I [Paul] was  
crafty, I took you in by deceit.  
<sup>17</sup> Did I take advantage of you  
through any of those whom I  
sent to you? <sup>18</sup> I urged Titus to  
go, and sent the brother with  
him. Titus did not take

advantage of you, did he? Did  
we not conduct ourselves with  
the same spirit? Did we not  
take the same steps?

<sup>19</sup> Have you been thinking  
all along that we have been  
defending ourselves before  
you? We are speaking in Christ  
before God. Everything we do,  
beloved, is for the sake of  
building you up. <sup>20</sup> For I fear  
that when I come, I may find  
you not as I wish, and that you  
may find me not as you wish; I  
fear that there may perhaps  
be quarreling, jealousy, anger,  
selfishness, slander, gossip,  
conceit, and disorder. <sup>21</sup> I fear  
that when I come again, my  
God may humble me before  
you, and that I may have to  
mourn over many who  
previously sinned and have  
not repented of the impurity,  
sexual immorality, and  
licentiousness that they have  
practiced.

**Psalms 57:1-3 (NRSV)**

*Praise and Assurance under  
Persecution*  
(Cp Ps 108:1-5)

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of  
David. A Miktam, when he fled from  
Saul, in the cave.

<sup>1</sup> Be merciful to me, O God,  
be merciful to me,  
for in you my soul takes  
refuge;  
in the shadow of your  
wings I will take refuge,  
until the destroying  
storms pass by.

<sup>2</sup> I cry to God Most High,  
to God who fulfills his  
purpose for me.

<sup>3</sup> He will send from heaven  
and save me,  
he will put to shame  
those who trample on  
me. *Selah*

God will send forth his  
steadfast love and his  
faithfulness.

**Proverbs 15:33** (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> The fear of the LORD is  
instruction in wisdom,  
and humility goes before  
honor.

**May 26**



**Isaiah 12:1–14:2** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving and Praise*

**12** You will say in that day:  
I will give thanks to you, O  
LORD,  
for though you were  
angry with me,  
your anger turned away,  
and you comforted me.

<sup>2</sup> Surely God is my salvation;  
I will trust, and will not  
be afraid,  
for the LORD GOD is my  
strength and my might;  
he has become my  
salvation.

<sup>3</sup> With joy you will draw  
water from the wells of  
salvation. <sup>4</sup> And you will say in  
that day:

Give thanks to the LORD,  
call on his name;  
make known his deeds  
among the nations;  
proclaim that his name is  
exalted.

<sup>5</sup> Sing praises to the LORD,  
for he has done  
gloriously;  
let this be known in all  
the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Shout aloud and sing for  
joy, O royal Zion,  
for great in your midst is  
the Holy One of Israel.

*Proclamation against Babylon*

**13** The oracle concerning  
Babylon that Isaiah son of  
Amoz saw.  
2 On a bare hill raise a signal,  
cry aloud to them;  
wave the hand for them to  
enter  
the gates of the nobles.  
3 I myself have commanded  
my consecrated ones,  
have summoned my  
warriors, my proudly  
exulting ones,  
to execute my anger.  
4 Listen, a tumult on the  
mountains  
as of a great multitude!  
Listen, an uproar of  
kingdoms,  
of nations gathering  
together!  
The LORD of hosts is  
mustering  
an army for battle.  
5 They come from a distant  
land,  
from the end of the  
heavens,  
the LORD and the weapons  
of his indignation,  
to destroy the whole  
earth.  
6 Wail, for the day of the  
LORD is near;

it will come like  
destruction from the  
Almighty!  
7 Therefore all hands will be  
feeble,  
and every human heart  
will melt,  
8 and they will be  
dismayed.  
Pangs and agony will seize  
them;  
they will be in anguish  
like a woman in labor.  
They will look aghast at  
one another;  
their faces will be  
aflake.  
9 See, the day of the LORD  
comes,  
cruel, with wrath and  
fierce anger,  
to make the earth a  
desolation,  
and to destroy its sinners  
from it.  
10 For the stars of the  
heavens and their  
constellations  
will not give their light;  
the sun will be dark at its  
rising,  
and the moon will not  
shed its light.  
11 I will punish the world for  
its evil,

- and the wicked for their iniquity;  
I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant,  
and lay low the insolence of tyrants.
- 12 I will make mortals more rare than fine gold,  
and humans than the gold of Ophir.
- 13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble,  
and the earth will be shaken out of its place,  
at the wrath of the LORD of hosts  
in the day of his fierce anger.
- 14 Like a hunted gazelle,  
or like sheep with no one to gather them,  
all will turn to their own people,  
and all will flee to their own lands.
- 15 Whoever is found will be thrust through,  
and whoever is caught will fall by the sword.
- 16 Their infants will be dashed to pieces  
before their eyes;  
their houses will be plundered,  
and their wives ravished.
- 17 See, I am stirring up the Medes against them,  
who have no regard for silver  
and do not delight in gold.
- 18 Their bows will slaughter the young men;  
they will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb;  
their eyes will not pity children.
- 19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,  
the splendor and pride of the Chaldeans,  
will be like Sodom and Gomorrah  
when God overthrew them.
- 20 It will never be inhabited  
or lived in for all generations;  
Arabs will not pitch their tents there,  
shepherds will not make their flocks lie down there.
- 21 But wild animals will lie down there,  
and its houses will be full of howling creatures;  
there ostriches will live,



and there goat-demons  
will dance.

<sup>22</sup> Hyenas will cry in its  
towers,  
and jackals in the  
pleasant palaces;  
its time is close at hand,  
and its days will not be  
prolonged.

### *Restoration of Judah*

**14** But the LORD will have  
compassion on Jacob and will  
again choose Israel, and will  
set them in their own land;  
and aliens will join them and  
attach themselves to the  
house of Jacob. <sup>2</sup> And the  
nations will take them and  
bring them to their place, and  
the house of Israel will possess  
the nations as male and  
female slaves in the LORD's  
land; they will take captive  
those who were their captors,  
and rule over those who  
oppressed them.

### **Corinthians 13:1-6** (NRSV)

#### *Further Warning*

**13** This is the third time I am  
coming to you. "Any charge  
must be sustained by the  
evidence of two or three

witnesses." <sup>2</sup> I warned those  
who sinned previously and all  
the others, and I warn them  
now while absent, as I did  
when present on my second  
visit, that if I come again, I will  
not be lenient— <sup>3</sup> since you  
desire proof that Christ is  
speaking in me. He is not weak  
in dealing with you, but is  
powerful in you. <sup>4</sup> For he was  
crucified in weakness, but lives  
by the power of God. For we  
are weak in him, but in dealing  
with you we will live with him  
by the power of God.

<sup>5</sup> Examine yourselves to  
see whether you are living in  
the faith. Test yourselves. Do  
you not realize that Jesus  
Christ is in you?—unless,  
indeed, you fail to meet the  
test! <sup>6</sup> I hope you will find out  
that we have not failed.

### **Psalm 57:4-11** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> I lie down among lions  
that greedily devour  
human prey;  
their teeth are spears and  
arrows,  
their tongues sharp  
swords.

<sup>5</sup> Be exalted, O God, above  
the heavens.

Let your glory be over all  
the earth.

<sup>6</sup> They set a net for my  
steps;  
my soul was bowed  
down.

They dug a pit in my path,  
but they have fallen into  
it themselves. *Selah*

<sup>7</sup> My heart is steadfast, O  
God,  
my heart is steadfast.  
I will sing and make  
melody.

<sup>8</sup> Awake, my soul!  
Awake, O harp and lyre!  
I will awake the dawn.

<sup>9</sup> I will give thanks to you, O  
Lord, among the  
peoples;  
I will sing praises to you  
among the nations.

<sup>10</sup> For your steadfast love is  
as high as the heavens;  
your faithfulness extends  
to the clouds.

<sup>11</sup> Be exalted, O God, above  
the heavens.  
Let your glory be over all  
the earth.

**Proverbs 16:1–3 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> The plans of the mind  
belong to mortals,

but the answer of the  
tongue is from the  
LORD.

<sup>2</sup> All one's ways may be pure  
in one's own eyes,  
but the LORD weighs the  
spirit.

<sup>3</sup> Commit your work to the  
LORD,  
and your plans will be  
established.

**May 27**



**Isaiah 14:3–32 (NRSV)**

*Downfall of the  
King of Babylon*

<sup>3</sup> When the LORD has given  
you rest from your pain and  
turmoil and the hard service  
with which you were made to  
serve, <sup>4</sup> you will take up this  
taunt against the king of  
Babylon:

How the oppressor has  
ceased!

How his insolence has  
ceased!

<sup>5</sup> The LORD has broken the  
staff of the wicked,

6 the scepter of rulers,  
that struck down the  
peoples in wrath  
with unceasing blows,  
that ruled the nations in  
anger  
with unrelenting  
persecution.

7 The whole earth is at rest  
and quiet;  
they break forth into  
singing.

8 The cypresses exult over  
you,  
the cedars of Lebanon,  
saying,  
“Since you were laid low,  
no one comes to cut us  
down.”

9 Sheol beneath is stirred up  
to meet you when you  
come;  
it rouses the shades to  
greet you,  
all who were leaders of  
the earth;  
it raises from their thrones  
all who were kings of the  
nations.

10 All of them will speak  
and say to you:  
“You too have become as  
weak as we!  
You have become like  
us!”

11 Your pomp is brought  
down to Sheol,  
and the sound of your  
harps;  
maggots are the bed  
beneath you,  
and worms are your  
covering.

12 How you are fallen from  
heaven,  
O Day Star, son of Dawn!  
How you are cut down to  
the ground,  
you who laid the nations  
low!

13 You said in your heart,  
“I will ascend to heaven;  
I will raise my throne  
above the stars of God;  
I will sit on the mount of  
assembly  
on the heights of  
Zaphon;

14 I will ascend to the tops of  
the clouds,  
I will make myself like  
the Most High.”

15 But you are brought down  
to Sheol,  
to the depths of the Pit.

16 Those who see you will  
stare at you,  
and ponder over you:  
“Is this the man who made  
the earth tremble,

17 who shook kingdoms,  
who made the world like a  
desert  
and overthrew its cities,  
who would not let his  
prisoners go home?"  
18 All the kings of the nations  
lie in glory,  
each in his own tomb;  
19 but you are cast out, away  
from your grave,  
like loathsome carrion,  
clothed with the dead,  
those pierced by the  
sword,  
who go down to the  
stones of the Pit,  
like a corpse trampled  
underfoot.  
20 You will not be joined with  
them in burial,  
because you have  
destroyed your land,  
you have killed your  
people.  
May the descendants of  
evildoers  
nevermore be named!  
21 Prepare slaughter for his  
sons  
because of the guilt of  
their father.  
Let them never rise to  
possess the earth

or cover the face of the  
world with cities.  
22 I will rise up against  
them, says the LORD of hosts,  
and will cut off from Babylon  
name and remnant, offspring  
and posterity, says the LORD.  
23 And I will make it a  
possession of the hedgehog,  
and pools of water, and I will  
sweep it with the broom of  
destruction, says the LORD of  
hosts.

*An Oracle concerning Assyria*

24 The LORD of hosts has  
sworn:  
As I have designed,  
so shall it be;  
and as I have planned,  
so shall it come to pass:  
25 I will break the Assyrian in  
my land,  
and on my mountains  
trample him under  
foot;  
his yoke shall be removed  
from them,  
and his burden from  
their shoulders.  
26 This is the plan that is  
planned  
concerning the whole  
earth;

and this is the hand that is  
stretched out  
over all the nations.

<sup>27</sup> For the LORD of hosts has  
planned,  
and who will annul it?  
His hand is stretched out,  
and who will turn it  
back?

*An Oracle concerning Philistia*

<sup>28</sup> In the year that King Ahaz  
died this oracle came:

<sup>29</sup> Do not rejoice, all you  
Philistines,  
that the rod that struck  
you is broken,  
for from the root of the  
snake will come forth  
an adder,  
and its fruit will be a  
flying fiery serpent.

<sup>30</sup> The firstborn of the poor  
will graze,  
and the needy lie down  
in safety;  
but I will make your root  
die of famine,  
and your remnant I will  
kill.

<sup>31</sup> Wail, O gate; cry, O city;  
melt in fear, O Philistia,  
all of you!  
For smoke comes out of  
the north,

and there is no straggler  
in its ranks.

<sup>32</sup> What will one answer the  
messengers of the  
nation?

“The LORD has founded  
Zion,  
and the needy among his  
people  
will find refuge in her.”

**Corinthians 13:7-13** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> But we pray to God that you  
may not do anything wrong—  
not that we may appear to  
have met the test, but that  
you may do what is right,  
though we may seem to have  
failed. <sup>8</sup> For we cannot do  
anything against the truth, but  
only for the truth. <sup>9</sup> For we  
rejoice when we are weak and  
you are strong. This is what we  
pray for, that you may become  
perfect. <sup>10</sup> So I write these  
things while I am away from  
you, so that when I come, I  
may not have to be severe in  
using the authority that the  
Lord has given me for building  
up and not for tearing down.

*Final Greetings and  
Benediction*

<sup>11</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

<sup>12</sup> Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

<sup>13</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

**Psalm 58:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Vengeance*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam.

<sup>1</sup> Do you indeed decree  
what is right, you  
gods?  
Do you judge people  
fairly?  
<sup>2</sup> No, in your hearts you  
devise wrongs;  
your hands deal out  
violence on earth.  
<sup>3</sup> The wicked go astray from  
the womb;  
they err from their birth,  
speaking lies.  
<sup>4</sup> They have venom like the  
venom of a serpent,

like the deaf adder that  
stops its ear,  
<sup>5</sup> so that it does not hear the  
voice of charmers  
or of the cunning  
enchanter.

<sup>6</sup> O God, break the teeth in  
their mouths;  
tear out the fangs of the  
young lions, O LORD!

<sup>7</sup> Let them vanish like water  
that runs away;  
like grass let them be  
trodden down and  
wither.

<sup>8</sup> Let them be like the snail  
that dissolves into  
slime;  
like the untimely birth  
that never sees the  
sun.

<sup>9</sup> Sooner than your pots can  
feel the heat of thorns,  
whether green or ablaze,  
may he sweep them  
away!

**Proverbs 16:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The LORD has made  
everything for its  
purpose,  
even the wicked for the  
day of trouble.

5 All those who are arrogant  
are an abomination to  
the LORD;  
be assured, they will not  
go unpunished.

## May 28



**Isaiah 15:1–16:14** (NRSV)  
*An Oracle concerning Moab*

**15** An oracle concerning  
Moab.

Because Ar is laid waste in  
a night,  
Moab is undone;  
because Kir is laid waste in  
a night,  
Moab is undone.

2 Dibon has gone up to the  
temple,  
to the high places to  
weep;  
over Nebo and over  
Medeba  
Moab wails.  
On every head is baldness,  
every beard is shorn;  
3 in the streets they bind on  
sackcloth;

on the housetops and in  
the squares  
everyone wails and melts  
in tears.  
4 Heshbon and Elealeh cry  
out,  
their voices are heard as  
far as Jahaz;  
therefore the loins of  
Moab quiver;  
his soul trembles.  
5 My heart cries out for  
Moab;  
his fugitives flee to Zoar,  
to Eglath-shelishiyah.  
For at the ascent of Luhith  
they go up weeping;  
on the road to Horonaim  
they raise a cry of  
destruction;  
6 the waters of Nimrim  
are a desolation;  
the grass is withered, the  
new growth fails,  
the verdure is no more.  
7 Therefore the abundance  
they have gained  
and what they have laid  
up  
they carry away  
over the Wadi of the  
Willows.  
8 For a cry has gone  
around the land of  
Moab;

the wailing reaches to  
Eglaim,  
the wailing reaches to  
Beer-elim.  
9 For the waters of Dibon  
are full of blood;  
yet I will bring upon  
Dibon even more—  
a lion for those of Moab  
who escape,  
for the remnant of the  
land.

**16** Send lambs  
to the ruler of the land,  
from Sela, by way of the  
desert,  
to the mount of  
daughter Zion.  
2 Like fluttering birds,  
like scattered nestlings,  
so are the daughters of  
Moab  
at the fords of the Arnon.  
3 “Give counsel,  
grant justice;  
make your shade like night  
at the height of noon;  
hide the outcasts,  
do not betray the  
fugitive;  
4 let the outcasts of Moab  
settle among you;  
be a refuge to them  
from the destroyer.”

When the oppressor is no  
more,  
and destruction has  
ceased,  
and marauders have  
vanished from the  
land,  
5 then a throne shall be  
established in steadfast  
love  
in the tent of David,  
and on it shall sit in  
faithfulness  
a ruler who seeks justice  
and is swift to do what is  
right.  
6 We have heard of the  
pride of Moab  
—how proud he is!—  
of his arrogance, his pride,  
and his insolence;  
his boasts are false.  
7 Therefore let Moab wail,  
let everyone wail for  
Moab.  
Mourn, utterly stricken,  
for the raisin cakes of  
Kir-hareseth.  
8 For the fields of Heshbon  
languish,  
and the vines of Sibmah,  
whose clusters once made  
drunk  
the lords of the nations,  
reached to Jazer



and strayed to the  
 desert;  
 their shoots once spread  
 abroad  
 and crossed over the sea.  
 9 Therefore I weep with the  
 weeping of Jazer  
 for the vines of Sibmah;  
 I drench you with my tears,  
 O Heshbon and Elealeh;  
 for the shout over your  
 fruit harvest  
 and your grain harvest  
 has ceased.  
 10 Joy and gladness are taken  
 away  
 from the fruitful field;  
 and in the vineyards no  
 songs are sung,  
 no shouts are raised;  
 no treader treads out wine  
 in the presses;  
 the vintage-shout is  
 hushed.  
 11 Therefore my heart throbs  
 like a harp for Moab,  
 and my very soul for Kir-  
 heres.  
 12 When Moab presents  
 himself, when he wearies  
 himself upon the high place,  
 when he comes to his  
 sanctuary to pray, he will not  
 prevail.

<sup>13</sup> This was the word that  
 the LORD spoke concerning  
 Moab in the past. <sup>14</sup> But now  
 the LORD says, In three years,  
 like the years of a hired  
 worker, the glory of Moab will  
 be brought into contempt, in  
 spite of all its great multitude;  
 and those who survive will be  
 very few and feeble.

**Galatians 1:1–10 (NRSV)**

*Salutation*

**1** Paul an apostle—sent  
 neither by human commission  
 nor from human authorities,  
 but through Jesus Christ and  
 God the Father, who raised  
 him from the dead— <sup>2</sup> and all  
 the members of God’s family  
 who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace  
 from God our Father and the  
 Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> who gave  
 himself for our sins to set us  
 free from the present evil age,  
 according to the will of our  
 God and Father, <sup>5</sup> to whom be  
 the glory forever and ever.  
 Amen.

*There Is No Other Gospel*

<sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you  
 are so quickly deserting the

one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—<sup>7</sup> not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.<sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!<sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

<sup>10</sup> Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

**Psalms 58:10-11** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> The righteous will rejoice when they see vengeance done; they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.

<sup>11</sup> People will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous;

surely there is a God who judges on earth."

**Proverbs 16:6-7** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> By loyalty and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one avoids evil.  
<sup>7</sup> When the ways of people please the LORD, he causes even their enemies to be at peace with them.

**May 29**



**Isaiah 17:1-18:7** (NRSV)

*An Oracle concerning Damascus*

**17** An oracle concerning Damascus.

See, Damascus will cease to be a city, and will become a heap of ruins.

<sup>2</sup> Her towns will be deserted forever; they will be places for flocks,

which will lie down, and  
no one will make them  
afraid.

<sup>3</sup> The fortress will disappear  
from Ephraim,  
and the kingdom from  
Damascus;  
and the remnant of Aram  
will be  
like the glory of the  
children of Israel,  
says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>4</sup> On that day  
the glory of Jacob will be  
brought low,  
and the fat of his flesh  
will grow lean.

<sup>5</sup> And it shall be as when  
reapers gather  
standing grain  
and their arms harvest  
the ears,  
and as when one gleans  
the ears of grain  
in the Valley of Rephaim.

Gleanings will be left in it,  
as when an olive tree is  
beaten—  
two or three berries  
in the top of the highest  
bough,  
four or five on the  
branches of a fruit  
tree,

says the LORD God of  
Israel.

<sup>7</sup> On that day people will  
regard their Maker, and their  
eyes will look to the Holy One  
of Israel; <sup>8</sup> they will not have  
regard for the altars, the work  
of their hands, and they will  
not look to what their own  
fingers have made, either the  
sacred poles or the altars of  
incense.

<sup>9</sup> On that day their strong  
cities will be like the deserted  
places of the Hivites and the  
Amorites, which they deserted  
because of the children of  
Israel, and there will be  
desolation.

<sup>10</sup> For you have forgotten the  
God of your salvation,  
and have not  
remembered the Rock  
of your refuge;  
therefore, though you  
plant pleasant plants  
and set out slips of an  
alien god,

<sup>11</sup> though you make them  
grow on the day that  
you plant them,  
and make them blossom  
in the morning that  
you sow;

yet the harvest will flee  
 away  
 in a day of grief and  
 incurable pain.  
<sup>12</sup> Ah, the thunder of many  
 peoples,  
 they thunder like the  
 thundering of the sea!  
 Ah, the roar of nations,  
 they roar like the roaring  
 of mighty waters!  
<sup>13</sup> The nations roar like the  
 roaring of many  
 waters,  
 but he will rebuke them,  
 and they will flee far  
 away,  
 chased like chaff on the  
 mountains before the  
 wind  
 and whirling dust before  
 the storm.  
<sup>14</sup> At evening time, lo, terror!  
 Before morning, they are  
 no more.  
 This is the fate of those  
 who despoil us,  
 and the lot of those who  
 plunder us.

*An Oracle concerning Ethiopia*

**18** Ah, land of whirring wings  
 beyond the rivers of  
 Ethiopia,

<sup>2</sup> sending ambassadors by  
 the Nile  
 in vessels of papyrus on  
 the waters!  
 Go, you swift messengers,  
 to a nation tall and  
 smooth,  
 to a people feared near  
 and far,  
 a nation mighty and  
 conquering,  
 whose land the rivers  
 divide.  
<sup>3</sup> All you inhabitants of the  
 world,  
 you who live on the  
 earth,  
 when a signal is raised on  
 the mountains, look!  
 When a trumpet is  
 blown, listen!  
<sup>4</sup> For thus the LORD said to  
 me:  
 I will quietly look from my  
 dwelling  
 like clear heat in  
 sunshine,  
 like a cloud of dew in the  
 heat of harvest.  
<sup>5</sup> For before the harvest,  
 when the blossom is  
 over  
 and the flower becomes  
 a ripening grape,

he will cut off the shoots  
with pruning hooks,  
and the spreading  
branches he will hew  
away.

<sup>6</sup> They shall all be left  
to the birds of prey of  
the mountains  
and to the animals of the  
earth.

And the birds of prey will  
summer on them,  
and all the animals of the  
earth will winter on  
them.

<sup>7</sup> At that time gifts will be  
brought to the LORD of hosts  
from a people tall and smooth,  
from a people feared near and  
far, a nation mighty and  
conquering, whose land the  
rivers divide, to Mount Zion,  
the place of the name of the  
LORD of hosts.

**Galatians 1:11–24 (NRSV)**

*Paul's Vindication  
of His Apostleship  
(Cp Acts 9)*

<sup>11</sup> For I want you to know,  
brothers and sisters, that the  
gospel that was proclaimed by  
me is not of human origin;  
<sup>12</sup> for I did not receive it from a  
human source, nor was I  
taught it, but I received it

through a revelation of Jesus  
Christ.

<sup>13</sup> You have heard, no  
doubt, of my earlier life in  
Judaism. I was violently  
persecuting the church of God  
and was trying to destroy it.

<sup>14</sup> I advanced in Judaism  
beyond many among my  
people of the same age, for I  
was far more zealous for the  
traditions of my ancestors.

<sup>15</sup> But when God, who had set  
me apart before I was born  
and called me through his  
grace, was pleased <sup>16</sup> to reveal  
his Son to me, so that I might  
proclaim him among the  
Gentiles, I did not confer with  
any human being, <sup>17</sup> nor did I  
go up to Jerusalem to those  
who were already apostles  
before me, but I went away at  
once into Arabia, and  
afterwards I returned to  
Damascus.

<sup>18</sup> Then after three years I  
did go up to Jerusalem to visit  
Cephas and stayed with him  
fifteen days; <sup>19</sup> but I did not  
see any other apostle except  
James the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup> In  
what I am writing to you,  
before God, I do not lie!

<sup>21</sup> Then I went into the regions

of Syria and Cilicia, <sup>22</sup> and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; <sup>23</sup> they only heard it said, “The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy.” <sup>24</sup> And they glorified God because of me.

**Psalms 59:1-13** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam, when Saul ordered his house to be watched in order to kill him.

<sup>1</sup> Deliver me from my  
enemies, O my God;  
protect me from those  
who rise up against  
me.  
<sup>2</sup> Deliver me from those who  
work evil;  
from the bloodthirsty  
save me.  
<sup>3</sup> Even now they lie in wait  
for my life;  
the mighty stir up strife  
against me.  
For no transgression or sin  
of mine, O LORD,  
<sup>4</sup> for no fault of mine, they  
run and make ready.  
Rouse yourself, come to  
my help and see!

<sup>5</sup> You, LORD God of hosts,  
are God of Israel.  
Awake to punish all the  
nations;  
spare none of those who  
treacherously plot evil.

*Selah*

<sup>6</sup> Each evening they come  
back,  
howling like dogs  
and prowling about the  
city.  
<sup>7</sup> There they are, bellowing  
with their mouths,  
with sharp words on  
their lips—  
for “Who,” they think,  
“will hear us?”  
<sup>8</sup> But you laugh at them, O  
LORD;  
you hold all the nations  
in derision.  
<sup>9</sup> O my strength, I will watch  
for you;  
for you, O God, are my  
fortress.  
<sup>10</sup> My God in his steadfast  
love will meet me;  
my God will let me look  
in triumph on my  
enemies.  
<sup>11</sup> Do not kill them, or my  
people may forget;

make them totter by  
your power, and bring  
them down,

O Lord, our shield.

<sup>12</sup> For the sin of their mouths,  
the words of their lips,  
let them be trapped in  
their pride.

For the cursing and lies  
that they utter,

<sup>13</sup> consume them in wrath;  
consume them until they  
are no more.

Then it will be known to  
the ends of the earth  
that God rules over  
Jacob. *Selah*

**Proverbs 16:8–9 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Better is a little with  
righteousness  
than large income with  
injustice.

<sup>9</sup> The human mind plans the  
way,  
but the LORD directs the  
steps.

**May 30**



**Isaiah 19:1–25 (NRSV)**

*An Oracle concerning Egypt*

**19** An oracle concerning  
Egypt.

See, the LORD is riding on a  
swift cloud  
and comes to Egypt;  
the idols of Egypt will  
tremble at his  
presence,  
and the heart of the  
Egyptians will melt  
within them.

<sup>2</sup> I will stir up Egyptians  
against Egyptians,  
and they will fight, one  
against the other,  
neighbor against  
neighbor,  
city against city, kingdom  
against kingdom;  
<sup>3</sup> the spirit of the Egyptians  
within them will be  
emptied out,  
and I will confound their  
plans;  
they will consult the idols  
and the spirits of the  
dead  
and the ghosts and the  
familiar spirits;  
<sup>4</sup> I will deliver the Egyptians

into the hand of a hard  
master;  
a fierce king will rule over  
them,  
says the Sovereign, the  
LORD of hosts.  
5 The waters of the Nile will  
be dried up,  
and the river will be  
parched and dry;  
6 its canals will become foul,  
and the branches of  
Egypt's Nile will  
diminish and dry up,  
reeds and rushes will rot  
away.  
7 There will be bare places  
by the Nile,  
on the brink of the Nile;  
and all that is sown by the  
Nile will dry up,  
be driven away, and be  
no more.  
8 Those who fish will mourn;  
all who cast hooks in the  
Nile will lament,  
and those who spread  
nets on the water will  
languish.  
9 The workers in flax will be  
in despair,  
and the carders and  
those at the loom will  
grow pale.

10 Its weavers will be  
dismayed,  
and all who work for  
wages will be grieved.  
11 The princes of Zoan are  
utterly foolish;  
the wise counselors of  
Pharaoh give stupid  
counsel.  
How can you say to  
Pharaoh,  
"I am one of the sages,  
a descendant of ancient  
kings"?"  
12 Where now are your  
sages?  
Let them tell you and  
make known  
what the LORD of hosts  
has planned against  
Egypt.  
13 The princes of Zoan have  
become fools,  
and the princes of  
Memphis are deluded;  
those who are the  
cornerstones of its  
tribes  
have led Egypt astray.  
14 The LORD has poured into  
them  
a spirit of confusion;  
and they have made Egypt  
stagger in all its doings



as a drunkard staggers  
around in vomit.

<sup>15</sup> Neither head nor tail, palm  
branch or reed,  
will be able to do  
anything for Egypt.

<sup>16</sup> On that day the  
Egyptians will be like women,  
and tremble with fear before  
the hand that the LORD of  
hosts raises against them.

<sup>17</sup> And the land of Judah will  
become a terror to the  
Egyptians; everyone to whom  
it is mentioned will fear  
because of the plan that the  
LORD of hosts is planning  
against them.

*Egypt, Assyria,  
and Israel Blessed*

<sup>18</sup> On that day there will be  
five cities in the land of Egypt  
that speak the language of  
Canaan and swear allegiance  
to the LORD of hosts. One of  
these will be called the City of  
the Sun.

<sup>19</sup> On that day there will be  
an altar to the LORD in the  
center of the land of Egypt,  
and a pillar to the LORD at its  
border. <sup>20</sup> It will be a sign and a  
witness to the LORD of hosts in  
the land of Egypt; when they

cry to the LORD because of  
oppressors, he will send them  
a savior, and will defend and  
deliver them. <sup>21</sup> The LORD will  
make himself known to the  
Egyptians; and the Egyptians  
will know the LORD on that  
day, and will worship with  
sacrifice and burnt offering,  
and they will make vows to  
the LORD and perform them.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD will strike Egypt,  
striking and healing; they will  
return to the LORD, and he will  
listen to their supplications  
and heal them.

<sup>23</sup> On that day there will be  
a highway from Egypt to  
Assyria, and the Assyrian will  
come into Egypt, and the  
Egyptian into Assyria, and the  
Egyptians will worship with  
the Assyrians.

<sup>24</sup> On that day Israel will be  
the third with Egypt and  
Assyria, a blessing in the midst  
of the earth, <sup>25</sup> whom the LORD  
of hosts has blessed, saying,  
"Blessed be Egypt my people,  
and Assyria the work of my  
hands, and Israel my  
heritage."

**Galatians 2:1–10** (NRSV)

*Paul and the Other Apostles*

*(Cp Acts 15:1–21)*

**2** Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. <sup>2</sup> I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain. <sup>3</sup> But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. <sup>4</sup> But because of false believers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us— <sup>5</sup> we did not submit to them even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might always remain with you. <sup>6</sup> And from those who were supposed to be acknowledged leaders (what they actually were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)— those leaders contributed nothing to me. <sup>7</sup> On the

contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised <sup>8</sup> (for he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles), <sup>9</sup> and when James and Cephas and John, who were acknowledged pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. <sup>10</sup> They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.

**Psalms 59:14–17** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Each evening they come  
back,

howling like dogs  
and prowling about the  
city.

<sup>15</sup> They roam about for food,  
and growl if they do not  
get their fill.

- 16 But I will sing of your  
 might;  
 I will sing aloud of your  
 steadfast love in the  
 morning.  
 For you have been a  
 fortress for me  
 and a refuge in the day  
 of my distress.
- 17 O my strength, I will sing  
 praises to you,  
 for you, O God, are my  
 fortress,  
 the God who shows me  
 steadfast love.

**Proverbs 16:10–11 (NRSV)**

- 10 Inspired decisions are on  
 the lips of a king;  
 his mouth does not sin in  
 judgment.
- 11 Honest balances and scales  
 are the LORD’S;  
 all the weights in the bag  
 are his work.

**May 31**



**Isaiah 20:1–21:17 (NRSV)**

*Isaiah Dramatizes the  
 Conquest of Egypt  
 and Ethiopia*

**20** In the year that the  
 commander-in-chief, who was  
 sent by King Sargon of Assyria,  
 came to Ashdod and fought  
 against it and took it—<sup>2</sup> at  
 that time the LORD had spoken  
 to Isaiah son of Amoz, saying,  
 “Go, and loose the sackcloth  
 from your loins and take your  
 sandals off your feet,” and he  
 had done so, walking naked  
 and barefoot.<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD  
 said, “Just as my servant Isaiah  
 has walked naked and  
 barefoot for three years as a  
 sign and a portent against  
 Egypt and Ethiopia,<sup>4</sup> so shall  
 the king of Assyria lead away  
 the Egyptians as captives and  
 the Ethiopians as exiles, both  
 the young and the old, naked  
 and barefoot, with buttocks  
 uncovered, to the shame of  
 Egypt.<sup>5</sup> And they shall be  
 dismayed and confounded  
 because of Ethiopia their hope  
 and of Egypt their boast.<sup>6</sup> In  
 that day the inhabitants of this  
 coastland will say, ‘See, this is  
 what has happened to those in  
 whom we hoped and to whom  
 we fled for help and

deliverance from the king of Assyria! And we, how shall we escape?’ ”

*Oracles concerning Babylon,  
Edom, and Arabia*

**21** The oracle concerning the wilderness of the sea.

As whirlwinds in the Negeb sweep on,  
it comes from the desert,  
from a terrible land.

<sup>2</sup> A stern vision is told to me;  
the betrayer betrays,  
and the destroyer destroys.

Go up, O Elam,  
lay siege, O Media;  
all the sighing she has caused

I bring to an end.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore my loins are filled with anguish;  
pangs have seized me,  
like the pangs of a woman in labor;  
I am bowed down so that I cannot hear,  
I am dismayed so that I cannot see.

<sup>4</sup> My mind reels, horror has appalled me;  
the twilight I longed for has been turned for me into trembling.

<sup>5</sup> They prepare the table,  
they spread the rugs,  
they eat, they drink.  
Rise up, commanders,  
oil the shield!

<sup>6</sup> For thus the Lord said to me:

“Go, post a lookout,  
let him announce what he sees.

<sup>7</sup> When he sees riders,  
horsemen in pairs,  
riders on donkeys, riders on camels,  
let him listen diligently,  
very diligently.”

<sup>8</sup> Then the watcher called out:

“Upon a watchtower I stand, O Lord,  
continually by day,  
and at my post I am stationed  
throughout the night.

<sup>9</sup> Look, there they come,  
riders,  
horsemen in pairs!”

Then he responded,  
“Fallen, fallen is Babylon;  
and all the images of her gods  
lie shattered on the ground.”

<sup>10</sup> O my threshed and winnowed one,

what I have heard from  
the LORD of hosts,  
the God of Israel, I  
announce to you.  
11 The oracle concerning  
Dumah.  
One is calling to me from  
Seir,  
“Sentinel, what of the  
night?  
Sentinel, what of the  
night?”  
12 The sentinel says:  
“Morning comes, and also  
the night.  
If you will inquire,  
inquire;  
come back again.”  
13 The oracle concerning the  
desert plain.  
In the scrub of the desert  
plain you will lodge,  
O caravans of Dedanites.  
14 Bring water to the thirsty,  
meet the fugitive with  
bread,  
O inhabitants of the land  
of Tema.  
15 For they have fled from  
the swords,  
from the drawn sword,  
from the bent bow,  
and from the stress of  
battle.

<sup>16</sup> For thus the Lord said to  
me: Within a year, according  
to the years of a hired worker,  
all the glory of Kedar will come  
to an end; <sup>17</sup> and the  
remaining bows of Kedar’s  
warriors will be few; for the  
LORD, the God of Israel, has  
spoken.

**Galatians 2:11–16** (NRSV)

*Paul Rebukes Peter at Antioch*

<sup>11</sup> But when Cephas came  
to Antioch, I opposed him to  
his face, because he stood  
self-condemned; <sup>12</sup> for until  
certain people came from  
James, he used to eat with the  
Gentiles. But after they came,  
he drew back and kept himself  
separate for fear of the  
circumcision faction. <sup>13</sup> And  
the other Jews joined him in  
this hypocrisy, so that even  
Barnabas was led astray by  
their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup> But when I  
saw that they were not acting  
consistently with the truth of  
the gospel, I said to Cephas  
before them all, “If you,  
though a Jew, live like a  
Gentile and not like a Jew,  
how can you compel the  
Gentiles to live like Jews?”

*Jews and Gentiles  
Are Saved by Faith*

<sup>15</sup> We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; <sup>16</sup> yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.

**Psalm 60:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for National Victory  
after Defeat  
(Cp Ps 108:6–13)*

To the leader: according to the Lily of the Covenant. A Mikdam of David; for instruction; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and when Joab on his return killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

- <sup>1</sup> O God, you have rejected us, broken our defenses;  
you have been angry;  
now restore us!
- <sup>2</sup> You have caused the land to quake; you have torn it open;  
repair the cracks in it, for it is tottering.

- <sup>3</sup> You have made your people suffer hard things;  
you have given us wine to drink that made us reel.
- <sup>4</sup> You have set up a banner for those who fear you, to rally to it out of bowshot. *Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> Give victory with your right hand, and answer us, so that those whom you love may be rescued.

**Proverbs 16:12–13 (NRSV)**

- <sup>12</sup> It is an abomination to kings to do evil,  
for the throne is established by righteousness.
- <sup>13</sup> Righteous lips are the delight of a king,  
and he loves those who speak what is right.

# June 1



## Isaiah 22:1-25 (NRSV)

### *A Warning of Destruction of Jerusalem*

**22** The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

What do you mean that  
you have gone up,  
all of you, to the  
housetops,

<sup>2</sup> you that are full of  
shoutings,  
tumultuous city, exultant  
town?

Your slain are not slain by  
the sword,  
nor are they dead in  
battle.

<sup>3</sup> Your rulers have all fled  
together;  
they were captured  
without the use of a  
bow.

All of you who were found  
were captured,  
though they had fled far  
away.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore I said:  
Look away from me,  
let me weep bitter tears;  
do not try to comfort me  
for the destruction of my  
beloved people.

<sup>5</sup> For the Lord God of hosts  
has a day  
of tumult and trampling  
and confusion  
in the valley of vision,  
a battering down of walls  
and a cry for help to the  
mountains.

<sup>6</sup> Elam bore the quiver  
with chariots and  
cavalry,  
and Kir uncovered the  
shield.

<sup>7</sup> Your choicest valleys were  
full of chariots,  
and the cavalry took  
their stand at the  
gates.

<sup>8</sup> He has taken away the  
covering of Judah.

On that day you looked to  
the weapons of the House of  
the Forest, <sup>9</sup> and you saw that  
there were many breaches in  
the city of David, and you  
collected the waters of the  
lower pool. <sup>10</sup> You counted the  
houses of Jerusalem, and you  
broke down the houses to  
fortify the wall. <sup>11</sup> You made a  
reservoir between the two  
walls for the water of the old  
pool. But you did not look to  
him who did it, or have regard

for him who planned it long ago.

<sup>12</sup> In that day the Lord GOD of hosts called to weeping and mourning, to baldness and putting on sackcloth;

<sup>13</sup> but instead there was joy and festivity, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep, eating meat and drinking wine.

“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

<sup>14</sup> The LORD of hosts has revealed himself in my ears:

Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die, says the Lord GOD of hosts.

*Denunciation of Self-Seeking Officials*

<sup>15</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: Come, go to this steward, to Shebna, who is master of the household, and say to him: <sup>16</sup> What right do you have here? Who are your relatives here, that you have cut out a tomb here for

yourself, cutting a tomb on the height, and carving a habitation for yourself in the rock? <sup>17</sup> The LORD is about to hurl you away violently, my fellow. He will seize firm hold on you, <sup>18</sup> whirl you round and round, and throw you like a ball into a wide land; there you shall die, and there your splendid chariots shall lie, O you disgrace to your master's house! <sup>19</sup> I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your post.

<sup>20</sup> On that day I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah, <sup>21</sup> and will clothe him with your robe and bind your sash on him. I will commit your authority to his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. <sup>22</sup> I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open. <sup>23</sup> I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honor to his ancestral house. <sup>24</sup> And they will hang on him the whole weight of his ancestral house, the offspring and issue,



every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons.<sup>25</sup> On that day, says the LORD of hosts, the peg that was fastened in a secure place will give way; it will be cut down and fall, and the load that was on it will perish, for the LORD has spoken.

**Galatians 2:17–21 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not!  
<sup>18</sup> But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor.<sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ;<sup>20</sup> and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.<sup>21</sup> I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

**Psalm 60:6-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> God has promised in his sanctuary:  
“With exultation I will divide up Shechem, and portion out the Vale of Succoth.  
<sup>7</sup> Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim is my helmet; Judah is my scepter.  
<sup>8</sup> Moab is my washbasin; on Edom I hurl my shoe; over Philistia I shout in triumph.”  
<sup>9</sup> Who will bring me to the fortified city?  
Who will lead me to Edom?  
<sup>10</sup> Have you not rejected us, O God?  
You do not go out, O God, with our armies.  
<sup>11</sup> O grant us help against the foe,  
for human help is worthless.  
<sup>12</sup> With God we shall do valiantly;  
it is he who will tread down our foes.

**Proverbs 16:14–15** (NRSV)

- <sup>14</sup> A king's wrath is a  
messenger of death,  
and whoever is wise will  
appease it.
- <sup>15</sup> In the light of a king's face  
there is life,  
and his favor is like the  
clouds that bring the  
spring rain.

**June 2**



**Isaiah 23:1-24:23** (NRSV)

*An Oracle concerning Tyre*

**23** The oracle concerning  
Tyre.

Wail, O ships of Tarshish,  
for your fortress is  
destroyed.

When they came in from  
Cyprus  
they learned of it.

- <sup>2</sup> Be still, O inhabitants of  
the coast,  
O merchants of Sidon,  
your messengers crossed  
over the sea
- <sup>3</sup> and were on the mighty  
waters;

your revenue was the grain  
of Shihor,  
the harvest of the Nile;  
you were the merchant  
of the nations.

- <sup>4</sup> Be ashamed, O Sidon, for  
the sea has spoken,  
the fortress of the sea,  
saying:  
“I have neither labored nor  
given birth,  
I have neither reared  
young men  
nor brought up young  
women.”

- <sup>5</sup> When the report comes to  
Egypt,  
they will be in anguish  
over the report about  
Tyre.

- <sup>6</sup> Cross over to Tarshish—  
wail, O inhabitants of the  
coast!

- <sup>7</sup> Is this your exultant city  
whose origin is from days  
of old,  
whose feet carried her  
to settle far away?

- <sup>8</sup> Who has planned this  
against Tyre, the  
bestower of crowns,  
whose merchants were  
princes,  
whose traders were the  
honored of the earth?

<sup>9</sup> The LORD of hosts has  
planned it—  
to defile the pride of all  
glory,  
to shame all the honored  
of the earth.

<sup>10</sup> Cross over to your own  
land,  
O ships of Tarshish;  
this is a harbor no more.

<sup>11</sup> He has stretched out his  
hand over the sea,  
he has shaken the  
kingdoms;  
the LORD has given  
command concerning  
Canaan  
to destroy its fortresses.

<sup>12</sup> He said:  
You will exult no longer,  
O oppressed virgin  
daughter Sidon;  
rise, cross over to Cyprus—  
even there you will have  
no rest.

<sup>13</sup> Look at the land of the  
Chaldeans! This is the people;  
it was not Assyria. They  
destined Tyre for wild animals.  
They erected their siege  
towers, they tore down her  
palaces, they made her a ruin.

<sup>14</sup> Wail, O ships of Tarshish,  
for your fortress is  
destroyed.

<sup>15</sup> From that day Tyre will be  
forgotten for seventy years,  
the lifetime of one king. At the  
end of seventy years, it will  
happen to Tyre as in the song  
about the prostitute:

<sup>16</sup> Take a harp,  
go about the city,  
you forgotten prostitute!  
Make sweet melody,  
sing many songs,  
that you may be  
remembered.

<sup>17</sup> At the end of seventy years,  
the LORD will visit Tyre, and she  
will return to her trade, and  
will prostitute herself with all  
the kingdoms of the world on  
the face of the earth. <sup>18</sup> Her  
merchandise and her wages  
will be dedicated to the LORD;  
her profits will not be stored  
or hoarded, but her  
merchandise will supply  
abundant food and fine  
clothing for those who live in  
the presence of the LORD.

*Impending Judgment  
on the Earth*

**24** Now the LORD is about to  
lay waste the earth and  
make it desolate,

and he will twist its  
surface and scatter its  
inhabitants.  
2 And it shall be, as with the  
people, so with the  
priest;  
as with the slave, so with  
his master;  
as with the maid, so with  
her mistress;  
as with the buyer, so with  
the seller;  
as with the lender, so  
with the borrower;  
as with the creditor, so  
with the debtor.  
3 The earth shall be utterly  
laid waste and utterly  
despoiled;  
for the LORD has spoken  
this word.  
4 The earth dries up and  
wITHERS,  
the world languishes and  
wITHERS;  
the heavens languish  
together with the  
earth.  
5 The earth lies polluted  
under its inhabitants;  
for they have transgressed  
laws,  
violated the statutes,  
broken the everlasting  
covenant.

6 Therefore a curse devours  
the earth,  
and its inhabitants suffer  
for their guilt;  
therefore the inhabitants  
of the earth dwindled,  
and few people are left.  
7 The wine dries up,  
the vine languishes,  
all the merry-hearted  
sigh.  
8 The mirth of the timbrels is  
stilled,  
the noise of the jubilant  
has ceased,  
the mirth of the lyre is  
stilled.  
9 No longer do they drink  
wine with singing;  
strong drink is bitter to  
those who drink it.  
10 The city of chaos is broken  
down,  
every house is shut up so  
that no one can enter.  
11 There is an outcry in the  
streets for lack of wine;  
all joy has reached its  
eventide;  
the gladness of the earth  
is banished.  
12 Desolation is left in the  
city,  
the gates are battered  
into ruins.

13 For thus it shall be on the  
earth  
and among the nations,  
as when an olive tree is  
beaten,  
as at the gleaning when  
the grape harvest is  
ended.

14 They lift up their voices,  
they sing for joy;  
they shout from the west  
over the majesty of the  
LORD.

15 Therefore in the east give  
glory to the LORD;  
in the coastlands of the  
sea glorify the name of  
the LORD, the God of  
Israel.

16 From the ends of the earth  
we hear songs of  
praise,  
of glory to the Righteous  
One.  
But I say, I pine away,  
I pine away. Woe is me!  
For the treacherous deal  
treacherously,  
the treacherous deal  
very treacherously.

17 Terror, and the pit, and the  
snare  
are upon you, O  
inhabitant of the earth!

18 Whoever flees at the  
sound of the terror  
shall fall into the pit;  
and whoever climbs out of  
the pit  
shall be caught in the  
snare.  
For the windows of heaven  
are opened,  
and the foundations of  
the earth tremble.

19 The earth is utterly broken,  
the earth is torn asunder,  
the earth is violently  
shaken.

20 The earth staggers like a  
drunkard,  
it sways like a hut;  
its transgression lies heavy  
upon it,  
and it falls, and will not  
rise again.

21 On that day the LORD will  
punish  
the host of heaven in  
heaven,  
and on earth the kings of  
the earth.

22 They will be gathered  
together  
like prisoners in a pit;  
they will be shut up in a  
prison,  
and after many days they  
will be punished.

23 Then the moon will be  
abashed,  
and the sun ashamed;  
for the LORD of hosts will  
reign  
on Mount Zion and in  
Jerusalem,  
and before his elders he  
will manifest his glory.

**Galatians 3:1–9** (NRSV)

*Law or Faith*  
(Cp Rom 4:1–25)

**3** You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! <sup>2</sup> The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? <sup>3</sup> Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? <sup>4</sup> Did you experience so much for nothing?—if it really was for nothing. <sup>5</sup> Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

<sup>6</sup> Just as Abraham  
“believed God, and it was

reckoned to him as  
righteousness,” <sup>7</sup> so, you see,  
those who believe are the  
descendants of Abraham.

<sup>8</sup> And the scripture, foreseeing  
that God would justify the  
Gentiles by faith, declared the  
gospel beforehand to  
Abraham, saying, “All the  
Gentiles shall be blessed in  
you.” <sup>9</sup> For this reason, those  
who believe are blessed with  
Abraham who believed.

**Psalms 61:1-3** (NRSV)

*Assurance of God’s Protection*

To the leader: with stringed  
instruments. Of David.

- 1 Hear my cry, O God;  
listen to my prayer.  
2 From the end of the earth I  
call to you,  
when my heart is faint.  
Lead me to the rock  
that is higher than I;  
3 for you are my refuge,  
a strong tower against  
the enemy.

**Proverbs 16:16–17** (NRSV)

- <sup>16</sup> How much better to get  
wisdom than gold!  
To get understanding is  
to be chosen rather  
than silver.

17 The highway of the upright  
avoids evil;  
those who guard their  
way preserve their  
lives.

## June 3



**Isaiah 25:1-26:21** (NRSV)  
*Praise for Deliverance  
from Oppression*

**25** O LORD, you are my God;  
I will exalt you, I will  
praise your name;  
for you have done  
wonderful things,  
plans formed of old,  
faithful and sure.  
2 For you have made the city  
a heap,  
the fortified city a ruin;  
the palace of aliens is a city  
no more,  
it will never be rebuilt.  
3 Therefore strong peoples  
will glorify you;  
cities of ruthless nations  
will fear you.  
4 For you have been a refuge  
to the poor,

a refuge to the needy in  
their distress,  
a shelter from the  
rainstorm and a shade  
from the heat.

When the blast of the  
ruthless was like a  
winter rainstorm,  
5 the noise of aliens like  
heat in a dry place,  
you subdued the heat with  
the shade of clouds;  
the song of the ruthless  
was stilled.

6 On this mountain the LORD  
of hosts will make for  
all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a  
feast of well-aged  
wines,  
of rich food filled with  
marrow, of well-aged  
wines strained clear.

7 And he will destroy on this  
mountain  
the shroud that is cast  
over all peoples,  
the sheet that is spread  
over all nations;  
8 he will swallow up death  
forever.

Then the Lord GOD will  
wipe away the tears  
from all faces,

and the disgrace of his  
people he will take  
away from all the  
earth,

for the LORD has spoken.

9 It will be said on that day,  
Lo, this is our God; we  
have waited for him, so  
that he might save us.  
This is the LORD for  
whom we have waited;  
let us be glad and rejoice  
in his salvation.

10 For the hand of the LORD  
will rest on this  
mountain.

The Moabites shall be  
trodden down in their  
place  
as straw is trodden down  
in a dung-pit.

11 Though they spread out  
their hands in the  
midst of it,  
as swimmers spread out  
their hands to swim,  
their pride will be laid  
low despite the  
struggle of their hands.

12 The high fortifications of  
his walls will be  
brought down,  
laid low, cast to the  
ground, even to the  
dust.

### *Judah's Song of Victory*

**26** On that day this song will  
be sung in the land of Judah:

We have a strong city;  
he sets up victory  
like walls and bulwarks.

2 Open the gates,  
so that the righteous  
nation that keeps faith  
may enter in.

3 Those of steadfast mind  
you keep in peace—  
in peace because they  
trust in you.

4 Trust in the LORD forever,  
for in the LORD GOD  
you have an everlasting  
rock.

5 For he has brought low  
the inhabitants of the  
height;  
the lofty city he lays low.  
He lays it low to the  
ground,  
casts it to the dust.

6 The foot tramples it,  
the feet of the poor,  
the steps of the needy.

7 The way of the righteous is  
level;  
O Just One, you make  
smooth the path of the  
righteous.


8 In the path of your  
judgments,



O LORD, we wait for you;  
your name and your  
renown  
are the soul's desire.  
9 My soul yearns for you in  
the night,  
my spirit within me  
earnestly seeks you.  
For when your judgments  
are in the earth,  
the inhabitants of the  
world learn  
righteousness.  
10 If favor is shown to the  
wicked,  
they do not learn  
righteousness;  
in the land of uprightness  
they deal perversely  
and do not see the  
majesty of the LORD.  
11 O LORD, your hand is lifted  
up,  
but they do not see it.  
Let them see your zeal for  
your people, and be  
ashamed.  
Let the fire for your  
adversaries consume  
them.  
12 O LORD, you will ordain  
peace for us,  
for indeed, all that we  
have done, you have  
done for us.

13 O LORD our God,  
other lords besides you  
have ruled over us,  
but we acknowledge  
your name alone.  
14 The dead do not live;  
shades do not rise—  
because you have  
punished and  
destroyed them,  
and wiped out all  
memory of them.  
15 But you have increased the  
nation, O LORD,  
you have increased the  
nation; you are  
glorified;  
you have enlarged all the  
borders of the land.  
16 O LORD, in distress they  
sought you,  
they poured out a prayer  
when your chastening  
was on them.  
17 Like a woman with child,  
who writhes and cries  
out in her pangs  
when she is near her  
time,  
so were we because of  
you, O LORD;  
18 we were with child, we  
writhed,  
but we gave birth only to  
wind.

We have won no victories  
on earth,  
and no one is born to  
inhabit the world.



<sup>19</sup> Your dead shall live, their  
corpses shall rise.  
O dwellers in the dust,  
awake and sing for joy!  
For your dew is a radiant  
dew,  
and the earth will give  
birth to those long  
dead.

<sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter  
your chambers,  
and shut your doors  
behind you;  
hide yourselves for a little  
while  
until the wrath is past.

<sup>21</sup> For the LORD comes out  
from his place  
to punish the inhabitants  
of the earth for their  
iniquity;  
the earth will disclose the  
blood shed on it,  
and will no longer cover  
its slain.

**Galatians 3:10–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> For all who rely on the  
works of the law are under a  
curse; for it is written, “Cursed  
is everyone who does not

observe and obey all the  
things written in the book of  
the law.” <sup>11</sup> Now it is evident  
that no one is justified before  
God by the law; for “The one  
who is righteous will live by  
faith.” <sup>12</sup> But the law does not  
rest on faith; on the contrary,  
“Whoever does the works of  
the law will live by them.”

<sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the  
curse of the law by becoming  
a curse for us—for it is  
written, “Cursed is everyone  
who hangs on a tree”— <sup>14</sup> in  
order that in Christ Jesus the  
blessing of Abraham might  
come to the Gentiles, so that  
we might receive the promise  
of the Spirit through faith.

**Psalm 61:4-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Let me abide in your tent  
forever,  
find refuge under the  
shelter of your wings.  
*Selah*

<sup>5</sup> For you, O God, have  
heard my vows;  
you have given me the  
heritage of those who  
fear your name.

<sup>6</sup> Prolong the life of the king;  
may his years endure to  
all generations!

7 May he be enthroned  
forever before God;  
appoint steadfast love  
and faithfulness to  
watch over him!  
8 So I will always sing praises  
to your name,  
as I pay my vows day  
after day.

**Proverbs 16:18** (NRSV)

18 Pride goes before  
destruction,  
and a haughty spirit  
before a fall.

**June 4**



**Isaiah 27:1-28:13** (NRSV)

*Israel's Redemption*

**27** On that day the LORD with  
his cruel and great and strong  
sword will punish Leviathan  
the fleeing serpent, Leviathan  
the twisting serpent, and he  
will kill the dragon that is in  
the sea.

2 On that day:  
A pleasant vineyard, sing  
about it!

3 I, the LORD, am its  
keeper;  
every moment I water it.  
I guard it night and day  
so that no one can harm  
it;  
4 I have no wrath.  
If it gives me thorns and  
briers,  
I will march to battle  
against it.  
I will burn it up.  
5 Or else let it cling to me for  
protection,  
let it make peace with  
me,  
let it make peace with  
me.  
6 In days to come Jacob shall  
take root,  
Israel shall blossom and  
put forth shoots,  
and fill the whole world  
with fruit.  
7 Has he struck them down  
as he struck down  
those who struck  
them?  
Or have they been killed  
as their killers were  
killed?  
8 By expulsion, by exile you  
struggled against them;

with his fierce blast he  
removed them in the  
day of the east wind.  
9 Therefore by this the guilt  
of Jacob will be  
expiated,  
and this will be the full  
fruit of the removal of  
his sin:  
when he makes all the  
stones of the altars  
like chalkstones crushed  
to pieces,  
no sacred poles or  
incense altars will  
remain standing.  
10 For the fortified city is  
solitary,  
a habitation deserted  
and forsaken, like the  
wilderness;  
the calves graze there,  
there they lie down, and  
strip its branches.  
11 When its boughs are dry,  
they are broken;  
women come and make  
a fire of them.  
For this is a people without  
understanding;  
therefore he that made  
them will not have  
compassion on them,  
he that formed them will  
show them no favor.

<sup>12</sup> On that day the LORD will  
thresh from the channel of the  
Euphrates to the Wadi of  
Egypt, and you will be  
gathered one by one, O  
people of Israel. <sup>13</sup> And on that  
day a great trumpet will be  
blown, and those who were  
lost in the land of Assyria and  
those who were driven out to  
the land of Egypt will come  
and worship the LORD on the  
holy mountain at Jerusalem.

*Judgment on Corrupt Rulers,  
Priests, and Prophets*

**28** Ah, the proud garland of  
the drunkards of  
Ephraim,  
and the fading flower of  
its glorious beauty,  
which is on the head of  
those bloated with rich  
food, of those  
overcome with wine!  
2 See, the Lord has one who  
is mighty and strong;  
like a storm of hail, a  
destroying tempest,  
like a storm of mighty,  
overflowing waters;  
with his hand he will hurl  
them down to the  
earth.

3 Trampled under foot will  
be  
the proud garland of the  
drunkards of Ephraim.  
4 And the fading flower of its  
glorious beauty,  
which is on the head of  
those bloated with rich  
food,  
will be like a first-ripe fig  
before the summer;  
whoever sees it, eats it  
up  
as soon as it comes to  
hand.  
5 In that day the LORD of  
hosts will be a garland  
of glory,  
and a diadem of beauty,  
to the remnant of his  
people;  
6 and a spirit of justice to  
the one who sits in  
judgment,  
and strength to those  
who turn back the  
battle at the gate.  
7 These also reel with wine  
and stagger with strong  
drink;  
the priest and the prophet  
reel with strong drink,  
they are confused with  
wine,

they stagger with strong  
drink;  
they err in vision,  
they stumble in giving  
judgment.  
8 All tables are covered with  
filthy vomit;  
no place is clean.  
9 "Whom will he teach  
knowledge,  
and to whom will he  
explain the message?  
Those who are weaned  
from milk,  
those taken from the  
breast?  
10 For it is precept upon  
precept, precept upon  
precept,  
line upon line, line upon  
line,  
here a little, there a  
little."  
11 Truly, with stammering lip  
and with alien tongue  
he will speak to this  
people,  
to whom he has said,  
"This is rest;  
give rest to the weary;  
and this is repose";  
yet they would not hear.  
13 Therefore the word of the  
LORD will be to them,

“Precept upon precept,  
precept upon precept,  
line upon line, line upon  
line,  
here a little, there a  
little;”

in order that they may go,  
and fall backward,  
and be broken, and  
snared, and taken.

### **Galatians 3:15–22** (NRSV)

*The Promise to Abraham*  
(Cp Gen 12:1–3)

<sup>15</sup> Brothers and sisters, I give an example from daily life: once a person’s will has been ratified, no one adds to it or annuls it. <sup>16</sup> Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring; it does not say, “And to offsprings,” as of many; but it says, “And to your offspring,” that is, to one person, who is Christ. <sup>17</sup> My point is this: the law, which came four hundred thirty years later, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. <sup>18</sup> For if the inheritance comes from the law, it no longer comes from the promise; but God granted it to Abraham through the promise.

### *The Purpose of the Law*

<sup>19</sup> Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring would come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained through angels by a mediator. <sup>20</sup> Now a mediator involves more than one party; but God is one.

<sup>21</sup> Is the law then opposed to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could make alive, then righteousness would indeed come through the law. <sup>22</sup> But the scripture has imprisoned all things under the power of sin, so that what was promised through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

### **Psalms 62:1-8** (NRSV)

*Song of Trust in God Alone*

To the leader: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> For God alone my soul  
waits in silence;  
from him comes my  
salvation.

<sup>2</sup> He alone is my rock and  
my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall never  
be shaken.



3 How long will you assail a  
person,  
will you batter your  
victim, all of you,  
as you would a leaning  
wall, a tottering fence?  
4 Their only plan is to bring  
down a person of  
prominence.  
They take pleasure in  
falsehood;  
they bless with their  
mouths,  
but inwardly they curse.

*Selah*

5 For God alone my soul  
waits in silence,  
for my hope is from him.  
6 He alone is my rock and  
my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be  
shaken.  
7 On God rests my  
deliverance and my  
honor;  
my mighty rock, my  
refuge is in God.  
8 Trust in him at all times, O  
people;  
pour out your heart  
before him;  
God is a refuge for us.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 16:19–20 (NRSV)**

19 It is better to be of a lowly  
spirit among the poor  
than to divide the spoil  
with the proud.  
20 Those who are attentive to  
a matter will prosper,  
and happy are those who  
trust in the LORD.

**June 5**



**Isaiah 28:14–29:14 (NRSV)**

14 Therefore hear the word of  
the LORD, you scoffers  
who rule this people in  
Jerusalem.  
15 Because you have said,  
“We have made a  
covenant with death,  
and with Sheol we have  
an agreement;  
when the overwhelming  
scourge passes through  
it will not come to us;  
for we have made lies our  
refuge,  
and in falsehood we  
have taken shelter”;

16 therefore thus says the  
Lord GOD,  
See, I am laying in Zion a  
foundation stone,  
a tested stone,  
a precious cornerstone, a  
sure foundation:  
“One who trusts will not  
panic.”

17 And I will make justice the  
line,  
and righteousness the  
plummet;  
hail will sweep away the  
refuge of lies,  
and waters will  
overwhelm the shelter.

18 Then your covenant with  
death will be annulled,  
and your agreement with  
Sheol will not stand;  
when the overwhelming  
scourge passes through  
you will be beaten down  
by it.

19 As often as it passes  
through, it will take  
you;  
for morning by morning  
it will pass through,  
by day and by night;  
and it will be sheer terror  
to understand the  
message.

20 For the bed is too short to  
stretch oneself on it,  
and the covering too  
narrow to wrap oneself  
in it.

21 For the LORD will rise up as  
on Mount Perazim,  
he will rage as in the  
valley of Gibeon  
to do his deed—strange is  
his deed!—  
and to work his work—  
alien is his work!

22 Now therefore do not  
scoff,  
or your bonds will be  
made stronger;  
for I have heard a decree  
of destruction  
from the Lord GOD of  
hosts upon the whole  
land.

23 Listen, and hear my voice;  
Pay attention, and hear  
my speech.

24 Do those who plow for  
sowing plow  
continually?  
Do they continually open  
and harrow their  
ground?

25 When they have leveled its  
surface,  
do they not scatter dill,  
sow cummin,



and plant wheat in rows  
and barley in its proper  
place,  
and spelt as the border?  
26 For they are well  
instructed;  
their God teaches them.  
27 Dill is not threshed with a  
threshing sledge,  
nor is a cart wheel rolled  
over cummin;  
but dill is beaten out with  
a stick,  
and cummin with a rod.  
28 Grain is crushed for bread,  
but one does not thresh  
it forever;  
one drives the cart wheel  
and horses over it,  
but does not pulverize it.  
29 This also comes from the  
LORD of hosts;  
he is wonderful in  
counsel,  
and excellent in wisdom.

*The Siege of Jerusalem*

**29** Ah, Ariel, Ariel,  
the city where David  
encamped!  
Add year to year;  
let the festivals run their  
round.  
2 Yet I will distress Ariel,

and there shall be  
moaning and  
lamentation,  
and Jerusalem shall be to  
me like an Ariel.  
3 And like David I will  
encamp against you;  
I will besiege you with  
towers  
and raise siegeworks  
against you.  
4 Then deep from the earth  
you shall speak,  
from low in the dust your  
words shall come;  
your voice shall come from  
the ground like the  
voice of a ghost,  
and your speech shall  
whisper out of the  
dust.  
5 But the multitude of your  
foes shall be like small  
dust,  
and the multitude of  
tyrants like flying chaff.  
And in an instant,  
suddenly,  
6 you will be visited by the  
LORD of hosts  
with thunder and  
earthquake and great  
noise,

with whirlwind and  
tempest, and the flame  
of a devouring fire.  
7 And the multitude of all  
the nations that fight  
against Ariel,  
all that fight against her  
and her stronghold,  
and who distress her,  
shall be like a dream, a  
vision of the night.  
8 Just as when a hungry  
person dreams of  
eating  
and wakes up still  
hungry,  
or a thirsty person dreams  
of drinking  
and wakes up faint, still  
thirsty,  
so shall the multitude of all  
the nations be  
that fight against Mount  
Zion.  
9 Stupefy yourselves and be  
in a stupor,  
blind yourselves and be  
blind!  
Be drunk, but not from  
wine;  
stagger, but not from  
strong drink!  
10 For the LORD has poured  
out upon you  
a spirit of deep sleep;

he has closed your eyes,  
you prophets,  
and covered your heads,  
you seers.

<sup>11</sup> The vision of all this has  
become for you like the words  
of a sealed document. If it is  
given to those who can read,  
with the command, "Read  
this," they say, "We cannot,  
for it is sealed." <sup>12</sup> And if it is  
given to those who cannot  
read, saying, "Read this," they  
say, "We cannot read."

<sup>13</sup> The Lord said:  
Because these people  
draw near with their  
mouths  
and honor me with their  
lips,  
while their hearts are far  
from me,  
and their worship of me is  
a human  
commandment learned  
by rote;

<sup>14</sup> so I will again do  
amazing things with this  
people,  
shocking and amazing.  
The wisdom of their wise  
shall perish,  
and the discernment of  
the discerning shall be  
hidden.

### Galatians 3:23–4:20 (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, <sup>26</sup> for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. <sup>27</sup> As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

**4** My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; <sup>2</sup> but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. <sup>3</sup> So with us; while we were minors, we were

enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. <sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup> And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

#### *Paul Reproves the Galatians*

<sup>8</sup> Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods. <sup>9</sup> Now, however, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits? How can you want to be enslaved to them again? <sup>10</sup> You are observing special days, and months, and seasons, and years. <sup>11</sup> I am afraid that my work for you may have been wasted.

<sup>12</sup> Friends, I beg you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong. <sup>13</sup> You know that it was because of a physical infirmity that I first announced the gospel to you; <sup>14</sup> though my condition put you to the test, you did not scorn or despise me, but welcomed me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> What has become of the goodwill you felt? For I testify that, had it been possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. <sup>16</sup> Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth? <sup>17</sup> They make much of you, but for no good purpose; they want to exclude you, so that you may make much of them. <sup>18</sup> It is good to be made much of for a good purpose at all times, and not only when I am present with you. <sup>19</sup> My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, <sup>20</sup> I wish I were present with you now and could change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

**Psalm 62:9-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Those of low estate are but a breath,  
those of high estate are a delusion;  
in the balances they go up;  
they are together lighter  
than a breath.

<sup>10</sup> Put no confidence in extortion,  
and set no vain hopes on robbery;  
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

<sup>11</sup> Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God,  
<sup>12</sup> and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.  
For you repay to all according to their work.

**Proverbs 16:21–23 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> The wise of heart is called perceptive,  
and pleasant speech increases persuasiveness.

<sup>22</sup> Wisdom is a fountain of life to one who has it,  
but folly is the punishment of fools.

23 The mind of the wise  
makes their speech  
judicious,  
and adds persuasiveness  
to their lips.

## June 6



### Isaiah 29:15-30:11 (NRSV)

15 Ha! You who hide a plan  
too deep for the LORD,  
whose deeds are in the  
dark,  
and who say, “Who sees  
us? Who knows us?”  
16 You turn things upside  
down!  
Shall the potter be  
regarded as the clay?  
Shall the thing made say of  
its maker,  
“He did not make me”;  
or the thing formed say of  
the one who formed it,  
“He has no  
understanding”?

### *Hope for the Future*

17 Shall not Lebanon in a very  
little while

become a fruitful field,  
and the fruitful field be  
regarded as a forest?  
18 On that day the deaf shall  
hear  
the words of a scroll,  
and out of their gloom and  
darkness  
the eyes of the blind  
shall see.  
19 The meek shall obtain  
fresh joy in the LORD,  
and the neediest people  
shall exult in the Holy  
One of Israel.  
20 For the tyrant shall be no  
more,  
and the scoffer shall  
cease to be;  
all those alert to do evil  
shall be cut off—  
21 those who cause a person  
to lose a lawsuit,  
who set a trap for the  
arbiter in the gate,  
and without grounds  
deny justice to the one  
in the right.  
22 Therefore thus says the  
LORD, who redeemed  
Abraham, concerning the  
house of Jacob:  
No longer shall Jacob be  
ashamed,

no longer shall his face  
grow pale.  
23 For when he sees his  
children,  
the work of my hands, in  
his midst,  
they will sanctify my  
name;  
they will sanctify the Holy  
One of Jacob,  
and will stand in awe of  
the God of Israel.  
24 And those who err in spirit  
will come to  
understanding,  
and those who grumble  
will accept instruction.

*The Futility of Reliance  
on Egypt*

**30** Oh, rebellious children,  
says the LORD,  
who carry out a plan, but  
not mine;  
who make an alliance, but  
against my will,  
adding sin to sin;  
2 who set out to go down to  
Egypt  
without asking for my  
counsel,  
to take refuge in the  
protection of Pharaoh,  
and to seek shelter in the  
shadow of Egypt;

3 Therefore the protection  
of Pharaoh shall  
become your shame,  
and the shelter in the  
shadow of Egypt your  
humiliation.  
4 For though his officials are  
at Zoan  
and his envoys reach  
Hanes,  
5 everyone comes to shame  
through a people that  
cannot profit them,  
that brings neither help  
nor profit,  
but shame and disgrace.  
6 An oracle concerning the  
animals of the Negeb.  
Through a land of trouble  
and distress,  
of lioness and roaring  
lion,  
of viper and flying  
serpent,  
they carry their riches on  
the backs of donkeys,  
and their treasures on  
the humps of camels,  
to a people that cannot  
profit them.  
7 For Egypt's help is  
worthless and empty,  
therefore I have called  
her,  
"Rahab who sits still."

*A Rebellious People*

8 Go now, write it before  
them on a tablet,  
and inscribe it in a book,  
so that it may be for the  
time to come  
as a witness forever.

9 For they are a rebellious  
people,  
faithless children,  
children who will not hear  
the instruction of the  
LORD;

10 who say to the seers, "Do  
not see";  
and to the prophets, "Do  
not prophesy to us  
what is right;

11 speak to us smooth things,  
prophesy illusions,

11 leave the way, turn aside  
from the path,  
let us hear no more  
about the Holy One of  
Israel."

**Galatians 4:21–31** (NRSV)

*The Allegory of  
Hagar and Sarah*

(Gen 21:8–21; Isa 54:1)

21 Tell me, you who desire  
to be subject to the law, will  
you not listen to the law?

22 For it is written that  
Abraham had two sons, one by  
a slave woman and the other

by a free woman. 23 One, the  
child of the slave, was born  
according to the flesh; the  
other, the child of the free  
woman, was born through the  
promise. 24 Now this is an  
allegory: these women are

two covenants. One woman,  
in fact, is Hagar, from Mount  
Sinai, bearing children for  
slavery. 25 Now Hagar is Mount  
Sinai in Arabia and  
corresponds to the present  
Jerusalem, for she is in slavery  
with her children. 26 But the  
other woman corresponds to  
the Jerusalem above; she is  
free, and she is our mother.

27 For it is written,  
"Rejoice, you childless one,  
you who bear no  
children,  
burst into song and  
shout, you who endure  
no birth pangs;  
for the children of the  
desolate woman are  
more numerous  
than the children of the  
one who is married."

28 Now you, my friends, are  
children of the promise, like  
Isaac. 29 But just as at that time  
the child who was born  
according to the flesh

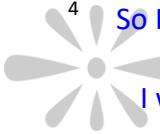
persecuted the child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also.<sup>30</sup> But what does the scripture say? "Drive out the slave and her child; for the child of the slave will not share the inheritance with the child of the free woman."<sup>31</sup> So then, friends, we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman.

**Psalm 63:1-5** (NRSV)

*Comfort and Assurance in  
God's Presence*

A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

- 1 O God, you are my God, I seek you,  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary  
land where there is no  
water.
- 2 So I have looked upon you  
in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power  
and glory.
- 3 Because your steadfast  
love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.
- 4 So I will bless you as long  
as I live;  
I will lift up my hands  
and call on your name.



- 5 My soul is satisfied as with  
a rich feast,  
and my mouth praises  
you with joyful lips

**Proverbs 16:24** (NRSV)

- 24 Pleasant words are like a  
honeycomb,  
sweetness to the soul  
and health to the body.

**June 7**



**Isaiah 30:12-31:9** (NRSV)

- 12 Therefore thus says the  
Holy One of Israel:  
Because you reject this  
word,  
and put your trust in  
oppression and deceit,  
and rely on them;  
13 therefore this iniquity shall  
become for you  
like a break in a high  
wall, bulging out, and  
about to collapse,  
whose crash comes  
suddenly, in an instant;  
14 its breaking is like that of a  
potter's vessel



that is smashed so  
ruthlessly  
that among its fragments  
not a sherd is found  
for taking fire from the  
hearth,  
or dipping water out of  
the cistern.

<sup>15</sup> For thus said the Lord God,  
the Holy One of Israel:  
In returning and rest you  
shall be saved;  
in quietness and in trust  
shall be your strength.  
But you refused <sup>16</sup> and  
said,  
“No! We will flee upon  
horses” —  
therefore you shall flee!  
and, “We will ride upon  
swift steeds” —  
therefore your pursuers  
shall be swift!

<sup>17</sup> A thousand shall flee at the  
threat of one,  
at the threat of five you  
shall flee,  
until you are left  
like a flagstaff on the top  
of a mountain,  
like a signal on a hill.

*God's Promise to Zion*

<sup>18</sup> Therefore the LORD waits  
to be gracious to you;

therefore he will rise up  
to show mercy to you.  
For the LORD is a God of  
justice;  
blessed are all those who  
wait for him.

<sup>19</sup> Truly, O people in Zion,  
inhabitants of Jerusalem, you  
shall weep no more. He will  
surely be gracious to you at  
the sound of your cry; when  
he hears it, he will answer you.

<sup>20</sup> Though the Lord may give  
you the bread of adversity and  
the water of affliction, yet  
your Teacher will not hide  
himself any more, but your  
eyes shall see your Teacher.

<sup>21</sup> And when you turn to the  
right or when you turn to the  
left, your ears shall hear a  
word behind you, saying, “This  
is the way; walk in it.” <sup>22</sup> Then  
you will defile your silver-  
covered idols and your gold-  
plated images. You will scatter  
them like filthy rags; you will  
say to them, “Away with you!”

<sup>23</sup> He will give rain for the  
seed with which you sow the  
ground, and grain, the  
produce of the ground, which  
will be rich and plenteous. On  
that day your cattle will graze  
in broad pastures; <sup>24</sup> and the

oxen and donkeys that till the ground will eat silage, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.<sup>25</sup> On every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water—on a day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.<sup>26</sup> Moreover the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, like the light of seven days, on the day when the LORD binds up the injuries of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow.

*Judgment on Assyria*

<sup>27</sup> See, the name of the LORD comes from far away, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is like a devouring fire;  
<sup>28</sup> his breath is like an overflowing stream that reaches up to the neck—  
to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction,

and to place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads them astray.  
<sup>29</sup> You shall have a song as in the night when a holy festival is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.<sup>30</sup> And the LORD will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and tempest and hailstones.<sup>31</sup> The Assyrian will be terror-stricken at the voice of the LORD, when he strikes with his rod.<sup>32</sup> And every stroke of the staff of punishment that the LORD lays upon him will be to the sound of timbrels and lyres; battling with brandished arm he will fight with him.<sup>33</sup> For his burning place has long been prepared; truly it is made ready for the king, its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it.

*Alliance with Egypt Is Futile*

**31** Alas for those who go  
down to Egypt for help  
and who rely on horses,  
who trust in chariots  
because they are many  
and in horsemen  
because they are very  
strong,  
but do not look to the Holy  
One of Israel  
or consult the LORD!  
<sup>2</sup> Yet he too is wise and  
brings disaster;  
he does not call back his  
words,  
but will rise against the  
house of the evildoers,  
and against the helpers  
of those who work  
iniquity.  
<sup>3</sup> The Egyptians are human,  
and not God;  
their horses are flesh,  
and not spirit.  
When the LORD stretches  
out his hand,  
the helper will stumble,  
and the one helped will  
fall,  
and they will all perish  
together.  
<sup>4</sup> For thus the LORD said to  
me,

As a lion or a young lion  
growls over its prey,  
and—when a band of  
shepherds is called out  
against it—  
is not terrified by their  
shouting  
or daunted at their  
noise,  
so the LORD of hosts will  
come down  
to fight upon Mount Zion  
and upon its hill.  
<sup>5</sup> Like birds hovering  
overhead, so the LORD  
of hosts  
will protect Jerusalem;  
he will protect and deliver  
it,  
he will spare and rescue  
it.  
<sup>6</sup> Turn back to him whom  
you have deeply betrayed, O  
people of Israel. <sup>7</sup> For on that  
day all of you shall throw away  
your idols of silver and idols of  
gold, which your hands have  
sinfully made for you.  
<sup>8</sup> “Then the Assyrian shall  
fall by a sword, not of  
mortals;  
and a sword, not of  
humans, shall devour  
him;

he shall flee from the sword,  
and his young men shall be put to forced labor.  
9 His rock shall pass away in terror,  
and his officers desert the standard in panic,"  
says the LORD, whose fire is in Zion,  
and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

**Galatians 5:1–6** (NRSV)

**5**<sup>1</sup> For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

*The Nature of  
Christian Freedom*

<sup>2</sup> Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. <sup>3</sup> Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law. <sup>4</sup> You who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you **have fallen away from grace.** <sup>5</sup> **For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of**

**righteousness.** <sup>6</sup> **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.**

**Psalm 63:6-11** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> when I think of you on my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
<sup>7</sup> for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.  
<sup>8</sup> My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.  
<sup>9</sup> But those who seek to destroy my life  
shall go down into the depths of the earth;  
<sup>10</sup> they shall be given over to the power of the sword,  
they shall be prey for jackals.  
<sup>11</sup> But the king shall rejoice in God;  
all who swear by him shall exult,  
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

**Proverbs 16:25 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> Sometimes there is a way  
that seems to be right,  
but in the end it is the  
way to death.

**June 8**



**Isaiah 32:1-33:9 (NRSV)**  
*Government with  
Justice Predicted*

**32** See, a king will reign in  
righteousness,  
and princes will rule with  
justice.  
<sup>2</sup> Each will be like a hiding  
place from the wind,  
a covert from the  
tempest,  
like streams of water in a  
dry place,  
like the shade of a great  
rock in a weary land.  
<sup>3</sup> Then the eyes of those  
who have sight will not  
be closed,  
and the ears of those  
who have hearing will  
listen.

<sup>4</sup> The minds of the rash will  
have good judgment,  
and the tongues of  
stammerers will speak  
readily and distinctly.  
<sup>5</sup> A fool will no longer be  
called noble,  
nor a villain said to be  
honorable.  
<sup>6</sup> For fools speak folly,  
and their minds plot  
iniquity:  
to practice ungodliness,  
to utter error concerning  
the LORD,  
to leave the craving of the  
hungry unsatisfied,  
and to deprive the thirsty  
of drink.  
<sup>7</sup> The villainies of villains are  
evil;  
they devise wicked  
devices  
to ruin the poor with lying  
words,  
even when the plea of  
the needy is right.  
<sup>8</sup> But those who are noble  
plan noble things,  
and by noble things they  
stand.

*Complacent Women  
Warned of Disaster*

9 Rise up, you women who  
are at ease, hear my  
voice;  
you complacent  
daughters, listen to my  
speech.

10 In little more than a year  
you will shudder, you  
complacent ones;  
for the vintage will fail,  
the fruit harvest will not  
come.

11 Tremble, you women who  
are at ease,  
shudder, you complacent  
ones;  
strip, and make yourselves  
bare,  
and put sackcloth on  
your loins.

12 Beat your breasts for the  
pleasant fields,  
for the fruitful vine,

13 for the soil of my people  
growing up in thorns and  
briers;

yes, for all the joyous  
houses  
in the jubilant city.

14 For the palace will be  
forsaken,  
the populous city  
deserted;

the hill and the  
watchtower  
will become dens  
forever,  
the joy of wild asses,  
a pasture for flocks;  
15 until a spirit from on high  
is poured out on us,  
and the wilderness  
becomes a fruitful  
field,  
and the fruitful field is  
deemed a forest.

*The Peace of God's Reign*

16 Then justice will dwell in  
the wilderness,  
and righteousness abide  
in the fruitful field.

17 The effect of righteousness  
will be peace,  
and the result of  
righteousness,  
quietness and trust  
forever.

18 My people will abide in a  
peaceful habitation,  
in secure dwellings, and  
in quiet resting places.

19 The forest will disappear  
completely,  
and the city will be  
utterly laid low.

20 Happy will you be who sow  
beside every stream,

who let the ox and the  
donkey range freely.

*A Prophecy of  
Deliverance from Foes*

**33** Ah, you destroyer,  
who yourself have not  
been destroyed;  
you treacherous one,  
with whom no one has  
dealt treacherously!  
When you have ceased to  
destroy,  
you will be destroyed;  
and when you have  
stopped dealing  
treacherously,  
you will be dealt with  
treacherously.  
<sup>2</sup> O LORD, be gracious to us;  
we wait for you.  
Be our arm every  
morning,  
our salvation in the time  
of trouble.  
<sup>3</sup> At the sound of tumult,  
peoples fled;  
before your majesty,  
nations scattered.  
<sup>4</sup> Spoil was gathered as the  
caterpillar gathers;  
as locusts leap, they  
leaped upon it.  
<sup>5</sup> The LORD is exalted, he  
dwells on high;

he filled Zion with justice  
and righteousness;  
<sup>6</sup> he will be the stability of  
your times,  
abundance of salvation,  
wisdom, and  
knowledge;  
the fear of the LORD is  
Zion's treasure.  
<sup>7</sup> Listen! the valiant cry in  
the streets;  
the envoys of peace  
weep bitterly.  
<sup>8</sup> The highways are  
deserted,  
travelers have quit the  
road.  
The treaty is broken,  
its oaths are despised,  
its obligation is  
disregarded.  
<sup>9</sup> The land mourns and  
languishes;  
Lebanon is confounded  
and withers away;  
Sharon is like a desert;  
and Bashan and Carmel  
shake off their leaves.

**Galatians 5:7–12** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> You were running well;  
who prevented you from  
obeying the truth? <sup>8</sup> Such  
persuasion does not come  
from the one who calls you. <sup>9</sup> A

little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. <sup>10</sup> I am confident about you in the Lord that you will not think otherwise. But whoever it is that is confusing you will pay the penalty. <sup>11</sup> But my friends, why am I still being persecuted if I am still preaching circumcision? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. <sup>12</sup> I wish those who unsettle you would castrate themselves!

**Psalms 64:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Protection  
from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;  
preserve my life from the dread enemy.  
<sup>2</sup> Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,  
from the scheming of evildoers,  
<sup>3</sup> who whet their tongues like swords,  
who aim bitter words like arrows,  
<sup>4</sup> shooting from ambush at the blameless;  
they shoot suddenly and without fear.

<sup>5</sup> They hold fast to their evil purpose;  
they talk of laying snares secretly,  
thinking, "Who can see us?"  
<sup>6</sup> Who can search out our crimes?  
We have thought out a cunningly conceived plot."  
For the human heart and mind are deep.  
<sup>7</sup> But God will shoot his arrow at them;  
they will be wounded suddenly.  
<sup>8</sup> Because of their tongue he will bring them to ruin;  
all who see them will shake with horror.  
<sup>9</sup> Then everyone will fear;  
they will tell what God has brought about,  
and ponder what he has done.

**Proverbs 16:26-27 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> The appetite of workers works for them;  
their hunger urges them on.  
<sup>27</sup> Scoundrels concoct evil,  
and their speech is like a scorching fire.



## June 9



### Isaiah 33:10-35:10 (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> “Now I will arise,” says the LORD,  
“now I will lift myself up;  
now I will be exalted.  
<sup>11</sup> You conceive chaff, you  
bring forth stubble;  
your breath is a fire that  
will consume you.  
<sup>12</sup> And the peoples will be as  
if burned to lime,  
like thorns cut down,  
that are burned in the  
fire.”  
<sup>13</sup> Hear, you who are far  
away, what I have  
done;  
and you who are near,  
acknowledge my  
might.  
<sup>14</sup> The sinners in Zion are  
afraid;  
trembling has seized the  
godless:  
“Who among us can live  
with the devouring  
fire?  
Who among us can live  
with everlasting  
flames?”

<sup>15</sup> Those who walk  
righteously and speak  
uprightly,  
who despise the gain of  
oppression,  
who wave away a bribe  
instead of accepting it,  
who stop their ears from  
hearing of bloodshed  
and shut their eyes from  
looking on evil,  
<sup>16</sup> they will live on the  
heights;  
their refuge will be the  
fortresses of rocks;  
their food will be  
supplied, their water  
assured.

### *The Land of the Majestic King*

<sup>17</sup> Your eyes will see the king  
in his beauty;  
they will behold a land  
that stretches far  
away.  
<sup>18</sup> Your mind will muse on  
the terror:  
“Where is the one who  
counted?  
Where is the one who  
weighed the tribute?  
Where is the one who  
counted the towers?”  
<sup>19</sup> No longer will you see the  
insolent people,

the people of an obscure  
speech that you cannot  
comprehend,  
stammering in a  
language that you  
cannot understand.  
20 Look on Zion, the city of  
our appointed  
festivals!  
Your eyes will see  
Jerusalem,  
a quiet habitation, an  
immovable tent,  
whose stakes will never be  
pulled up,  
and none of whose ropes  
will be broken.  
21 But there the LORD in  
majesty will be for us  
a place of broad rivers  
and streams,  
where no galley with oars  
can go,  
nor stately ship can pass.  
22 For the LORD is our judge,  
the LORD is our ruler,  
the LORD is our king; he  
will save us.  
23 Your rigging hangs loose;  
it cannot hold the mast  
firm in its place,  
or keep the sail spread  
out.

Then prey and spoil in  
abundance will be  
divided;  
even the lame will fall to  
plundering.  
24 And no inhabitant will say,  
“I am sick”;  
the people who live  
there will be forgiven  
their iniquity.

### *Judgment on the Nations*

**34** Draw near, O nations, to  
hear;  
O peoples, give heed!  
Let the earth hear, and all  
that fills it;  
the world, and all that  
comes from it.  
2 For the LORD is enraged  
against all the nations,  
and furious against all  
their hordes;  
he has doomed them,  
has given them over  
for slaughter.  
3 Their slain shall be cast  
out,  
and the stench of their  
corpses shall rise;  
the mountains shall flow  
with their blood.  
4 All the host of heaven shall  
rot away,

and the skies roll up like  
a scroll.  
All their host shall wither  
like a leaf withering on a  
vine,  
or fruit withering on a fig  
tree.  
5 When my sword has drunk  
its fill in the heavens,  
lo, it will descend upon  
Edom,  
upon the people I have  
doomed to judgment.  
6 The LORD has a sword; it is  
sated with blood,  
it is gorged with fat,  
with the blood of lambs  
and goats,  
with the fat of the  
kidneys of rams.  
For the LORD has a sacrifice  
in Bozrah,  
a great slaughter in the  
land of Edom.  
7 Wild oxen shall fall with  
them,  
and young steers with  
the mighty bulls.  
Their land shall be soaked  
with blood,  
and their soil made rich  
with fat.  
8 For the LORD has a day of  
vengeance,

a year of vindication by  
Zion's cause.  
9 And the streams of Edom  
shall be turned into  
pitch,  
and her soil into sulfur;  
her land shall become  
burning pitch.  
10 Night and day it shall not  
be quenched;  
its smoke shall go up  
forever.  
From generation to  
generation it shall lie  
waste;  
no one shall pass  
through it forever and  
ever.  
11 But the hawk and the  
hedgehog shall possess  
it;  
the owl and the raven  
shall live in it.  
He shall stretch the line of  
confusion over it,  
and the plummet of  
chaos over its nobles.  
12 They shall name it No  
Kingdom There,  
and all its princes shall  
be nothing.  
13 Thorns shall grow over its  
strongholds,  
nettles and thistles in its  
fortresses.

It shall be the haunt of  
jackals,  
an abode for ostriches.  
14 Wildcats shall meet with  
hyenas,  
goat-demons shall call to  
each other;  
there too Lilith shall  
repose,  
and find a place to rest.  
15 There shall the owl nest  
and lay and hatch and  
brood in its shadow;  
there too the buzzards  
shall gather,  
each one with its mate.  
16 Seek and read from the  
book of the LORD:  
Not one of these shall be  
missing;  
none shall be without its  
mate.  
For the mouth of the LORD  
has commanded,  
and his spirit has  
gathered them.  
17 He has cast the lot for  
them,  
his hand has portioned it  
out to them with the  
line;  
they shall possess it  
forever,

from generation to  
generation they shall  
live in it.

*The Return of the  
Redeemed to Zion*

**35** The wilderness and the  
dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice  
and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall  
blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and  
singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall  
be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel  
and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of  
the LORD,  
the majesty of our God.  
<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak  
hands,  
and make firm the feeble  
knees.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a  
fearful heart,  
“Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with  
vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save  
you.”

5 Then the eyes of the blind  
shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf  
unstopped;  
6 then the lame shall leap  
like a deer,  
and the tongue of the  
speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break  
forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the  
desert;  
7 the burning sand shall  
become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground  
springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall  
become a swamp,  
the grass shall become  
reeds and rushes.  
8 A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the  
Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel  
on it,  
but it shall be for God's  
people;  
no traveler, not even  
fools, shall go astray.  
9 No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous  
beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found  
there,

but the redeemed shall  
walk there.  
10 And the ransomed of the  
LORD shall return,  
and come to Zion with  
singing;  
everlasting joy shall be  
upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and  
gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing  
shall flee away.

**Galatians 5:13–18 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> For you were called to  
freedom, brothers and sisters;  
only do not use your freedom  
as an opportunity for self-  
indulgence, but through love  
become slaves to one another.  
<sup>14</sup> For the whole law is  
summed up in a single  
commandment, "You shall  
love your neighbor as  
yourself." <sup>15</sup> If, however, you  
bite and devour one another,  
take care that you are not  
consumed by one another.

*The Works of the Flesh*

<sup>16</sup> Live by the Spirit, I say,  
and do not gratify the desires  
of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For what the  
flesh desires is opposed to the  
Spirit, and what the Spirit

desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

**Psalm 64:10** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD  
and take refuge in him.  
Let all the upright in heart glory.

**Proverbs 16:28–30** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> A perverse person spreads strife,  
and a whisperer separates close friends.  
<sup>29</sup> The violent entice their neighbors,  
and lead them in a way that is not good.  
<sup>30</sup> One who winks the eyes plans perverse things;  
one who compresses the lips brings evil to pass.

**June 10**



**Isaiah 36:1-22** (NRSV)

*Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem*

(2 Kings 18:13–37;  
2 Chr 32:1–19)

**36** In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. <sup>2</sup> The king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. He stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller’s Field. <sup>3</sup> And there came out to him Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder.

<sup>4</sup> The Rabshakeh said to them, “Say to Hezekiah: Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you base this confidence of yours? <sup>5</sup> Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? On whom do you now rely, that you have rebelled against me? <sup>6</sup> See, you are relying on

Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. <sup>7</sup> But if you say to me, 'We rely on the LORD our God,' is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'? <sup>8</sup> Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. <sup>9</sup> How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? <sup>10</sup> Moreover, is it without the LORD that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it."

<sup>11</sup> Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the

wall." <sup>12</sup> But the Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the people sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?"

<sup>13</sup> Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria!

<sup>14</sup> Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you. <sup>15</sup> Do not let Hezekiah make you rely on the LORD by saying, The LORD will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.' <sup>16</sup> Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make your peace with me and come out to me; then everyone of you will eat from your own vine and your own fig tree and drink water from your own cistern, <sup>17</sup> until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. <sup>18</sup> Do not let Hezekiah mislead you by

saying, The LORD will save us. Has any of the gods of the nations saved their land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? <sup>19</sup> Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? <sup>20</sup> Who among all the gods of these countries have saved their countries out of my hand, that the LORD should save Jerusalem out of my hand?’ ”

<sup>21</sup> But they were silent and answered him not a word, for the king’s command was, “Do not answer him.” <sup>22</sup> Then Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

### **Galatians 5:19–26 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness,

carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### *The Fruit of the Spirit*

*(Cp Col 3:12–13)*

<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

### **Psalm 65:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for  
Earth’s Bounty*

To the leader. A Psalm of David. A Song.

- 1 Praise is due to you,  
O God, in Zion;  
and to you shall vows be  
performed,
- 2 O you who answer  
prayer!



To you all flesh shall come.  
<sup>3</sup> When deeds of iniquity  
    overwhelm us,  
    you forgive our  
    transgressions.  
<sup>4</sup> Happy are those whom  
    you choose and bring  
    near  
    to live in your courts.  
We shall be satisfied with  
    the goodness of your  
    house,  
    your holy temple.

**Proverbs 16:31–33** (NRSV)

<sup>31</sup> Gray hair is a crown of  
    glory;  
    it is gained in a righteous  
    life.  
<sup>32</sup> One who is slow to anger is  
    better than the mighty,  
    and one whose temper is  
    controlled than one  
    who captures a city.  
<sup>33</sup> The lot is cast into the lap,  
    but the decision is the  
    LORD's alone.

## June 11



**Isaiah 37:1-29** (NRSV)

*Hezekiah Consults Isaiah*  
(2 Kings 19:1–13)

**37** When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> And he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. <sup>3</sup> They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. <sup>4</sup> It may be that the LORD your God heard the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the LORD your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.”

<sup>5</sup> When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, <sup>6</sup> Isaiah said to them, “Say to

your master, 'Thus says the LORD: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. <sup>7</sup> I myself will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.' "

<sup>8</sup> The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah; for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. <sup>9</sup> Now the king heard concerning King Tirhakah of Ethiopia, "He has set out to fight against you." When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, <sup>10</sup> "Thus shall you speak to King Hezekiah of Judah: Do not let your God on whom you rely deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. <sup>11</sup> See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, destroying them utterly. Shall you be delivered? <sup>12</sup> Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my predecessors destroyed,

Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? <sup>13</sup> Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?"

*Hezekiah's Prayer*

*(2 Kings 19:14–34)*

<sup>14</sup> Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; then Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. <sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, saying: <sup>16</sup> "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. <sup>17</sup> Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. <sup>18</sup> Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, <sup>19</sup> and have hurled their gods into the fire, though they were no gods, but the work of human hands—wood and stone—and

so they were destroyed. <sup>20</sup> So now, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the LORD.”

<sup>21</sup> Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying: “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Because you have prayed to me concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria, <sup>22</sup> this is the word that the LORD has spoken concerning him:

She despises you, she scorns you—  
virgin daughter Zion;  
she tosses her head—  
behind your back,  
daughter Jerusalem.

<sup>23</sup> “Whom have you mocked and reviled?  
Against whom have you raised your voice and haughtily lifted your eyes?  
Against the Holy One of Israel!

<sup>24</sup> By your servants you have mocked the Lord, and you have said, ‘With my many chariots I have gone up the heights of the mountains,

to the far recesses of Lebanon;  
I felled its tallest cedars,  
its choicest cypresses;  
I came to its remotest height,  
its densest forest.

<sup>25</sup> I dug wells and drank waters,  
I dried up with the sole of my foot  
all the streams of Egypt.’

<sup>26</sup> “Have you not heard that I determined it long ago?

I planned from days of old what now I bring to pass, that you should make fortified cities  
crash into heaps of ruins,

<sup>27</sup> while their inhabitants, shorn of strength, are dismayed and confounded;

they have become like plants of the field and like tender grass, like grass on the housetops,  
blighted before it is grown.

<sup>28</sup> “I know your rising up and your sitting down, your going out and coming in,

and your raging against me.

<sup>29</sup> Because you have raged against me and your arrogance has come to my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth; I will turn you back on the way by which you came.

**Galatians 6:1–10 (NRSV)**

*Bear One Another's Burdens*

**6** My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. <sup>2</sup> *Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.* <sup>3</sup> For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. <sup>5</sup> For all must carry their own loads.

<sup>6</sup> Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

<sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. <sup>8</sup> If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. <sup>9</sup> So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup> So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

**Psalms 65:5-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> *By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.*

<sup>6</sup> By your strength you established the mountains; you are girded with might.

7 You silence the roaring of  
the seas,  
the roaring of their  
waves,  
the tumult of the  
peoples.

8 Those who live at earth's  
farthest bounds are  
awed by your signs;  
you make the gateways of  
the morning and the  
evening shout for joy.

9 You visit the earth and  
water it,  
you greatly enrich it;  
the river of God is full of  
water;  
you provide the people  
with grain,  
for so you have prepared  
it.

10 You water its furrows  
abundantly,  
settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers,  
and blessing its growth.

11 You crown the year with  
your bounty;  
your wagon tracks  
overflow with richness.

12 The pastures of the  
wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves  
with joy,

13 the meadows clothe  
themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck  
themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing  
together for joy.

**Proverbs 17:1 (NRSV)**

1 Better is a dry morsel  
with quiet  
than a house full of  
feasting with strife.

## June 12



**Isaiah 37:30-38:22 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> "And this shall be the  
sign for you: This year eat  
what grows of itself, and in the  
second year what springs from  
that; then in the third year  
sow, reap, plant vineyards,  
and eat their fruit. <sup>31</sup> The  
surviving remnant of the  
house of Judah shall again  
take root downward, and bear  
fruit upward; <sup>32</sup> for from  
Jerusalem a remnant shall go  
out, and from Mount Zion a

band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

<sup>33</sup> “Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. <sup>34</sup> By the way that he came, by the same he shall return; he shall not come into this city, says the LORD. <sup>35</sup> For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”

*Sennacherib’s  
Defeat and Death*  
(2 Kings 19:35–37)

<sup>36</sup> Then the angel of the LORD set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies. <sup>37</sup> Then King Sennacherib of Assyria left, went home, and lived at Nineveh. <sup>38</sup> As he was worshiping in the house of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of Ararat. His son Esar-haddon succeeded him.

*Hezekiah’s Illness*

(2 Kings 20:1–11; 2 Chr 32:24–26)

**38** In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, “Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.” <sup>2</sup> Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the LORD: <sup>3</sup> “Remember now, O LORD, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

<sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: <sup>5</sup> “Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the LORD, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. <sup>6</sup> I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and defend this city.

<sup>7</sup> “This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he has promised: <sup>8</sup> See, I will make the shadow cast by the

declining sun on the dial of  
Ahaz turn back ten steps.” So  
the sun turned back on the  
dial the ten steps by which it  
had declined.

<sup>9</sup> A writing of King  
Hezekiah of Judah, after he  
had been sick and had  
recovered from his sickness:

<sup>10</sup> I said: In the noontide of  
my days  
I must depart;  
I am consigned to the  
gates of Sheol  
for the rest of my years.

<sup>11</sup> I said, I shall not see the  
LORD  
in the land of the living;  
I shall look upon mortals  
no more  
among the inhabitants of  
the world.

<sup>12</sup> My dwelling is plucked up  
and removed from me  
like a shepherd’s tent;  
like a weaver I have rolled  
up my life;  
he cuts me off from the  
loom;

from day to night you  
bring me to an end;

<sup>13</sup> I cry for help until  
morning;  
like a lion he breaks all my  
bones;

from day to night you  
bring me to an end.

<sup>14</sup> Like a swallow or a crane I  
clamor,  
I moan like a dove.  
My eyes are weary with  
looking upward.

O Lord, I am oppressed;  
be my security!

<sup>15</sup> But what can I say? For he  
has spoken to me,  
and he himself has done  
it.

All my sleep has fled  
because of the bitterness  
of my soul.

<sup>16</sup> O Lord, by these things  
people live,  
and in all these is the life  
of my spirit.

Oh, restore me to health  
and make me live!

<sup>17</sup> Surely it was for my  
welfare  
that I had great  
bitterness;  
but you have held back my  
life

from the pit of  
destruction,  
for you have cast all my  
sins  
behind your back.

<sup>18</sup> For Sheol cannot thank  
you,

death cannot praise you;  
those who go down to the  
Pit cannot hope  
for your faithfulness.

<sup>19</sup> The living, the living, they  
thank you,  
as I do this day;  
fathers make known to  
children  
your faithfulness.

<sup>20</sup> The LORD will save me,  
and we will sing to  
stringed instruments  
all the days of our lives,  
at the house of the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> Now Isaiah had said, "Let  
them take a lump of figs, and  
apply it to the boil, so that he  
may recover." <sup>22</sup> Hezekiah also  
had said, "What is the sign  
that I shall go up to the house  
of the LORD?"

### **Galatians 6:11–18** (NRSV)

#### *Final Admonitions and Benediction*

<sup>11</sup> See what large letters I  
make when I am writing in my  
own hand! <sup>12</sup> It is those who  
want to make a good showing  
in the flesh that try to compel  
you to be circumcised—only  
that they may not be  
persecuted for the cross of  
Christ. <sup>13</sup> Even the circumcised

do not themselves obey the  
law, but they want you to be  
circumcised so that they may  
boast about your flesh. <sup>14</sup> May  
I never boast of anything  
except the cross of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, by which the  
world has been crucified to  
me, and I to the world. <sup>15</sup> For  
neither circumcision nor  
uncircumcision is anything;  
but a new creation is  
everything! <sup>16</sup> As for those who  
will follow this rule—peace be  
upon them, and mercy, and  
upon the Israel of God.

<sup>17</sup> From now on, let no one  
make trouble for me; for I  
carry the marks of Jesus  
branded on my body.

<sup>18</sup> May the grace of our  
Lord Jesus Christ be with your  
spirit, brothers and sisters.  
Amen.

### **Psalm 66:1-7** (NRSV)

#### *Praise for God's Goodness to Israel*

To the leader. A Song. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> Make a joyful noise to  
God, all the earth;  
<sup>2</sup> sing the glory of his  
name;  
give to him glorious  
praise.



3 Say to God, “How  
awesome are your  
deeds!  
Because of your great  
power, your enemies  
cringe before you.  
4 All the earth worships you;  
they sing praises to you,  
sing praises to your  
name.” *Selah*  
5 Come and see what God  
has done:  
he is awesome in his  
deeds among mortals.  
6 He turned the sea into dry  
land;  
they passed through the  
river on foot.  
There we rejoiced in him,  
7 who rules by his might  
forever,  
whose eyes keep watch on  
the nations—  
let the rebellious not  
exalt themselves.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 17:2–3** (NRSV)

2 A slave who deals wisely  
will rule over a child  
who acts shamefully,  
and will share the  
inheritance as one of  
the family.

3 The crucible is for silver,  
and the furnace is for  
gold,  
but the LORD tests the  
heart.

**June 13**



**Isaiah 39:1-40:17** (NRSV)

*Envoys from Babylon  
Welcomed  
(2 Kings 20:12–19)*

**39** At that time King  
Merodach-baladan son of  
Baladan of Babylon sent  
envoys with letters and a  
present to Hezekiah, for he  
heard that he had been sick  
and had recovered. <sup>2</sup> Hezekiah  
welcomed them; he showed  
them his treasure house, the  
silver, the gold, the spices, the  
precious oil, his whole armory,  
all that was found in his  
storehouses. There was  
nothing in his house or in all  
his realm that Hezekiah did  
not show them. <sup>3</sup> Then the  
prophet Isaiah came to King  
Hezekiah and said to him,

“What did these men say?  
From where did they come to  
you?” Hezekiah answered,  
“They have come to me from a  
far country, from Babylon.”

<sup>4</sup> He said, “What have they  
seen in your house?” Hezekiah  
answered, “They have seen all  
that is in my house; there is  
nothing in my storehouses  
that I did not show them.”

<sup>5</sup> Then Isaiah said to  
Hezekiah, “Hear the word of  
the LORD of hosts: <sup>6</sup> Days are  
coming when all that is in your  
house, and that which your  
ancestors have stored up until  
this day, shall be carried to  
Babylon; nothing shall be left,  
says the LORD. <sup>7</sup> Some of your  
own sons who are born to you  
shall be taken away; they shall  
be eunuchs in the palace of  
the king of Babylon.” <sup>8</sup> Then  
Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The  
word of the LORD that you  
have spoken is good.” For he  
thought, “There will be peace  
and security in my days.”

*God's People Are Comforted*  
(Cp Lk 3:4-6)

**40** Comfort, O comfort my  
people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to  
Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her  
term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from  
the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out:  
“In the wilderness prepare  
the way of the LORD,  
make straight in the  
desert a highway for  
our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted  
up,  
and every mountain and  
hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall  
become level,  
and the rough places a  
plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the LORD  
shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it  
together,  
for the mouth of the  
LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, “Cry out!”  
And I said, “What shall I  
cry?”

All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the  
flower of the field.

- 7 The grass withers, the  
flower fades,  
when the breath of the  
LORD blows upon it;  
surely the people are  
grass.
- 8 The grass withers, the  
flower fades;  
but the word of our God  
will stand forever.
- 9 Get you up to a high  
mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good  
tidings;  
lift up your voice with  
strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of  
good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”
- 10 See, the Lord GOD comes  
with might,  
and his arm rules for  
him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense  
before him.
- 11 He will feed his flock like a  
shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs  
in his arms,  
and carry them in his  
bosom,  
and gently lead the  
mother sheep.
- 12 Who has measured the  
waters in the hollow of  
his hand  
and marked off the  
heavens with a span,  
enclosed the dust of the  
earth in a measure,  
and weighed the  
mountains in scales  
and the hills in a  
balance?
- 13 Who has directed the spirit  
of the LORD,  
or as his counselor has  
instructed him?
- 14 Whom did he consult for  
his enlightenment,  
and who taught him the  
path of justice?  
Who taught him  
knowledge,  
and showed him the way  
of understanding?
- 15 Even the nations are like a  
drop from a bucket,  
and are accounted as  
dust on the scales;  
see, he takes up the isles  
like fine dust.
- 16 Lebanon would not  
provide fuel enough,

nor are its animals  
enough for a burnt  
offering.

<sup>17</sup> All the nations are as  
nothing before him;  
they are accounted by  
him as less than  
nothing and emptiness.

### **Ephesians 1:1–14 (NRSV)**

#### *Salutation*

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ  
Jesus by the will of God,  
To the saints who are in  
Ephesus and are faithful in  
Christ Jesus:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace  
from God our Father and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

#### *Spiritual Blessings in Christ*

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has blessed us in Christ  
with every spiritual blessing in  
the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> just as  
he chose us in Christ before  
the foundation of the world to  
be holy and blameless before  
him in love. <sup>5</sup> He destined us  
for adoption as his children  
through Jesus Christ,  
according to the good  
pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the  
praise of his glorious grace

that he freely bestowed on us  
in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In him we  
have redemption through his  
blood, the forgiveness of our  
trespasses, according to the  
riches of his grace <sup>8</sup> that he  
lavished on us. With all  
wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> he has  
made known to us the mystery  
of his will, according to his  
good pleasure that he set  
forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup> as a plan for  
the fullness of time, to gather  
up all things in him, things in  
heaven and things on earth.

<sup>11</sup> In Christ we have also  
obtained an inheritance,  
having been destined  
according to the purpose of  
him who accomplishes all  
things according to his counsel  
and will, <sup>12</sup> so that we, who  
were the first to set our hope  
on Christ, might live for the  
praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> In him  
you also, when you had heard  
the word of truth, the gospel  
of your salvation, and had  
believed in him, were marked  
with the seal of the promised  
Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup> this is the pledge  
of our inheritance toward  
redemption as God's own  
people, to the praise of his  
glory.

**Psalms 66:8-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Bless our God, O peoples,  
let the sound of his  
praise be heard,  
<sup>9</sup> who has kept us among  
the living,  
and has not let our feet  
slip.  
<sup>10</sup> For you, O God, have  
tested us;  
you have tried us as  
silver is tried.  
<sup>11</sup> You brought us into the  
net;  
you laid burdens on our  
backs;  
<sup>12</sup> you let people ride over  
our heads;  
we went through fire  
and through water;  
yet you have brought us  
out to a spacious place.  
<sup>13</sup> I will come into your house  
with burnt offerings;  
I will pay you my vows,  
<sup>14</sup> those that my lips uttered  
and my mouth promised  
when I was in trouble.  
<sup>15</sup> I will offer to you burnt  
offerings of fatlings,  
with the smoke of the  
sacrifice of rams;  
I will make an offering of  
bulls and goats.

*Selah*

<sup>16</sup> Come and hear, all you  
who fear God,  
and I will tell what he has  
done for me.  
<sup>17</sup> I cried aloud to him,  
and he was extolled with  
my tongue.  
<sup>18</sup> If I had cherished iniquity  
in my heart,  
the Lord would not have  
listened.  
<sup>19</sup> But truly God has listened;  
he has given heed to the  
words of my prayer.  
<sup>20</sup> Blessed be God,  
because he has not  
rejected my prayer  
or removed his steadfast  
love from me.

**Proverbs 17:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> An evildoer listens to  
wicked lips;  
and a liar gives heed to a  
mischievous tongue.  
<sup>5</sup> Those who mock the poor  
insult their Maker;  
those who are glad at  
calamity will not go  
unpunished.

# June 14



## Isaiah 40:18-41:16 (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> To whom then will you  
    liken God,  
    or what likeness  
    compare with him?  
<sup>19</sup> An idol? —A workman  
    casts it,  
    and a goldsmith overlays  
    it with gold,  
    and casts for it silver  
    chains.  
<sup>20</sup> As a gift one chooses  
    mulberry wood  
    —wood that will not  
    rot—  
    then seeks out a skilled  
    artisan  
    to set up an image that  
    will not topple.  
<sup>21</sup> Have you not known?  
    Have you not heard?  
    Has it not been told you  
    from the beginning?  
    Have you not  
    understood from the  
    foundations of the  
    earth?  
<sup>22</sup> It is he who sits above the  
    circle of the earth,  
    and its inhabitants are  
    like grasshoppers;

    who stretches out the  
    heavens like a curtain,  
    and spreads them like a  
    tent to live in;  
<sup>23</sup> who brings princes to  
    naught,  
    and makes the rulers of  
    the earth as nothing.  
<sup>24</sup> Scarcely are they planted,  
    scarcely sown,  
    scarcely has their stem  
    taken root in the earth,  
    when he blows upon them,  
    and they wither,  
    and the tempest carries  
    them off like stubble.  
<sup>25</sup> To whom then will you  
    compare me,  
    or who is my equal? says  
    the Holy One.  
<sup>26</sup> Lift up your eyes on high  
    and see:  
    Who created these?  
    He who brings out their  
    host and numbers  
    them,  
    calling them all by name;  
    because he is great in  
    strength,  
    mighty in power,  
    not one is missing.  
<sup>27</sup> Why do you say, O Jacob,  
    and speak, O Israel,  
    “My way is hidden from  
    the LORD,

and my right is  
disregarded by my  
God”?

28

Have you not known?  
Have you not heard?  
The LORD is the everlasting  
God,  
the Creator of the ends  
of the earth.

He does not faint or grow  
weary;  
his understanding is  
unsearchable.

29

He gives power to the  
faint,  
and strengthens the  
powerless.

30

Even youths will faint and  
be weary,  
and the young will fall  
exhausted;

31

but those who wait for the  
LORD shall renew their  
strength,  
they shall mount up with  
wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be  
weary,  
they shall walk and not  
faint.

*Israel Assured of God's Help*

**41** Listen to me in silence, O  
coastlands;

let the peoples renew  
their strength;  
let them approach, then  
let them speak;  
let us together draw near  
for judgment.

2

Who has roused a victor  
from the east,  
summoned him to his  
service?  
He delivers up nations to  
him,  
and tramples kings under  
foot;

he makes them like dust  
with his sword,  
like driven stubble with  
his bow.

3

He pursues them and  
passes on safely,  
scarcely touching the  
path with his feet.

4

Who has performed and  
done this,  
calling the generations  
from the beginning?  
I, the LORD, am first,  
and will be with the last.

5

The coastlands have seen  
and are afraid,  
the ends of the earth  
tremble;  
they have drawn near  
and come.

6

Each one helps the other,

saying to one another,  
"Take courage!"  
7 The artisan encourages the  
goldsmith,  
and the one who  
smooths with the  
hammer encourages  
the one who strikes the  
anvil,  
saying of the soldering, "It  
is good";  
and they fasten it with  
nails so that it cannot  
be moved.  
8 But you, Israel, my servant,  
Jacob, whom I have  
chosen,  
the offspring of  
Abraham, my friend;  
9 you whom I took from the  
ends of the earth,  
and called from its  
farthest corners,  
saying to you, "You are my  
servant,  
I have chosen you and  
not cast you off";  
10 do not fear, for I am with  
you,  
do not be afraid, for I am  
your God;  
I will strengthen you, I will  
help you,  
I will uphold you with my  
victorious right hand.

11 Yes, all who are incensed  
against you  
shall be ashamed and  
disgraced;  
those who strive against  
you  
shall be as nothing and  
shall perish.  
12 You shall seek those who  
contend with you,  
but you shall not find  
them;  
those who war against you  
shall be as nothing at all.  
13 For I, the LORD your God,  
hold your right hand;  
it is I who say to you, "Do  
not fear,  
I will help you."  
14 Do not fear, you worm  
Jacob,  
you insect Israel!  
I will help you, says the  
LORD;  
your Redeemer is the  
Holy One of Israel.  
15 Now, I will make of you a  
threshing sledge,  
sharp, new, and having  
teeth;  
you shall thresh the  
mountains and crush  
them,  
and you shall make the  
hills like chaff.



<sup>16</sup> You shall winnow them  
and the wind shall  
carry them away,  
and the tempest shall  
scatter them.  
Then you shall rejoice in  
the LORD;  
in the Holy One of Israel  
you shall glory.

**Ephesians 1:15–23** (NRSV)  
*Paul's Prayer*

<sup>15</sup> I have heard of your faith  
in the Lord Jesus and your love  
toward all the saints, and for  
this reason <sup>16</sup> I do not cease to  
give thanks for you as I  
remember you in my prayers.

<sup>17</sup> I pray that the God of our  
Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of  
glory, may give you a spirit of  
wisdom and revelation as you  
come to know him, <sup>18</sup> so that,  
with the eyes of your heart  
enlightened, you may know  
what is the hope to which he  
has called you, what are the  
riches of his glorious  
inheritance among the saints,  
<sup>19</sup> and what is the  
immeasurable greatness of his  
power for us who believe,  
according to the working of his  
great power. <sup>20</sup> God put this  
power to work in Christ when

he raised him from the dead  
and seated him at his right  
hand in the heavenly places,  
<sup>21</sup> far above all rule and  
authority and power and  
dominion, and above every  
name that is named, not only  
in this age but also in the age  
to come. <sup>22</sup> And he has put all  
things under his feet and has  
made him the head over all  
things for the church, <sup>23</sup> which  
is his body, the fullness of him  
who fills all in all.

**Psalms 67:1-3** (NRSV)

*The Nations Called  
to Praise God*

To the leader: with stringed  
instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

<sup>1</sup> May God be gracious to us  
and bless us  
and make his face to  
shine upon us, *Selah*  
<sup>2</sup> that your way may be  
known upon earth,  
your saving power  
among all nations.  
<sup>3</sup> Let the peoples praise you,  
O God;  
let all the peoples praise  
you.

**Proverbs 17:6** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Grandchildren are the  
crown of the aged,

and the glory of children  
is their parents.

## June 15



### Isaiah 41:17-42:9 (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> When the poor and needy  
seek water,  
and there is none,  
and their tongue is  
parched with thirst,  
I the LORD will answer  
them,  
I the God of Israel will  
not forsake them.  
<sup>18</sup> I will open rivers on the  
bare heights,  
and fountains in the  
midst of the valleys;  
I will make the wilderness  
a pool of water,  
and the dry land springs  
of water.  
<sup>19</sup> I will put in the wilderness  
the cedar,  
the acacia, the myrtle,  
and the olive;  
I will set in the desert the  
cypress,

the plane and the pine  
together,  
<sup>20</sup> so that all may see and  
know,  
all may consider and  
understand,  
that the hand of the LORD  
has done this,  
the Holy One of Israel  
has created it.

### *The Futility of Idols*

<sup>21</sup> Set forth your case, says  
the LORD;  
bring your proofs, says  
the King of Jacob.  
<sup>22</sup> Let them bring them, and  
tell us  
what is to happen.  
Tell us the former things,  
what they are,  
so that we may consider  
them,  
and that we may know  
their outcome;  
or declare to us the  
things to come.  
<sup>23</sup> Tell us what is to come  
hereafter,  
that we may know that  
you are gods;  
do good, or do harm,  
that we may be afraid  
and terrified.  
<sup>24</sup> You, indeed, are nothing

and your work is nothing  
at all;  
whoever chooses you is  
an abomination.

25 I stirred up one from the  
north, and he has  
come,  
from the rising of the sun  
he was summoned by  
name.

He shall trample on rulers  
as on mortar,  
as the potter treads clay.

26 Who declared it from the  
beginning, so that we  
might know,  
and beforehand, so that  
we might say, "He is  
right"?

There was no one who  
declared it, none who  
proclaimed,  
none who heard your  
words.

27 I first have declared it to  
Zion,  
and I give to Jerusalem a  
herald of good tidings.

28 But when I look there is no  
one;  
among these there is no  
counselor  
who, when I ask, gives an  
answer.

29 No, they are all a delusion;

their works are nothing;  
their images are empty  
wind.

*The Servant, a Light  
to the Nations*

**42** Here is my servant, whom  
I uphold,  
my chosen, in whom my  
soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon  
him;  
he will bring forth justice  
to the nations.

2 He will not cry or lift up his  
voice,  
or make it heard in the  
street;

3 a bruised reed he will not  
break,  
and a dimly burning wick  
he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring  
forth justice.

4 He will not grow faint or  
be crushed  
until he has established  
justice in the earth;  
and the coastlands wait  
for his teaching.

5 Thus says God, the LORD,  
who created the heavens  
and stretched them  
out,

who spread out the  
earth and what comes  
from it,  
who gives breath to the  
people upon it  
and spirit to those who  
walk in it:

6 I am the LORD, I have called  
you in righteousness,  
I have taken you by the  
hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a  
covenant to the  
people,  
a light to the nations,  
7 to open the eyes that are  
blind,  
to bring out the prisoners  
from the dungeon,  
from the prison those  
who sit in darkness.  
8 I am the LORD, that is my  
name;  
my glory I give to no  
other,  
nor my praise to idols.  
9 See, the former things  
have come to pass,  
and new things I now  
declare;  
before they spring forth,  
I tell you of them.

**Ephesians 2:1–10 (NRSV)**  
*From Death to Life*

**2** You were dead through the  
trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which  
you once lived, following the  
course of this world, following  
the ruler of the power of the  
air, the spirit that is now at  
work among those who are  
disobedient. <sup>3</sup> All of us once  
lived among them in the  
passions of our flesh, following  
the desires of flesh and  
senses, and we were by nature  
children of wrath, like  
everyone else. <sup>4</sup> But God, who  
is rich in mercy, out of the  
great love with which he loved  
us <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead  
through our trespasses, made  
us alive together with Christ—  
by grace you have been  
saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up  
with him and seated us with  
him in the heavenly places in  
Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the  
ages to come he might show  
the immeasurable riches of his  
grace in kindness toward us in  
Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you  
have been saved through  
faith, and this is not your own  
doing; it is the gift of God—  
<sup>9</sup> not the result of works, so  
that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> **For  
we are what he has made us,  
created in Christ Jesus for**

good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

**Psalms 67:4-7** (NRSV)

- 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
- 5 Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.
- 6 The earth has yielded its increase;  
God, our God, has blessed us.
- 7 May God continue to bless us;  
let all the ends of the earth revere him.

**Proverbs 17:7-8** (NRSV)

- 7 Fine speech is not becoming to a fool;  
still less is false speech to a ruler.
- 8 A bribe is like a magic stone in the eyes of those who give it;  
wherever they turn they prosper.

**June 16**



**Isaiah 42:10-43:13** (NRSV)

*A Hymn of Praise*

- 10 Sing to the LORD a new song,  
his praise from the end of the earth!  
Let the sea roar and all that fills it,  
the coastlands and their inhabitants.
- 11 Let the desert and its towns lift up their voice,  
the villages that Kedar inhabits;  
let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy,  
let them shout from the tops of the mountains.
- 12 Let them give glory to the LORD,  
and declare his praise in the coastlands.
- 13 The LORD goes forth like a soldier,  
like a warrior he stirs up his fury;  
he cries out, he shouts aloud,  
he shows himself mighty against his foes.

14 For a long time I have held  
my peace,  
I have kept still and  
restrained myself;  
now I will cry out like a  
woman in labor,  
I will gasp and pant.  
15 I will lay waste mountains  
and hills,  
and dry up all their  
herbage;  
I will turn the rivers into  
islands,  
and dry up the pools.  
16 I will lead the blind  
by a road they do not  
know,  
by paths they have not  
known  
I will guide them.  
I will turn the darkness  
before them into light,  
the rough places into  
level ground.  
These are the things I will  
do,  
and I will not forsake  
them.  
17 They shall be turned back  
and utterly put to  
shame—  
those who trust in  
carved images,  
who say to cast images,  
“You are our gods.”

18 Listen, you that are deaf;  
and you that are blind,  
look up and see!  
19 Who is blind but my  
servant,  
or deaf like my  
messenger whom I  
send?  
Who is blind like my  
dedicated one,  
or blind like the servant  
of the LORD?  
20 He sees many things,  
but does not observe  
them;  
his ears are open, but he  
does not hear.

*Israel's Disobedience*

21 The LORD was pleased, for  
the sake of his  
righteousness,  
to magnify his teaching  
and make it glorious.  
22 But this is a people robbed  
and plundered,  
all of them are trapped  
in holes  
and hidden in prisons;  
they have become a prey  
with no one to rescue,  
a spoil with no one to  
say, “Restore!”  
23 Who among you will give  
heed to this,

who will attend and  
listen for the time to  
come?

24 Who gave up Jacob to the  
spoiler,  
and Israel to the  
robbers?

Was it not the LORD,  
against whom we have  
sinned,  
in whose ways they  
would not walk,  
and whose law they  
would not obey?

25 So he poured upon him  
the heat of his anger  
and the fury of war;  
it set him on fire all  
around, but he did not  
understand;  
it burned him, but he did  
not take it to heart.

*Restoration and  
Protection Promised*

**43** But now thus says the  
LORD,  
he who created you, O  
Jacob,  
he who formed you, O  
Israel:  
Do not fear, for I have  
redeemed you;  
I have called you by  
name, you are mine.

2 When you pass through  
the waters, I will be  
with you;  
and through the rivers,  
they shall not  
overwhelm you;  
when you walk through  
fire you shall not be  
burned,  
and the flame shall not  
consume you.

3 For I am the LORD your  
God,  
the Holy One of Israel,  
your Savior.  
I give Egypt as your  
ransom,  
Ethiopia and Seba in  
exchange for you.

4 Because you are precious  
in my sight,  
and honored, and I love  
you,  
I give people in return for  
you,  
nations in exchange for  
your life.

5 Do not fear, for I am with  
you;  
I will bring your offspring  
from the east,  
and from the west I will  
gather you;

6 I will say to the north,  
“Give them up,”

and to the south, “Do  
not withhold;  
bring my sons from far  
away  
and my daughters from  
the end of the earth—  
7 everyone who is called by  
my name,  
whom I created for my  
glory,  
whom I formed and  
made.”  
8 Bring forth the people who  
are blind, yet have  
eyes,  
who are deaf, yet have  
ears!  
9 Let all the nations gather  
together,  
and let the peoples  
assemble.  
Who among them  
declared this,  
and foretold to us the  
former things?  
Let them bring their  
witnesses to justify  
them,  
and let them hear and  
say, “It is true.”  
10 You are my witnesses, says  
the LORD,  
and my servant whom I  
have chosen,

so that you may know and  
believe me  
and understand that I am  
he.

Before me no god was  
formed,  
nor shall there be any  
after me.

11 I, I am the LORD,  
and besides me there is  
no savior.

12 I declared and saved and  
proclaimed,  
when there was no  
strange god among  
you;  
and you are my  
witnesses, says the  
LORD.

13 I am God, and also  
henceforth I am He;  
there is no one who can  
deliver from my hand;  
I work and who can  
hinder it?

**Ephesians 2:11–22** (NRSV)  
*One in Christ*

11 So then, remember that  
at one time you Gentiles by  
birth, called “the  
uncircumcision” by those who  
are called “the circumcision”—  
a physical circumcision made  
in the flesh by human hands—



<sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. <sup>15</sup> He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. <sup>17</sup> So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; <sup>18</sup> **for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.** <sup>19</sup> **So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also**

**members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.**

<sup>21</sup> In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; <sup>22</sup> in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

### **Psalm 68:1-6 (NRSV)**

#### *Praise and Thanksgiving*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm. A Song.

- 1 Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee before him.
- 2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God.
- 3 But let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy.
- 4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name;

lift up a song to him who  
rides upon the  
clouds—

his name is the LORD—  
be exultant before him.

5 Father of orphans and  
protector of widows  
is God in his holy  
habitation.

6 God gives the desolate a  
home to live in;  
he leads out the  
prisoners to prosperity,  
but the rebellious live in  
a parched land.

**Proverbs 17:9–11 (NRSV)**

9 One who forgives an  
affront fosters  
friendship,  
but one who dwells on  
disputes will alienate a  
friend.

10 A rebuke strikes deeper  
into a discerning  
person  
than a hundred blows  
into a fool.

11 Evil people seek only  
rebellion,  
but a cruel messenger  
will be sent against  
them.

**June 17**



**Isaiah 43:14–44:8 (NRSV)**

14 Thus says the LORD,  
your Redeemer, the Holy  
One of Israel:

For your sake I will send to  
Babylon  
and break down all the  
bars,  
and the shouting of the  
Chaldeans will be  
turned to lamentation.

15 I am the LORD, your Holy  
One,  
the Creator of Israel,  
your King.

16 Thus says the LORD,  
who makes a way in the  
sea,  
a path in the mighty  
waters,

17 who brings out chariot and  
horse,  
army and warrior;  
they lie down, they cannot  
rise,  
they are extinguished,  
quenched like a wick:

18 Do not remember the  
former things,  
or consider the things of  
old.

19 I am about to do a new  
thing;  
now it springs forth, do  
you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the  
wilderness  
and rivers in the desert.  
20 The wild animals will  
honor me,  
the jackals and the  
ostriches;  
for I give water in the  
wilderness,  
rivers in the desert,  
to give drink to my chosen  
people,  
21 the people whom I  
formed for myself  
so that they might declare  
my praise.  
22 Yet you did not call upon  
me, O Jacob;  
but you have been weary  
of me, O Israel!  
23 You have not brought me  
your sheep for burnt  
offerings,  
or honored me with your  
sacrifices.  
I have not burdened you  
with offerings,  
or wearied you with  
frankincense.

24 You have not bought me  
sweet cane with  
money,  
or satisfied me with the  
fat of your sacrifices.  
But you have burdened me  
with your sins;  
you have wearied me  
with your iniquities.  
25 I, I am He  
who blots out your  
transgressions for my  
own sake,  
and I will not remember  
your sins.  
26 Accuse me, let us go to  
trial;  
set forth your case, so  
that you may be  
proved right.  
27 Your first ancestor sinned,  
and your interpreters  
transgressed against  
me.  
28 Therefore I profaned the  
princes of the  
sanctuary,  
I delivered Jacob to utter  
destruction,  
and Israel to reviling.

*God's Blessing on Israel*

**44** But now hear, O Jacob my  
servant,


Israel whom I have  
chosen!  
<sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD who  
made you,  
who formed you in the  
womb and will help  
you:  
Do not fear, O Jacob my  
servant,  
Jeshurun whom I have  
chosen.  
<sup>3</sup> For I will pour water on the  
thirsty land,  
and streams on the dry  
ground;  
I will pour my spirit upon  
your descendants,  
and my blessing on your  
offspring.  
<sup>4</sup> They shall spring up like a  
green tamarisk,  
like willows by flowing  
streams.  
<sup>5</sup> This one will say, "I am the  
LORD'S,"  
another will be called by  
the name of Jacob,  
yet another will write on  
the hand, "The LORD'S,"  
and adopt the name of  
Israel.  
<sup>6</sup> Thus says the LORD, the  
King of Israel,  
and his Redeemer, the  
LORD of hosts:

I am the first and I am the  
last;  
besides me there is no  
god.  
<sup>7</sup> Who is like me? Let them  
proclaim it,  
let them declare and set  
it forth before me.  
Who has announced from  
of old the things to  
come?  
Let them tell us what is  
yet to be.  
<sup>8</sup> Do not fear, or be afraid;  
have I not told you from  
of old and declared it?  
You are my witnesses!  
Is there any god besides  
me?  
There is no other rock; I  
know not one.

### **Ephesians 3:1–11** (NRSV)

#### *Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles*

**3** This is the reason that I Paul  
am a prisoner for Christ Jesus  
for the sake of you Gentiles—  
<sup>2</sup> for surely you have already  
heard of the commission of  
God's grace that was given me  
for you, <sup>3</sup> and how the mystery  
was made known to me by  
revelation, as I wrote above in  
a few words, <sup>4</sup> a reading of  
which will enable you to



perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. <sup>5</sup> In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: <sup>6</sup> that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

<sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; <sup>10</sup> so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

**Psalm 68:7-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, *Selah*  
<sup>8</sup> the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.  
<sup>9</sup> Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad; you restored your heritage when it languished;  
<sup>10</sup> your flock found a dwelling in it; in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.  
<sup>11</sup> The Lord gives the command; great is the company of those who bore the tidings:  
<sup>12</sup> "The kings of the armies, they flee, they flee!"  
The women at home divide the spoil,  
<sup>13</sup> though they stay among the sheepfolds—

the wings of a dove  
covered with silver,  
its pinions with green  
gold.

14 When the Almighty  
scattered kings there,  
snow fell on Zalmon.

15 O mighty mountain,  
mountain of Bashan;  
O many-peaked  
mountain, mountain of  
Bashan!

16 Why do you look with  
envy, O many-peaked  
mountain,  
at the mount that God  
desired for his abode,  
where the LORD will  
reside forever?

17 With mighty chariotry,  
twice ten thousand,  
thousands upon  
thousands,  
the Lord came from Sinai  
into the holy place.

18 You ascended the high  
mount,  
leading captives in your  
train  
and receiving gifts from  
people,  
even from those who rebel  
against the LORD God's  
abiding there.

### **Proverbs 17:12–13 (NRSV)**

12 Better to meet a she-bear  
robbed of its cubs  
than to confront a fool  
immersed in folly.

13 Evil will not depart from  
the house  
of one who returns evil  
for good.

## **June 18**



### **Isaiah 44:9-45:10 (NRSV)**

#### *The Absurdity of Idol Worship*

<sup>9</sup> All who make idols are  
nothing, and the things they  
delight in do not profit; their  
witnesses neither see nor  
know. And so they will be put  
to shame. <sup>10</sup> Who would  
fashion a god or cast an image  
that can do no good? <sup>11</sup> Look,  
all its devotees shall be put to  
shame; the artisans too are  
merely human. Let them all  
assemble, let them stand up;  
they shall be terrified, they  
shall all be put to shame.

<sup>12</sup> The ironsmith fashions it  
and works it over the coals,

shaping it with hammers, and forging it with his strong arm; he becomes hungry and his strength fails, he drinks no water and is faint. <sup>13</sup> The carpenter stretches a line, marks it out with a stylus, fashions it with planes, and marks it with a compass; he makes it in human form, with human beauty, to be set up in a shrine. <sup>14</sup> He cuts down cedars or chooses a holm tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. <sup>15</sup> Then it can be used as fuel. Part of it he takes and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Then he makes a god and worships it, makes it a carved image and bows down before it. <sup>16</sup> Half of it he burns in the fire; over this half he roasts meat, eats it and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, "Ah, I am warm, I can feel the fire!" <sup>17</sup> The rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, bows down to it and worships it; he prays to it and says, "Save me, for you are my god!"

<sup>18</sup> They do not know, nor do they comprehend; for their eyes are shut, so that they cannot see, and their minds as well, so that they cannot understand. <sup>19</sup> No one considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, "Half of it I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals, I roasted meat and have eaten. Now shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?" <sup>20</sup> He feeds on ashes; a deluded mind has led him astray, and he cannot save himself or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a fraud?"

*Israel Is Not Forgotten*

- <sup>21</sup> Remember these things, O Jacob,  
and Israel, for you are  
my servant;  
I formed you, you are my  
servant;  
O Israel, you will not be  
forgotten by me.
- <sup>22</sup> I have swept away your  
transgressions like a  
cloud,  
and your sins like mist;

return to me, for I have redeemed you.

<sup>23</sup> Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel.

<sup>24</sup> Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who by myself spread out the earth; <sup>25</sup> who frustrates the omens of liars, and makes fools of diviners; who turns back the wise, and makes their knowledge foolish; <sup>26</sup> who confirms the word of his servant, and fulfills the prediction of his messengers;

who says of Jerusalem, "It shall be inhabited," and of the cities of Judah, "They shall be rebuilt, and I will raise up their ruins";

<sup>27</sup> who says to the deep, "Be dry—

I will dry up your rivers";

<sup>28</sup> who says of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and he shall carry out all my purpose";

and who says of Jerusalem, "It shall be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."

#### *Cyrus, God's Instrument*

**45** Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him— and the gates shall not be closed:

<sup>2</sup> I will go before you and level the mountains,



I will break in pieces the  
doors of bronze  
and cut through the bars  
of iron,  
3 I will give you the  
treasures of darkness  
and riches hidden in  
secret places,  
so that you may know that  
it is I, the LORD,  
the God of Israel, who  
call you by your name.  
4 For the sake of my servant  
Jacob,  
and Israel my chosen,  
I call you by your name,  
I surname you, though  
you do not know me.  
5 I am the LORD, and there is  
no other;  
besides me there is no  
god.  
I arm you, though you do  
not know me,  
6 so that they may know,  
from the rising of the  
sun  
and from the west, that  
there is no one besides  
me;  
I am the LORD, and there  
is no other.  
7 I form light and create  
darkness,

I make weal and create  
woe;  
I the LORD do all these  
things.  
8 Shower, O heavens, from  
above,  
and let the skies rain  
down righteousness;  
let the earth open, that  
salvation may spring  
up,  
and let it cause  
righteousness to  
sprout up also;  
I the LORD have created  
it.  
9 Woe to you who strive  
with your Maker,  
earthen vessels with the  
potter!  
Does the clay say to the  
one who fashions it,  
“What are you  
making”?  
or “Your work has no  
handles”?  
10 Woe to anyone who says  
to a father, “What are  
you begetting?”  
or to a woman, “With  
what are you in labor?”

**Ephesians 3:12–21** (NRSV)  
12 in whom we have access to  
God in boldness and

confidence through faith in him. <sup>13</sup> I pray therefore that you may not lose heart over my sufferings for you; they are your glory.

*Prayer for the Readers*

<sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, <sup>17</sup> and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. <sup>18</sup> I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus

to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

**Psalm 68:19-31 (NRSV)**

- <sup>19</sup> Blessed be the Lord,  
who daily bears us up;  
God is our salvation.  
*Selah*
- <sup>20</sup> Our God is a God of  
salvation,  
and to GOD, the Lord,  
belongs escape from  
death.
- <sup>21</sup> But God will shatter the  
heads of his enemies,  
the hairy crown of those  
who walk in their guilty  
ways.
- <sup>22</sup> The Lord said,  
“I will bring them back  
from Bashan,  
I will bring them back from  
the depths of the sea,  
<sup>23</sup> so that you may bathe  
your feet in blood,  
so that the tongues of  
your dogs may have  
their share from the  
foe.”
- <sup>24</sup> Your solemn processions  
are seen, O God,  
the processions of my  
God, my King, into the  
sanctuary—

25 the singers in front, the  
musicians last,  
between them girls  
playing tambourines:  
26 “Bless God in the great  
congregation,  
the LORD, O you who are  
of Israel’s fountain!”  
27 There is Benjamin, the  
least of them, in the  
lead,  
the princes of Judah in a  
body,  
the princes of Zebulun,  
the princes of Naphtali.  
28 Summon your might, O  
God;  
show your strength, O  
God, as you have done  
for us before.  
29 Because of your temple at  
Jerusalem  
kings bear gifts to you.  
30 Rebuke the wild animals  
that live among the  
reeds,  
the herd of bulls with the  
calves of the peoples.  
Trample under foot those  
who lust after tribute;  
scatter the peoples who  
delight in war.  
31 Let bronze be brought  
from Egypt;

let Ethiopia hasten to  
stretch out its hands to  
God.

**Proverbs 17:14–15 (NRSV)**

14 The beginning of strife is  
like letting out water;  
so stop before the  
quarrel breaks out.  
15 One who justifies the  
wicked and one who  
condemns the  
righteous  
are both alike an  
abomination to the  
LORD.

**June 19**



**Isaiah 45:11-46:13 (NRSV)**

11 Thus says the LORD,  
the Holy One of Israel,  
and its Maker:  
Will you question me  
about my children,  
or command me  
concerning the work of  
my hands?  
12 I made the earth,

and created humankind  
upon it;  
it was my hands that  
stretched out the  
heavens,  
and I commanded all  
their host.

13 I have aroused Cyrus in  
righteousness,  
and I will make all his  
paths straight;  
he shall build my city  
and set my exiles free,  
not for price or reward,  
says the LORD of hosts.

14 Thus says the LORD:  
The wealth of Egypt and  
the merchandise of  
Ethiopia,  
and the Sabeans, tall of  
stature,  
shall come over to you and  
be yours,  
they shall follow you;  
they shall come over in  
chains and bow down  
to you.  
They will make  
supplication to you,  
saying,  
"God is with you alone,  
and there is no other;  
there is no god besides  
him."

15 Truly, you are a God who  
hides himself,  
O God of Israel, the  
Savior.

16 All of them are put to  
shame and  
confounded,  
the makers of idols go in  
confusion together.

17 But Israel is saved by the  
LORD  
with everlasting  
salvation;  
you shall not be put to  
shame or confounded  
to all eternity.

18 For thus says the LORD,  
who created the heavens  
(he is God!),  
who formed the earth and  
made it  
(he established it;  
he did not create it a  
chaos,  
he formed it to be  
inhabited!):  
I am the LORD, and there is  
no other.

19 I did not speak in secret,  
in a land of darkness;  
I did not say to the  
offspring of Jacob,  
"Seek me in chaos."  
I the LORD speak the truth,  
I declare what is right.

*Idols Cannot Save Babylon*

20 Assemble yourselves and  
come together,  
draw near, you survivors  
of the nations!  
They have no knowledge—  
those who carry about  
their wooden idols,  
and keep on praying to a  
god  
that cannot save.

21 Declare and present your  
case;  
let them take counsel  
together!  
Who told this long ago?  
Who declared it of old?  
Was it not I, the LORD?  
There is no other god  
besides me,  
a righteous God and a  
Savior;  
there is no one besides  
me.

22 Turn to me and be saved,  
all the ends of the earth!  
For I am God, and there  
is no other.

23 By myself I have sworn,  
from my mouth has gone  
forth in righteousness  
a word that shall not  
return:  
“To me every knee shall  
bow,

every tongue shall  
swear.”

24 Only in the LORD, it shall be  
said of me,  
are righteousness and  
strength;  
all who were incensed  
against him  
shall come to him and be  
ashamed.

25 In the LORD all the offspring  
of Israel  
shall triumph and glory.

**46** Bel bows down, Nebo  
stoops,  
their idols are on beasts  
and cattle;  
these things you carry are  
loaded  
as burdens on weary  
animals.

2 They stoop, they bow  
down together;  
they cannot save the  
burden,  
but themselves go into  
captivity.

3 Listen to me, O house of  
Jacob,  
all the remnant of the  
house of Israel,  
who have been borne by  
me from your birth,  
carried from the womb;

4 even to your old age I am  
he,  
even when you turn gray  
I will carry you.  
I have made, and I will  
bear;  
I will carry and will save.  
5 To whom will you liken me  
and make me equal,  
and compare me, as  
though we were alike?  
6 Those who lavish gold  
from the purse,  
and weigh out silver in  
the scales—  
they hire a goldsmith, who  
makes it into a god;  
then they fall down and  
worship!  
7 They lift it to their  
shoulders, they carry it,  
they set it in its place,  
and it stands there;  
it cannot move from its  
place.  
If one cries out to it, it  
does not answer  
or save anyone from  
trouble.  
8 Remember this and  
consider,  
recall it to mind, you  
transgressors,  
9 remember the former  
things of old;

for I am God, and there is  
no other;  
I am God, and there is no  
one like me,  
10 declaring the end from the  
beginning  
and from ancient times  
things not yet done,  
saying, "My purpose shall  
stand,  
and I will fulfill my  
intention,"  
11 calling a bird of prey from  
the east,  
the man for my purpose  
from a far country.  
I have spoken, and I will  
bring it to pass;  
I have planned, and I will  
do it.  
12 Listen to me, you stubborn  
of heart,  
you who are far from  
deliverance:  
13 I bring near my  
deliverance, it is not far  
off,  
and my salvation will not  
tarry;  
I will put salvation in Zion,  
for Israel my glory.

**Ephesians 4:1–8 (NRSV)**

*Unity in the Body of Christ*

**4** I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

<sup>7</sup> But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore it is said,  
"When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive;  
he gave gifts to his people."

**Psalms 68:32-35 (NRSV)**

<sup>32</sup> Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;  
sing praises to the Lord,  
*Selah*

<sup>33</sup> O rider in the heavens, the ancient heavens;

listen, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.

<sup>34</sup> Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel;  
and whose power is in the skies.

<sup>35</sup> Awesome is God in his sanctuary,  
the God of Israel;  
he gives power and strength to his people.  
Blessed be God!

**Proverbs 17:16 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> Why should fools have a price in hand to buy wisdom, when they have no mind to learn?

**June 20**



**Isaiah 47:1-48:11 (NRSV)**

*The Humiliation of Babylon*

**47** Come down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter Babylon!

Sit on the ground without a throne,

daughter Chaldea!  
For you shall no more be  
called  
tender and delicate.  
2 Take the millstones and  
grind meal,  
remove your veil,  
strip off your robe,  
uncover your legs,  
pass through the rivers.  
3 Your nakedness shall be  
uncovered,  
and your shame shall be  
seen.  
I will take vengeance,  
and I will spare no one.  
4 Our Redeemer—the LORD  
of hosts is his name—  
is the Holy One of Israel.  
5 Sit in silence, and go into  
darkness,  
daughter Chaldea!  
For you shall no more be  
called  
the mistress of  
kingdoms.  
6 I was angry with my  
people,  
I profaned my heritage;  
I gave them into your  
hand,  
you showed them no  
mercy;  
on the aged you made  
your yoke

exceedingly heavy.  
7 You said, “I shall be  
mistress forever,”  
so that you did not lay  
these things to heart  
or remember their end.  
8 Now therefore hear this,  
you lover of pleasures,  
who sit securely,  
who say in your heart,  
“I am, and there is no  
one besides me;  
I shall not sit as a widow  
or know the loss of  
children”—  
9 both these things shall  
come upon you  
in a moment, in one day:  
the loss of children and  
widowhood  
shall come upon you in  
full measure,  
in spite of your many  
sorceries  
and the great power of  
your enchantments.  
10 You felt secure in your  
wickedness;  
you said, “No one sees  
me.”  
Your wisdom and your  
knowledge  
led you astray,  
and you said in your heart,



“I am, and there is no  
one besides me.”  
11 But evil shall come upon  
you,  
which you cannot charm  
away;  
disaster shall fall upon you,  
which you will not be  
able to ward off;  
and ruin shall come on you  
suddenly,  
of which you know  
nothing.  
12 Stand fast in your  
enchantments  
and your many sorceries,  
with which you have  
labored from your  
youth;  
perhaps you may be able  
to succeed,  
perhaps you may inspire  
terror.  
13 You are wearied with your  
many consultations;  
let those who study the  
heavens  
stand up and save you,  
those who gaze at the  
stars,  
and at each new moon  
predict  
what shall befall you.  
14 See, they are like stubble,  
the fire consumes them;

they cannot deliver  
themselves  
from the power of the  
flame.  
No coal for warming  
oneself is this,  
no fire to sit before!  
15 Such to you are those with  
whom you have  
labored,  
who have trafficked with  
you from your youth;  
they all wander about in  
their own paths;  
there is no one to save  
you.

*God the Creator and Redeemer*

**48** Hear this, O house of  
Jacob,  
who are called by the  
name of Israel,  
and who came forth  
from the loins of  
Judah;  
who swear by the name of  
the LORD,  
and invoke the God of  
Israel,  
but not in truth or right.  
2 For they call themselves  
after the holy city,  
and lean on the God of  
Israel;

the LORD of hosts is his  
name.  
3 The former things I  
declared long ago,  
they went out from my  
mouth and I made  
them known;  
then suddenly I did them  
and they came to pass.  
4 Because I know that you  
are obstinate,  
and your neck is an iron  
sinew  
and your forehead brass,  
5 I declared them to you  
from long ago,  
before they came to pass  
I announced them to  
you,  
so that you would not say,  
“My idol did them,  
my carved image and my  
cast image  
commanded them.”  
6 You have heard; now see  
all this;  
and will you not declare  
it?  
From this time forward I  
make you hear new  
things,  
hidden things that you  
have not known.  
7 They are created now, not  
long ago;

before today you have  
never heard of them,  
so that you could not  
say, “I already knew  
them.”  
8 You have never heard, you  
have never known,  
from of old your ear has  
not been opened.  
For I knew that you would  
deal very  
treacherously,  
and that from birth you  
were called a rebel.  
9 For my name’s sake I defer  
my anger,  
for the sake of my praise  
I restrain it for you,  
so that I may not cut you  
off.  
10 See, I have refined you,  
but not like silver;  
I have tested you in the  
furnace of adversity.  
11 For my own sake, for my  
own sake, I do it,  
for why should my name  
be profaned?  
My glory I will not give to  
another.

**Ephesians 4:9–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> (When it says, “He  
ascended,” what does it mean  
but that he had also

descended into the lower parts of the earth? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) <sup>11</sup> The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. <sup>14</sup> **We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.**

**Psalm 69:1-13 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Persecution*

To the leader: according to Lilies. Of David.

- 1 Save me, O God,  
for the waters have  
come up to my neck.
- 2 I sink in deep mire,  
where there is no  
foothold;  
I have come into deep  
waters,  
and the flood sweeps  
over me.
- 3 I am weary with my crying;  
my throat is parched.  
My eyes grow dim  
with waiting for my God.
- 4 More in number than the  
hairs of my head  
are those who hate me  
without cause;  
many are those who would  
destroy me,  
my enemies who accuse  
me falsely.  
What I did not steal  
must I now restore?
- 5 O God, you know my folly;  
the wrongs I have done  
are not hidden from  
you.
- 6 Do not let those who hope  
in you be put to shame  
because of me,

O Lord God of hosts;  
do not let those who seek  
you be dishonored  
because of me,  
O God of Israel.

- 7 It is for your sake that I  
have borne reproach,  
that shame has covered  
my face.
- 8 I have become a stranger  
to my kindred,  
an alien to my mother's  
children.
- 9 It is zeal for your house  
that has consumed me;  
the insults of those who  
insult you have fallen  
on me.
- 10 When I humbled my soul  
with fasting,  
they insulted me for  
doing so.
- 11 When I made sackcloth my  
clothing,  
I became a byword to  
them.
- 12 I am the subject of gossip  
for those who sit in the  
gate,  
and the drunkards make  
songs about me.
- 13 But as for me, my prayer is  
to you, O LORD.  
At an acceptable time, O  
God,

in the abundance of your  
steadfast love, answer  
me.

With your faithful help

**Proverbs 17:17–18** (NRSV)

- 17 A friend loves at all times,  
and kinsfolk are born to  
share adversity.
- 18 It is senseless to give a  
pledge,  
to become surety for a  
neighbor.

## June 21



**Isaiah 48:12-49:12** (NRSV)

- 12 Listen to me, O Jacob,  
and Israel, whom I  
called:  
I am He; I am the first,  
and I am the last.
- 13 My hand laid the  
foundation of the  
earth,  
and my right hand  
spread out the  
heavens;  
when I summon them,  
they stand at attention.

14 Assemble, all of you, and  
hear!

Who among them has  
declared these things?  
The LORD loves him;  
he shall perform his  
purpose on Babylon,  
and his arm shall be  
against the Chaldeans.

15 I, even I, have spoken and  
called him,  
I have brought him, and  
he will prosper in his  
way.

16 Draw near to me, hear  
this!  
From the beginning I  
have not spoken in  
secret,  
from the time it came to  
be I have been there.  
And now the Lord GOD has  
sent me and his spirit.

17 Thus says the LORD,  
your Redeemer, the Holy  
One of Israel:  
I am the LORD your God,  
who teaches you for  
your own good,  
who leads you in the way  
you should go.

18 O that you had paid  
attention to my  
commandments!

Then your prosperity  
would have been like a  
river,

and your success like the  
waves of the sea;

19 your offspring would have  
been like the sand,  
and your descendants  
like its grains;  
their name would never be  
cut off  
or destroyed from before  
me.

20 Go out from Babylon, flee  
from Chaldea,  
declare this with a shout  
of joy, proclaim it,  
send it forth to the end of  
the earth;  
say, "The LORD has  
redeemed his servant  
Jacob!"

21 They did not thirst when  
he led them through  
the deserts;  
he made water flow for  
them from the rock;  
he split open the rock  
and the water gushed  
out.

22 "There is no peace," says  
the LORD, "for the  
wicked."

*The Servant's Mission*

**49** Listen to me, O  
coastlands,  
pay attention, you  
peoples from far away!  
The LORD called me before  
I was born,  
while I was in my  
mother's womb he  
named me.  
2 He made my mouth like a  
sharp sword,  
in the shadow of his  
hand he hid me;  
he made me a polished  
arrow,  
in his quiver he hid me  
away.  
3 And he said to me, "You  
are my servant,  
Israel, in whom I will be  
glorified."  
4 But I said, "I have labored  
in vain,  
I have spent my strength  
for nothing and vanity;  
yet surely my cause is with  
the LORD,  
and my reward with my  
God."  
5 And now the LORD says,  
who formed me in the  
womb to be his  
servant,  
to bring Jacob back to him,

and that Israel might be  
gathered to him,  
for I am honored in the  
sight of the LORD,  
and my God has become  
my strength—

6 he says,  
"It is too light a thing that  
you should be my  
servant  
to raise up the tribes of  
Jacob  
and to restore the  
survivors of Israel;  
I will give you as a light to  
the nations,  
that my salvation may  
reach to the end of the  
earth."

7 Thus says the LORD,  
the Redeemer of Israel  
and his Holy One,  
to one deeply despised,  
abhorred by the  
nations,  
the slave of rulers,  
"Kings shall see and stand  
up,  
princes, and they shall  
prostrate themselves,  
because of the LORD, who  
is faithful,  
the Holy One of Israel,  
who has chosen you."

*Zion's Children to  
Be Brought Home*

8 Thus says the LORD:  
In a time of favor I have  
answered you,  
on a day of salvation I  
have helped you;  
I have kept you and given  
you  
as a covenant to the  
people,  
to establish the land,  
to apportion the  
desolate heritages;  
9 saying to the prisoners,  
“Come out,”  
to those who are in  
darkness, “Show  
yourselves.”  
They shall feed along the  
ways,  
on all the bare heights  
shall be their pasture;  
10 they shall not hunger or  
thirst,  
neither scorching wind  
nor sun shall strike  
them down,  
for he who has pity on  
them will lead them,  
and by springs of water  
will guide them.  
11 And I will turn all my  
mountains into a road,

and my highways shall  
be raised up.

12 Lo, these shall come from  
far away,  
and lo, these from the  
north and from the  
west,  
and these from the land  
of Syene.

**Ephesians 4:17–24** (NRSV)

*The Old Life and the New*

17 Now this I affirm and  
insist on in the Lord: you must  
no longer live as the Gentiles  
live, in the futility of their  
minds. 18 They are darkened in  
their understanding, alienated  
from the life of God because  
of their ignorance and  
hardness of heart. 19 They  
have lost all sensitivity and  
have abandoned themselves  
to licentiousness, greedy to  
practice every kind of  
impurity. 20 That is not the way  
you learned Christ! 21 For  
surely you have heard about  
him and were taught in him, as  
truth is in Jesus. 22 **You were  
taught to put away your  
former way of life, your old  
self, corrupt and deluded by  
its lusts, 23 and to be renewed  
in the spirit of your minds,**

<sup>24</sup> and to clothe yourselves  
with the new self, created  
according to the likeness of  
God in true righteousness and  
holiness.

**Psalms 69:14-18 (NRSV)**

- <sup>14</sup> rescue me  
from sinking in the mire;  
let me be delivered from  
my enemies  
and from the deep  
waters.
- <sup>15</sup> Do not let the flood sweep  
over me,  
or the deep swallow me  
up,  
or the Pit close its mouth  
over me.
- <sup>16</sup> Answer me, O LORD, for  
your steadfast love is  
good;  
according to your  
abundant mercy, turn  
to me.
- <sup>17</sup> Do not hide your face from  
your servant,  
for I am in distress—  
make haste to answer  
me.
- <sup>18</sup> Draw near to me, redeem  
me,  
set me free because of  
my enemies.

**Proverbs 17:19-21 (NRSV)**

- <sup>19</sup> One who loves  
transgression loves  
strife;  
one who builds a high  
threshold invites  
broken bones.
- <sup>20</sup> The crooked of mind do  
not prosper,  
and the perverse of  
tongue fall into  
calamity.
- <sup>21</sup> The one who begets a fool  
gets trouble; the  
parent of a fool has no  
joy.

**June 22**



**Isaiah 49:13-50:11 (NRSV)**

- <sup>13</sup> Sing for joy, O heavens,  
and exult, O earth;  
break forth, O  
mountains, into  
singing!
- For the LORD has  
comforted his people,  
and will have  
compassion on his  
suffering ones.



14 But Zion said, "The LORD  
has forsaken me,  
my Lord has forgotten  
me."  
15 Can a woman forget her  
nursing child,  
or show no compassion  
for the child of her  
womb?  
Even these may forget,  
yet I will not forget you.  
16 See, I have inscribed you  
on the palms of my  
hands;  
your walls are  
continually before me.  
17 Your builders outdo your  
destroyers,  
and those who laid you  
waste go away from  
you.  
18 Lift up your eyes all around  
and see;  
they all gather, they  
come to you.  
As I live, says the LORD,  
you shall put all of them  
on like an ornament,  
and like a bride you shall  
bind them on.  
19 Surely your waste and your  
desolate places  
and your devastated  
land—

surely now you will be too  
crowded for your  
inhabitants,  
and those who  
swallowed you up will  
be far away.  
20 The children born in the  
time of your  
bereavement  
will yet say in your  
hearing:  
"The place is too crowded  
for me;  
make room for me to  
settle."  
21 Then you will say in your  
heart,  
"Who has borne me  
these?  
I was bereaved and barren,  
exiled and put away—  
so who has reared  
these?  
I was left all alone—  
where then have these  
come from?"  
22 Thus says the Lord God:  
I will soon lift up my hand  
to the nations,  
and raise my signal to  
the peoples;  
and they shall bring your  
sons in their bosom,

and your daughters shall  
be carried on their  
shoulders.

23 Kings shall be your foster  
fathers,  
and their queens your  
nursing mothers.  
With their faces to the  
ground they shall bow  
down to you,  
and lick the dust of your  
feet.

Then you will know that I  
am the LORD;  
those who wait for me  
shall not be put to  
shame.

24 Can the prey be taken  
from the mighty,  
or the captives of a  
tyrant be rescued?

25 But thus says the LORD:  
Even the captives of the  
mighty shall be taken,  
and the prey of the  
tyrant be rescued;  
for I will contend with  
those who contend  
with you,  
and I will save your  
children.

26 I will make your  
oppressors eat their  
own flesh,

and they shall be drunk  
with their own blood  
as with wine.

Then all flesh shall know  
that I am the LORD your  
Savior,  
and your Redeemer, the  
Mighty One of Jacob.

**50** Thus says the LORD:

Where is your mother's bill  
of divorce  
with which I put her  
away?

Or which of my creditors is  
it  
to whom I have sold  
you?

No, because of your sins  
you were sold,  
and for your  
transgressions your  
mother was put away.

2 Why was no one there  
when I came?

Why did no one answer  
when I called?

Is my hand shortened, that  
it cannot redeem?

Or have I no power to  
deliver?

By my rebuke I dry up the  
sea,

I make the rivers a  
desert;

their fish stink for lack of  
water,  
and die of thirst.

3 I clothe the heavens with  
blackness,  
and make sackcloth their  
covering.

*The Servant's Humiliation  
and Vindication*

4 The Lord GOD has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to  
sustain  
the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he  
wakens—  
wakens my ear  
to listen as those who  
are taught.

5 The Lord GOD has opened  
my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.

6 I gave my back to those  
who struck me,  
and my cheeks to those  
who pulled out the  
beard;

I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.

7 The Lord GOD helps me;  
therefore I have not  
been disgraced;

therefore I have set my  
face like flint,  
and I know that I shall  
not be put to shame;  
8 he who vindicates me is  
near.

Who will contend with  
me?

Let us stand up together.  
Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.

9 It is the Lord GOD who  
helps me;  
who will declare me  
guilty?

All of them will wear out  
like a garment;  
the moth will eat them  
up.

10 Who among you fears the  
LORD  
and obeys the voice of  
his servant,  
who walks in darkness  
and has no light,  
yet trusts in the name of  
the LORD  
and relies upon his God?

11 But all of you are kindlers  
of fire,  
lighters of firebrands.  
Walk in the flame of your  
fire,  
and among the brands  
that you have kindled!

This is what you shall have  
from my hand:  
you shall lie down in  
torment.

**Ephesians 4:25–32** (NRSV)

*Rules for the New Life*

<sup>25</sup> So then, putting away  
falsehood, let all of us speak  
the truth to our neighbors, for  
we are members of one  
another. <sup>26</sup> Be angry but do not  
sin; do not let the sun go down  
on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and do not  
make room for the devil.

<sup>28</sup> Thieves must give up  
stealing; rather let them labor  
and work honestly with their  
own hands, so as to have  
something to share with the  
needy. <sup>29</sup> Let no evil talk come  
out of your mouths, but only  
what is useful for building up,  
as there is need, so that your  
words may give grace to those  
who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve  
the Holy Spirit of God, with  
which you were marked with a  
seal for the day of  
redemption. <sup>31</sup> Put away from  
you all bitterness and wrath  
and anger and wrangling and  
slander, together with all  
malice, <sup>32</sup> and be kind to one  
another, tenderhearted,

forgiving one another, as God  
in Christ has forgiven you.

**Psalms 69:19–31** (NRSV)

- <sup>19</sup> You know the insults I  
receive,  
and my shame and  
dishonor;  
my foes are all known to  
you.
- <sup>20</sup> Insults have broken my  
heart,  
so that I am in despair.  
I looked for pity, but there  
was none;  
and for comforters, but I  
found none.
- <sup>21</sup> They gave me poison for  
food,  
and for my thirst they  
gave me vinegar to  
drink.
- <sup>22</sup> Let their table be a trap for  
them,  
a snare for their allies.
- <sup>23</sup> Let their eyes be darkened  
so that they cannot  
see,  
and make their loins  
tremble continually.
- <sup>24</sup> Pour out your indignation  
upon them,  
and let your burning  
anger overtake them.

25 May their camp be a  
desolation;  
let no one live in their  
tents.

26 For they persecute those  
whom you have struck  
down,  
and those whom you  
have wounded, they  
attack still more.

27 Add guilt to their guilt;  
may they have no  
acquittal from you.

28 Let them be blotted out of  
the book of the living;  
let them not be enrolled  
among the righteous.

29 But I am lowly and in pain;  
let your salvation, O God,  
protect me.

30 I will praise the name of  
God with a song;  
I will magnify him with  
thanksgiving.

31 This will please the LORD  
more than an ox  
or a bull with horns and  
hoofs.

**Proverbs 17:22 (NRSV)**

22 A cheerful heart is a good  
medicine,  
but a downcast spirit  
dries up the bones.

**June 23**



**Isaiah 51:1-23 (NRSV)**

*Blessings in Store  
for God's People  
(Cp Gen 12:1-3)*

**51** Listen to me, you that  
pursue righteousness,  
you that seek the LORD.  
Look to the rock from  
which you were hewn,  
and to the quarry from  
which you were dug.

2 Look to Abraham your  
father  
and to Sarah who bore  
you;  
for he was but one when I  
called him,  
but I blessed him and  
made him many.

3 For the LORD will comfort  
Zion;  
he will comfort all her  
waste places,  
and will make her  
wilderness like Eden,  
her desert like the  
garden of the LORD;  
joy and gladness will be  
found in her,  
thanksgiving and the  
voice of song.

4 Listen to me, my people,

and give heed to me, my  
nation;  
for a teaching will go out  
from me,  
and my justice for a light  
to the peoples.  
5 I will bring near my  
deliverance swiftly,  
my salvation has gone  
out  
and my arms will rule the  
peoples;  
the coastlands wait for me,  
and for my arm they  
hope.  
6 Lift up your eyes to the  
heavens,  
and look at the earth  
beneath;  
for the heavens will vanish  
like smoke,  
the earth will wear out  
like a garment,  
and those who live on it  
will die like gnats;  
but my salvation will be  
forever,  
and my deliverance will  
never be ended.  
7 Listen to me, you who  
know righteousness,  
you people who have my  
teaching in your  
hearts;

do not fear the reproach of  
others,  
and do not be dismayed  
when they revile you.  
8 For the moth will eat them  
up like a garment,  
and the worm will eat  
them like wool;  
but my deliverance will be  
forever,  
and my salvation to all  
generations.  
9 Awake, awake, put on  
strength,  
O arm of the LORD!  
Awake, as in days of old,  
the generations of long  
ago!  
Was it not you who cut  
Rahab in pieces,  
who pierced the dragon?  
10 Was it not you who dried  
up the sea,  
the waters of the great  
deep;  
who made the depths of  
the sea a way  
for the redeemed to  
cross over?  
11 So the ransomed of the  
LORD shall return,  
and come to Zion with  
singing;  
everlasting joy shall be  
upon their heads;

they shall obtain joy and  
gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing  
shall flee away.  
12 I, I am he who comforts  
you;  
why then are you afraid  
of a mere mortal who  
must die,  
a human being who  
fades like grass?  
13 You have forgotten the  
LORD, your Maker,  
who stretched out the  
heavens  
and laid the foundations  
of the earth.  
You fear continually all day  
long  
because of the fury of  
the oppressor,  
who is bent on  
destruction.  
But where is the fury of  
the oppressor?  
14 The oppressed shall  
speedily be released;  
they shall not die and go  
down to the Pit,  
nor shall they lack bread.  
15 For I am the LORD your  
God,  
who stirs up the sea so  
that its waves roar—

the LORD of hosts is his  
name.  
16 I have put my words in  
your mouth,  
and hidden you in the  
shadow of my hand,  
stretching out the heavens  
and laying the  
foundations of the  
earth,  
and saying to Zion, “You  
are my people.”  
17 Rouse yourself, rouse  
yourself!  
Stand up, O Jerusalem,  
you who have drunk at the  
hand of the LORD  
the cup of his wrath,  
who have drunk to the  
dregs  
the bowl of staggering.  
18 There is no one to guide  
her  
among all the children  
she has borne;  
there is no one to take her  
by the hand  
among all the children  
she has brought up.  
19 These two things have  
befallen you  
—who will grieve with  
you?—

devastation and  
destruction, famine  
and sword—  
who will comfort you?  
20 Your children have fainted,  
they lie at the head of  
every street  
like an antelope in a net;  
they are full of the wrath  
of the LORD,  
the rebuke of your God.  
21 Therefore hear this, you  
who are wounded,  
who are drunk, but not  
with wine:  
22 Thus says your Sovereign,  
the LORD,  
your God who pleads the  
cause of his people:  
See, I have taken from  
your hand the cup of  
staggering;  
you shall drink no more  
from the bowl of my  
wrath.  
23 And I will put it into the  
hand of your  
tormentors,  
who have said to you,  
“Bow down, that we may  
walk on you”;  
and you have made your  
back like the ground  
and like the street for  
them to walk on.

## **Ephesians 5:1–9 (NRSV)**

**5** <sup>1</sup>Therefore be imitators of  
God, as beloved children, <sup>2</sup>and  
live in love, as Christ loved us  
and gave himself up for us, a  
fragrant offering and sacrifice  
to God.

### *Renounce Pagan Ways*

<sup>3</sup>But fornication and  
impurity of any kind, or greed,  
must not even be mentioned  
among you, as is proper  
among saints. <sup>4</sup>Entirely out of  
place is obscene, silly, and  
vulgar talk; but instead, let  
there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup>Be  
sure of this, that no fornicator  
or impure person, or one who  
is greedy (that is, an idolater),  
has any inheritance in the  
kingdom of Christ and of God.

<sup>6</sup>Let no one deceive you  
with empty words, for because  
of these things the wrath of  
God comes on those who are  
disobedient. <sup>7</sup>Therefore do  
not be associated with them.  
<sup>8</sup>For once you were darkness,  
but now in the Lord you are  
light. Live as children of light—  
<sup>9</sup>for the fruit of the light is  
found in all that is good and  
right and true.



**Psalm 69:32-36** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> Let the oppressed see it  
and be glad;  
you who seek God, let  
your hearts revive.

<sup>33</sup> **For the LORD hears the  
needy,  
and does not despise his  
own that are in bonds.**

<sup>34</sup> Let heaven and earth  
praise him,  
the seas and everything  
that moves in them.

<sup>35</sup> For God will save Zion  
and rebuild the cities of  
Judah;  
and his servants shall live  
there and possess it;

<sup>36</sup> the children of his  
servants shall inherit it,  
and those who love his  
name shall live in it.

**Proverbs 17:23** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> The wicked accept a  
concealed bribe  
to pervert the ways of  
justice.

**June 24**



**Isaiah 52:1-53:12** (NRSV)

*Let Zion Rejoice*

**52** Awake, awake,  
put on your strength, O  
Zion!

Put on your beautiful  
garments,  
O Jerusalem, the holy  
city;

for the uncircumcised and  
the unclean  
shall enter you no more.

<sup>2</sup> Shake yourself from the  
dust, rise up,  
O captive Jerusalem;  
loose the bonds from your  
neck,

O captive daughter Zion!

<sup>3</sup> For thus says the LORD:

You were sold for nothing, and  
you shall be redeemed  
without money. <sup>4</sup> For thus says  
the Lord GOD: Long ago, my  
people went down into Egypt  
to reside there as aliens; the  
Assyrian, too, has oppressed  
them without cause. <sup>5</sup> Now  
therefore what am I doing  
here, says the LORD, seeing  
that my people are taken  
away without cause? Their  
rulers howl, says the LORD, and

continually, all day long, my name is despised. <sup>6</sup> Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I.

<sup>7</sup> How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

<sup>8</sup> Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

<sup>9</sup> Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations;

and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

<sup>11</sup> Depart, depart, go out from there!

Touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of it, purify yourselves, you who carry the vessels of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight; for the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

*The Suffering Servant*

<sup>13</sup> See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.

<sup>14</sup> Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—

<sup>15</sup> so he shall startle many nations;

kings shall shut their  
mouths because of  
him;  
for that which had not  
been told them they  
shall see,  
and that which they had  
not heard they shall  
contemplate.

**53** Who has believed what  
we have heard?  
And to whom has the  
arm of the LORD been  
revealed?  
<sup>2</sup> For he grew up before him  
like a young plant,  
and like a root out of dry  
ground;  
he had no form or majesty  
that we should look at  
him,  
nothing in his  
appearance that we  
should desire him.  
<sup>3</sup> He was despised and  
rejected by others;  
a man of suffering and  
acquainted with  
infirmity;  
and as one from whom  
others hide their faces  
he was despised, and we  
held him of no  
account.

<sup>4</sup> Surely he has borne our  
infirmities  
and carried our diseases;  
yet we accounted him  
stricken,  
struck down by God, and  
afflicted.  
<sup>5</sup> But he was wounded for  
our transgressions,  
crushed for our  
iniquities;  
upon him was the  
punishment that made  
us whole,  
and by his bruises we are  
healed.  
<sup>6</sup> All we like sheep have  
gone astray;  
we have all turned to our  
own way,  
and the LORD has laid on  
him  
the iniquity of us all.  
<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he  
was afflicted,  
yet he did not open his  
mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to  
the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that  
before its shearers is  
silent,  
so he did not open his  
mouth.

8 By a perversion of justice  
he was taken away.  
Who could have  
imagined his future?  
For he was cut off from the  
land of the living,  
stricken for the  
transgression of my  
people.

9 They made his grave with  
the wicked  
and his tomb with the  
rich,  
although he had done no  
violence,  
and there was no deceit  
in his mouth.

10 Yet it was the will of the  
LORD to crush him with  
pain.  
When you make his life an  
offering for sin,  
he shall see his offspring,  
and shall prolong his  
days;  
through him the will of the  
LORD shall prosper.

11 **Out of his anguish he  
shall see light;  
he shall find satisfaction  
through his knowledge.  
The righteous one, my  
servant, shall make  
many righteous,**

**and he shall bear their  
iniquities.**

12 Therefore I will allot him a  
portion with the great,  
and he shall divide the  
spoil with the strong;  
because he poured out  
himself to death,  
and was numbered with  
the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of  
many,  
and made intercession  
for the transgressors.

**Ephesians 5:10–33 (NRSV)**

10 Try to find out what is  
pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no  
part in the unfruitful works of  
darkness, but instead expose  
them. 12 For it is shameful  
even to mention what such  
people do secretly; 13 but  
everything exposed by the  
light becomes visible, 14 for  
everything that becomes  
visible is light. Therefore it  
says,

“Sleeper, awake!  
Rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on  
you.”

15 Be careful then how you  
live, not as unwise people but  
as wise, 16 making the most of

the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*The Christian Household*  
(Cp Col 3:18–19)

<sup>21</sup> Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

<sup>22</sup> Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup> Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word,

<sup>27</sup> so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body.

<sup>31</sup> “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup> This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

**Psalm 70:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*  
(Ps 40:13-17)

To the leader. Of David, for the memorial offering.

<sup>1</sup> Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.

O LORD, make haste to  
help me!

<sup>2</sup> Let those be put to shame  
and confusion  
who seek my life.

Let those be turned back  
and brought to  
dishonor  
who desire to hurt me.

<sup>3</sup> Let those who say, "Aha,  
Aha!"  
turn back because of  
their shame.

<sup>4</sup> Let all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in  
you.

Let those who love your  
salvation  
say evermore, "God is  
great!"

<sup>5</sup> But I am poor and needy;  
hasten to me, O God!  
You are my help and my  
deliverer;  
O LORD, do not delay!

**Proverbs 17:24–25** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> The discerning person  
looks to wisdom,  
but the eyes of a fool to  
the ends of the earth.

<sup>25</sup> Foolish children are a grief  
to their father  
and bitterness to her  
who bore them.

**June 25**



**Isaiah 54:1-55:13** (NRSV)

*The Eternal Covenant of Peace*

**54** Sing, O barren one who  
did not bear;  
burst into song and  
shout,  
you who have not been  
in labor!

For the children of the  
desolate woman will  
be more  
than the children of her  
that is married, says  
the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Enlarge the site of your  
tent,  
and let the curtains of  
your habitations be  
stretched out;  
do not hold back; lengthen  
your cords  
and strengthen your  
stakes.

<sup>3</sup> For you will spread out to  
the right and to the  
left,  
and your descendants  
will possess the nations  
and will settle the  
desolate towns.

<sup>4</sup> Do not fear, for you will  
not be ashamed;

do not be discouraged,  
for you will not suffer  
disgrace;  
for you will forget the  
shame of your youth,  
and the disgrace of your  
widowhood you will  
remember no more.  
5 For your Maker is your  
husband,  
the LORD of hosts is his  
name;  
the Holy One of Israel is  
your Redeemer,  
the God of the whole  
earth he is called.  
6 For the LORD has called you  
like a wife forsaken and  
grieved in spirit,  
like the wife of a man's  
youth when she is cast  
off,  
says your God.  
7 For a brief moment I  
abandoned you,  
but with great  
compassion I will  
gather you.  
8 In overflowing wrath for a  
moment  
I hid my face from you,  
but with everlasting love I  
will have compassion  
on you,

says the LORD, your  
Redeemer.  
9 This is like the days of  
Noah to me:  
Just as I swore that the  
waters of Noah  
would never again go  
over the earth,  
so I have sworn that I will  
not be angry with you  
and will not rebuke you.  
10 For the mountains may  
depart  
and the hills be removed,  
but my steadfast love shall  
not depart from you,  
and my covenant of  
peace shall not be  
removed,  
says the LORD, who has  
compassion on you.  
11 O afflicted one, storm-  
tossed, and not  
comforted,  
I am about to set your  
stones in antimony,  
and lay your foundations  
with sapphires.  
12 I will make your pinnacles  
of rubies,  
your gates of jewels,  
and all your wall of  
precious stones.  
13 All your children shall be  
taught by the LORD,

and great shall be the  
prosperity of your  
children.

14 In righteousness you shall  
be established;  
you shall be far from  
oppression, for you  
shall not fear;  
and from terror, for it  
shall not come near  
you.

15 If anyone stirs up strife,  
it is not from me;  
whoever stirs up strife  
with you  
shall fall because of you.

16 See it is I who have created  
the smith  
who blows the fire of  
coals,  
and produces a weapon  
fit for its purpose;  
I have also created the  
ravager to destroy.

17 No weapon that is  
fashioned against you  
shall prosper,  
and you shall confute  
every tongue that rises  
against you in  
judgment.

This is the heritage of the  
servants of the LORD  
and their vindication  
from me, says the LORD.

*An Invitation to Abundant Life*

**55** Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and you that have no  
money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and  
without price.

2 Why do you spend your  
money for that which  
is not bread,  
and your labor for that  
which does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to me, and  
eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in  
rich food.

3 Incline your ear, and come  
to me;  
listen, so that you may  
live.

I will make with you an  
everlasting covenant,  
my steadfast, sure love  
for David.

4 See, I made him a witness  
to the peoples,  
a leader and commander  
for the peoples.

5 See, you shall call nations  
that you do not know,  
and nations that do not  
know you shall run to  
you,



because of the LORD your  
God, the Holy One of  
Israel,  
for he has glorified you.

6 Seek the LORD while he  
may be found,  
call upon him while he is  
near;

7 let the wicked forsake  
their way,  
and the unrighteous  
their thoughts;  
let them return to the  
LORD, that he may have  
mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he  
will abundantly  
pardon.

8 For my thoughts are not  
your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my  
ways, says the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are  
higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher  
than your ways  
and my thoughts than  
your thoughts.

10 For as the rain and the  
snow come down from  
heaven,  
and do not return there  
until they have  
watered the earth,

making it bring forth and  
sprout,  
giving seed to the sower  
and bread to the eater,  
11 so shall my word be that  
goes out from my  
mouth;  
it shall not return to me  
empty,  
but it shall accomplish that  
which I purpose,  
and succeed in the thing  
for which I sent it.

12 For you shall go out in joy,  
and be led back in peace;  
the mountains and the hills  
before you  
shall burst into song,  
and all the trees of the  
field shall clap their  
hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall  
come up the cypress;  
instead of the brier shall  
come up the myrtle;  
and it shall be to the LORD  
for a memorial,  
for an everlasting sign  
that shall not be cut  
off.

**Ephesians 6:1–9** (NRSV)  
*Children and Parents*  
(Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16)

**6** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

<sup>2</sup>“Honor your father and mother”—this is the first commandment with a promise: <sup>3</sup>“so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

<sup>4</sup>And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

*Slaves and Masters*

<sup>5</sup>Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; <sup>6</sup>not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

<sup>7</sup>Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women,

<sup>8</sup>knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free.

<sup>9</sup>And, masters, do the same to them. Stop

threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.

**Psalm 71:1-6** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Lifelong Protection and Help*

- 1 In you, O LORD, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.
- 2 In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
incline your ear to me and save me.
- 3 Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.
- 4 Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.
- 5 For you, O Lord, are my hope,  
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.
- 6 Upon you I have leaned from my birth;

it was you who took me  
from my mother's  
womb. My praise is  
continually of you.

**Proverbs 17:26** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> To impose a fine on the  
innocent is not right,  
or to flog the noble for  
their integrity.

**June 26**



**Isaiah 56:1-57:14** (NRSV)

*The Covenant Extended  
to All Who Obey*

**56** Thus says the LORD:  
Maintain justice, and do  
what is right,  
for soon my salvation will  
come,  
and my deliverance be  
revealed.  
<sup>2</sup> Happy is the mortal who  
does this,  
the one who holds it fast,  
who keeps the sabbath,  
not profaning it,  
and refrains from doing  
any evil.

<sup>3</sup> Do not let the foreigner  
joined to the LORD say,  
“The LORD will surely  
separate me from his  
people”;  
and do not let the eunuch  
say,  
“I am just a dry tree.”  
<sup>4</sup> For thus says the LORD:  
To the eunuchs who keep  
my sabbaths,  
who choose the things  
that please me  
and hold fast my  
covenant,  
<sup>5</sup> I will give, in my house and  
within my walls,  
a monument and a name  
better than sons and  
daughters;  
I will give them an  
everlasting name  
that shall not be cut off.  
<sup>6</sup> And the foreigners who  
join themselves to the  
LORD,  
to minister to him, to  
love the name of the  
LORD,  
and to be his servants,  
all who keep the sabbath,  
and do not profane it,  
and hold fast my  
covenant—



7 these I will bring to my  
holy mountain,  
and make them joyful in  
my house of prayer;  
their burnt offerings and  
their sacrifices  
will be accepted on my  
altar;  
for my house shall be  
called a house of  
prayer  
for all peoples.  
8 Thus says the Lord GOD,  
who gathers the outcasts  
of Israel,  
I will gather others to them  
besides those already  
gathered.

*The Corruption  
of Israel's Rulers*

9 All you wild animals,  
all you wild animals in  
the forest, come to  
devour!  
10 Israel's sentinels are blind,  
they are all without  
knowledge;  
they are all silent dogs  
that cannot bark;  
dreaming, lying down,  
loving to slumber.  
11 The dogs have a mighty  
appetite;  
they never have enough.

The shepherds also have  
no understanding;  
they have all turned to  
their own way,  
to their own gain, one  
and all.  
12 "Come," they say, "let us  
get wine;  
let us fill ourselves with  
strong drink.  
And tomorrow will be like  
today,  
great beyond measure."

*Israel's Futile Idolatry*

**57** The righteous perish,  
and no one takes it to  
heart;  
the devout are taken  
away,  
while no one  
understands.  
For the righteous are taken  
away from calamity,  
and they enter into  
peace;  
2 those who walk uprightly  
will rest on their  
couches.  
3 But as for you, come here,  
you children of a  
sorceress,  
you offspring of an  
adulterer and a whore.  
4 Whom are you mocking?

Against whom do you  
open your mouth wide  
and stick out your  
tongue?  
Are you not children of  
transgression,  
the offspring of deceit—  
5 you that burn with lust  
among the oaks,  
under every green tree;  
you that slaughter your  
children in the valleys,  
under the clefts of the  
rocks?  
6 Among the smooth stones  
of the valley is your  
portion;  
they, they, are your lot;  
to them you have poured  
out a drink offering,  
you have brought a grain  
offering.  
Shall I be appeased for  
these things?  
7 Upon a high and lofty  
mountain  
you have set your bed,  
and there you went up  
to offer sacrifice.  
8 Behind the door and the  
doorpost  
you have set up your  
symbol;  
for, in deserting me, you  
have uncovered your bed,

you have gone up to it,  
you have made it wide;  
and you have made a  
bargain for yourself  
with them,  
you have loved their bed,  
you have gazed on their  
nakedness.  
9 You journeyed to Molech  
with oil,  
and multiplied your  
perfumes;  
you sent your envoys far  
away,  
and sent down even to  
Sheol.  
10 You grew weary from your  
many wanderings,  
but you did not say, "It is  
useless."  
You found your desire  
rekindled,  
and so you did not  
weaken.  
11 Whom did you dread and  
fear  
so that you lied,  
and did not remember me  
or give me a thought?  
Have I not kept silent and  
closed my eyes,  
and so you do not fear  
me?

<sup>12</sup> I will concede your  
righteousness and your  
works,  
but they will not help  
you.

<sup>13</sup> When you cry out, let your  
collection of idols  
deliver you!

The wind will carry them  
off,  
a breath will take them  
away.

But whoever takes refuge  
in me shall possess the  
land  
and inherit my holy  
mountain.

*A Promise of Help and Healing*

<sup>14</sup> It shall be said,  
“Build up, build up,  
prepare the way,  
remove every  
obstruction from my  
people’s way.”

**Ephesians 6:10–24 (NRSV)**

*The Whole Armor of God*

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the  
Lord and in the strength of his  
power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole  
armor of God, so that you may  
be able to stand against the  
wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For our  
struggle is not against enemies

of blood and flesh, but against  
the rulers, against the  
authorities, against the cosmic  
powers of this present  
darkness, against the spiritual  
forces of evil in the heavenly  
places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up  
the whole armor of God, so  
that you may be able to  
withstand on that evil day, and  
having done everything, to  
stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore,  
and fasten the belt of truth  
around your waist, and put on  
the breastplate of  
righteousness. <sup>15</sup> As shoes for  
your feet put on whatever will  
make you ready to proclaim  
the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> With all  
of these, take the shield of  
faith, with which you will be  
able to quench all the flaming  
arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take  
the helmet of salvation, and  
the sword of the Spirit, which  
is the word of God.

<sup>18</sup> Pray in the Spirit at all  
times in every prayer and  
supplication. To that end keep  
alert and always persevere in  
supplication for all the saints.  
<sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, so that  
when I speak, a message may  
be given to me to make known  
with boldness the mystery of

the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

*Personal Matters and  
Benediction*

<sup>21</sup> So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus will tell you everything. He is a dear brother and a faithful minister in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> I am sending him to you for this very purpose, to let you know how we are, and to encourage your hearts.

<sup>23</sup> Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Psalm 71:7-16** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> I have been like a portent to many,  
but you are my strong  
refuge.

<sup>8</sup> My mouth is filled with  
your praise,  
and with your glory all  
day long.

<sup>9</sup> Do not cast me off in the  
time of old age;  
do not forsake me when  
my strength is spent.

<sup>10</sup> For my enemies speak  
concerning me,  
and those who watch for  
my life consult  
together.

<sup>11</sup> They say, "Pursue and  
seize that person  
whom God has forsaken,  
for there is no one to  
deliver."

<sup>12</sup> O God, do not be far from  
me;  
O my God, make haste to  
help me!

<sup>13</sup> Let my accusers be put to  
shame and consumed;  
let those who seek to  
hurt me  
be covered with scorn  
and disgrace.

<sup>14</sup> But I will hope continually,  
and will praise you yet  
more and more.

<sup>15</sup> My mouth will tell of your  
righteous acts,  
of your deeds of  
salvation all day long,  
though their number is  
past my knowledge.

16 I will come praising the  
mighty deeds of the  
Lord GOD,  
I will praise your  
righteousness, yours  
alone.

**Proverbs 17:27–28 (NRSV)**

27 One who spares words is  
knowledgeable;  
one who is cool in spirit  
has understanding.  
28 Even fools who keep silent  
are considered wise;  
when they close their  
lips, they are deemed  
intelligent.

**June 27**



**Isaiah 57:15–58:14 (NRSV)**

15 For thus says the high and  
lofty one  
who inhabits eternity,  
whose name is Holy:  
I dwell in the high and holy  
place,  
and also with those who  
are contrite and  
humble in spirit,

to revive the spirit of the  
humble,  
and to revive the heart  
of the contrite.

16 For I will not continually  
accuse,  
nor will I always be  
angry;  
for then the spirits would  
grow faint before me,  
even the souls that I  
have made.

17 Because of their wicked  
covetousness I was  
angry;  
I struck them, I hid and  
was angry;  
but they kept turning  
back to their own  
ways.

18 I have seen their ways, but  
I will heal them;  
I will lead them and  
repay them with  
comfort,  
creating for their  
mourners the fruit of  
the lips.

19 Peace, peace, to the far  
and the near, says the  
LORD;  
and I will heal them.

20 But the wicked are like the  
tossing sea  
that cannot keep still;



its waters toss up mire  
and mud.

<sup>21</sup> There is no peace, says my  
God, for the wicked.

*False and True Worship*

**58** Shout out, do not hold  
back!

Lift up your voice like a  
trumpet!

Announce to my people  
their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob  
their sins.

<sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek  
me

and delight to know my  
ways,

as if they were a nation  
that practiced  
righteousness  
and did not forsake the  
ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous  
judgments,  
they delight to draw near  
to God.

<sup>3</sup> “Why do we fast, but you  
do not see?

Why humble ourselves,  
but you do not  
notice?”

Look, you serve your own  
interest on your fast  
day,

and oppress all your  
workers.

<sup>4</sup> Look, you fast only to  
quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a  
wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do  
today  
will not make your voice  
heard on high.

<sup>5</sup> Is such the fast that I  
choose,  
a day to humble oneself?  
Is it to bow down the head  
like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth  
and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the  
LORD?

<sup>6</sup> Is not this the fast that I  
choose:  
to loose the bonds of  
injustice,  
to undo the thongs of  
the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go  
free,  
and to break every yoke?

<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your  
bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless  
poor into your house;  
when you see the naked,  
to cover them,

and not to hide yourself  
from your own kin?  
8 Then your light shall break  
forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall  
spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go  
before you,  
the glory of the LORD  
shall be your rear  
guard.  
9 Then you shall call, and the  
LORD will answer;  
you shall cry for help,  
and he will say, Here I  
am.  
If you remove the yoke  
from among you,  
the pointing of the  
finger, the speaking of  
evil,  
10 if you offer your food to  
the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of  
the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in  
the darkness  
and your gloom be like  
the noonday.  
11 The LORD will guide you  
continually,  
and satisfy your needs in  
parched places,  
and make your bones  
strong;

and you shall be like a  
watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.  
12 Your ancient ruins shall be  
rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the  
foundations of many  
generations;  
you shall be called the  
repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to  
live in.  
13 If you refrain from  
trampling the sabbath,  
from pursuing your own  
interests on my holy  
day;  
if you call the sabbath a  
delight  
and the holy day of the  
LORD honorable;  
if you honor it, not going  
your own ways,  
serving your own  
interests, or pursuing  
your own affairs;  
14 then you shall take delight  
in the LORD,  
and I will make you ride  
upon the heights of the  
earth;  
I will feed you with the  
heritage of your  
ancestor Jacob,

for the mouth of the  
LORD has spoken.

**Philippians 1:1–11** (NRSV)  
*Salutation*

**1** Paul and Timothy, servants  
of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ  
Jesus who are in Philippi, with  
the bishops and deacons:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace  
from God our Father and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

*Paul's Prayer for  
the Philippians*

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every  
time I remember you,  
<sup>4</sup> constantly praying with joy in  
every one of my prayers for all  
of you, <sup>5</sup> because of your  
sharing in the gospel from the  
first day until now. <sup>6</sup> I am  
confident of this, that the one  
who began a good work  
among you will bring it to  
completion by the day of Jesus  
Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to  
think this way about all of you,  
because you hold me in your  
heart, for all of you share in  
God's grace with me, both in  
my imprisonment and in the  
defense and confirmation of  
the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my

witness, how I long for all of  
you with the compassion of  
Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And this is my  
prayer, that your love may  
overflow more and more with  
knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup> to  
help you to determine what is  
best, so that in the day of  
Christ you may be pure and  
blameless, <sup>11</sup> having produced  
the harvest of righteousness  
that comes through Jesus  
Christ for the glory and praise  
of God.

**Psalms 71:17–24** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> O God, from my youth you  
have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your  
wondrous deeds.  
<sup>18</sup> So even to old age and  
gray hairs,  
O God, do not forsake  
me,  
until I proclaim your might  
to all the generations to  
come.  
Your power <sup>19</sup> and your  
righteousness, O God,  
reach the high heavens.  
You who have done great  
things,  
O God, who is like you?

20 You who have made me  
see many troubles and  
calamities  
will revive me again;  
from the depths of the  
earth  
you will bring me up  
again.

21 You will increase my  
honor,  
and comfort me once  
again.

22 I will also praise you with  
the harp  
for your faithfulness, O  
my God;  
I will sing praises to you  
with the lyre,  
O Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips will shout for joy  
when I sing praises to  
you;  
my soul also, which you  
have rescued.

24 All day long my tongue will  
talk of your righteous  
help,  
for those who tried to do  
me harm  
have been put to shame,  
and disgraced.

**Proverbs 18:1** (NRSV)

1 The one who lives alone  
is self-indulgent,

showing contempt for all  
who have sound  
judgment.

**June 28**



**Isaiah 59:1-21** (NRSV)

*Injustice and Oppression  
to Be Punished*

**59** See, the LORD's hand is  
not too short to save,  
nor his ear too dull to  
hear.

2 Rather, your iniquities  
have been barriers  
between you and your  
God,  
and your sins have hidden  
his face from you  
so that he does not hear.

3 For your hands are defiled  
with blood,  
and your fingers with  
iniquity;  
your lips have spoken lies,  
your tongue mutters  
wickedness.

4 No one brings suit justly,  
no one goes to law  
honestly;

they rely on empty pleas,  
they speak lies,  
conceiving mischief and  
begetting iniquity.  
5 They hatch adders' eggs,  
and weave the spider's  
web;  
whoever eats their eggs  
dies,  
and the crushed egg  
hatches out a viper.  
6 Their webs cannot serve as  
clothing;  
they cannot cover  
themselves with what  
they make.  
Their works are works of  
iniquity,  
and deeds of violence  
are in their hands.  
7 Their feet run to evil,  
and they rush to shed  
innocent blood;  
their thoughts are  
thoughts of iniquity,  
desolation and  
destruction are in their  
highways.  
8 The way of peace they do  
not know,  
and there is no justice in  
their paths.  
Their roads they have  
made crooked;

no one who walks in  
them knows peace.  
9 Therefore justice is far  
from us,  
and righteousness does  
not reach us;  
we wait for light, and lo!  
there is darkness;  
and for brightness, but  
we walk in gloom.  
10 We grope like the blind  
along a wall,  
groping like those who  
have no eyes;  
we stumble at noon as in  
the twilight,  
among the vigorous as  
though we were dead.  
11 We all growl like bears;  
like doves we moan  
mournfully.  
We wait for justice, but  
there is none;  
for salvation, but it is far  
from us.  
12 For our transgressions  
before you are many,  
and our sins testify  
against us.  
Our transgressions indeed  
are with us,  
and we know our  
iniquities:  
13 transgressing, and denying  
the LORD,

and turning away from  
following our God,  
talking oppression and  
revolt,  
conceiving lying words  
and uttering them  
from the heart.

14 Justice is turned back,  
and righteousness stands  
at a distance;  
for truth stumbles in the  
public square,  
and uprightness cannot  
enter.

15 Truth is lacking,  
and whoever turns from  
evil is spoiled.  
The LORD saw it, and it  
displeased him  
that there was no justice.

16 He saw that there was no  
one,  
and was appalled that  
there was no one to  
intervene;  
so his own arm brought  
him victory,  
and his righteousness  
upheld him.

17 He put on righteousness  
like a breastplate,  
and a helmet of salvation  
on his head;  
he put on garments of  
vengeance for clothing,

and wrapped himself in  
fury as in a mantle.

18 According to their deeds,  
so will he repay;  
wrath to his adversaries,  
requital to his enemies;  
to the coastlands he will  
render requital.

19 So those in the west shall  
fear the name of the  
LORD,  
and those in the east, his  
glory;  
for he will come like a  
pent-up stream  
that the wind of the LORD  
drives on.

20 **And he will come to Zion  
as Redeemer,  
to those in Jacob who  
turn from  
transgression, says the  
LORD.**

21 And as for me, this is my  
covenant with them, says the  
LORD: my spirit that is upon  
you, and my words that I have  
put in your mouth, shall not  
depart out of your mouth, or  
out of the mouths of your  
children, or out of the mouths  
of your children's children,  
says the LORD, from now on  
and forever.



**Philippians 1:12–26 (NRSV)**

*Paul's Present Circumstances*

<sup>12</sup> I want you to know, beloved, that what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel, <sup>13</sup> so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ; <sup>14</sup> and most of the brothers and sisters, having been made confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, dare to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear.

<sup>15</sup> Some proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. <sup>16</sup> These proclaim Christ out of love, knowing that I have been put here for the defense of the gospel; <sup>17</sup> the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but intending to increase my suffering in my imprisonment. <sup>18</sup> What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or true; and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, <sup>19</sup> for I know that through your prayers and the

help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance. <sup>20</sup> It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup> For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; <sup>24</sup> but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. <sup>25</sup> Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, <sup>26</sup> so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

**Psalms 72:1-14 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Guidance and Support for the King*  
Of Solomon.

<sup>1</sup> Give the king your justice,  
O God,

and your righteousness  
to a king's son.  
2 May he judge your people  
with righteousness,  
and your poor with  
justice.  
3 May the mountains yield  
prosperity for the  
people,  
and the hills, in  
righteousness.  
4 May he defend the cause  
of the poor of the  
people,  
give deliverance to the  
needy,  
and crush the oppressor.  
5 May he live while the sun  
endures,  
and as long as the moon,  
throughout all  
generations.  
6 May he be like rain that  
falls on the mown  
grass,  
like showers that water  
the earth.  
7 In his days may  
righteousness flourish  
and peace abound, until  
the moon is no more.  
8 May he have dominion  
from sea to sea,  
and from the River to the  
ends of the earth.

9 May his foes bow down  
before him,  
and his enemies lick the  
dust.  
10 May the kings of Tarshish  
and of the isles  
render him tribute,  
may the kings of Sheba  
and Seba  
bring gifts.  
11 May all kings fall down  
before him,  
all nations give him  
service.  
12 For he delivers the needy  
when they call,  
the poor and those who  
have no helper.  
13 He has pity on the weak  
and the needy,  
and saves the lives of the  
needy.  
14 From oppression and  
violence he redeems  
their life;  
and precious is their  
blood in his sight.

**Proverbs 18:2–3** (NRSV)

2 A fool takes no pleasure in  
understanding,  
but only in expressing  
personal opinion.  
3 When wickedness comes,  
contempt comes also;



and with dishonor comes  
disgrace.

## June 29



**Isaiah 60:1-22** (NRSV)  
*The Ingathering  
of the Dispersed*

**60** Arise, shine; for your light  
has come,  
and the glory of the LORD  
has risen upon you.  
<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover  
the earth,  
and thick darkness the  
peoples;  
but the LORD will arise  
upon you,  
and his glory will appear  
over you.  
<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your  
light,  
and kings to the  
brightness of your  
dawn.  
<sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look  
around;  
they all gather together,  
they come to you;

your sons shall come from  
far away,  
and your daughters shall  
be carried on their  
nurses' arms.

<sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be  
radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and  
rejoice,  
because the abundance of  
the sea shall be  
brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations  
shall come to you.  
<sup>6</sup> A multitude of camels shall  
cover you,  
the young camels of  
Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba  
shall come.  
They shall bring gold and  
frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the  
praise of the LORD.  
<sup>7</sup> All the flocks of Kedar shall  
be gathered to you,  
the rams of Nebaioth  
shall minister to you;  
they shall be acceptable on  
my altar,  
and I will glorify my  
glorious house.  
<sup>8</sup> Who are these that fly like  
a cloud,

and like doves to their  
windows?  
9 For the coastlands shall  
wait for me,  
the ships of Tarshish  
first,  
to bring your children from  
far away,  
their silver and gold with  
them,  
for the name of the LORD  
your God,  
and for the Holy One of  
Israel,  
because he has glorified  
you.  
10 Foreigners shall build up  
your walls,  
and their kings shall  
minister to you;  
for in my wrath I struck  
you down,  
but in my favor I have  
had mercy on you.  
11 Your gates shall always be  
open;  
day and night they shall  
not be shut,  
so that nations shall bring  
you their wealth,  
with their kings led in  
procession.  
12 For the nation and  
kingdom

that will not serve you  
shall perish;  
those nations shall be  
utterly laid waste.  
13 The glory of Lebanon shall  
come to you,  
the cypress, the plane,  
and the pine,  
to beautify the place of my  
sanctuary;  
and I will glorify where  
my feet rest.  
14 The descendants of those  
who oppressed you  
shall come bending low  
to you,  
and all who despised you  
shall bow down at your  
feet;  
they shall call you the City  
of the LORD,  
the Zion of the Holy One  
of Israel.  
15 Whereas you have been  
forsaken and hated,  
with no one passing  
through,  
I will make you majestic  
forever,  
a joy from age to age.  
16 You shall suck the milk of  
nations,  
you shall suck the  
breasts of kings;

and you shall know that I,  
the LORD, am your  
Savior  
and your Redeemer, the  
Mighty One of Jacob.  
17 Instead of bronze I will  
bring gold,  
instead of iron I will bring  
silver;  
instead of wood, bronze,  
instead of stones, iron.  
I will appoint Peace as your  
overseer  
and Righteousness as  
your taskmaster.

18 Violence shall no more be  
heard in your land,  
devastation or  
destruction within your  
borders;  
you shall call your walls  
Salvation,  
and your gates Praise.

*God the Glory of Zion*

19 °The sun shall no longer be  
your light by day,  
nor for brightness shall the  
moon  
give light to you by night;  
but the LORD will be your  
everlasting light,

and your God will be  
your glory.

20 Your sun shall no more go  
down,  
or your moon withdraw  
itself;  
for the LORD will be your  
everlasting light,  
and your days of  
mourning shall be  
ended.

21 Your people shall all be  
righteous;  
they shall possess the  
land forever.  
They are the shoot that I  
planted, the work of  
my hands,  
so that I might be  
glorified.

22 The least of them shall  
become a clan,  
and the smallest one a  
mighty nation;  
I am the LORD;  
in its time I will  
accomplish it quickly.

**Philippians 1:27–2:2 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> Only, live your life in a  
manner worthy of the gospel  
of Christ, so that, whether I  
come and see you or am  
absent and hear about you, I  
will know that you are

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° See Revelation 22:4-5

standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel,<sup>28</sup> and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing.<sup>29</sup> For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—<sup>30</sup> since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

*Imitating Christ's Humility*

**2** If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy,<sup>2</sup> make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

**Psalms 72:15-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Long may he live!  
    May gold of Sheba be  
    given to him.  
    May prayer be made for  
    him continually,

    and blessings invoked for  
    him all day long.  
<sup>16</sup> May there be abundance  
    of grain in the land;  
    may it wave on the tops  
    of the mountains;  
    may its fruit be like  
    Lebanon;  
    and may people blossom  
    in the cities  
    like the grass of the field.  
<sup>17</sup> May his name endure  
    forever,  
    his fame continue as long  
    as the sun.  
    May all nations be blessed  
    in him;  
    may they pronounce him  
    happy.  
<sup>18</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the  
    God of Israel,  
    who alone does  
    wondrous things.  
<sup>19</sup> Blessed be his glorious  
    name forever;  
    may his glory fill the  
    whole earth.  
    Amen and Amen.  
<sup>20</sup> The prayers of David son of  
    Jesse are ended.

**Proverbs 18:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The words of the mouth  
    are deep waters;

the fountain of wisdom  
is a gushing stream.

<sup>5</sup> It is not right to be partial  
to the guilty,  
or to subvert the  
innocent in judgment.

## June 30



**Isaiah 61:1-62:5** (NRSV)  
*The Good News of Deliverance*

**61** The spirit of the Lord God  
is upon me,  
because the LORD has  
anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring  
good news to the  
oppressed,  
to bind up the  
brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the  
captives,  
and release to the  
prisoners;  
<sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the  
LORD's favor,  
and the day of  
vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who  
mourn;

<sup>3</sup> to provide for those who  
mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland  
instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead  
of mourning,  
the mantle of praise  
instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of  
righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD,  
to display his glory.  
<sup>4</sup> They shall build up the  
ancient ruins,  
they shall raise up the  
former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined  
cities,  
the devastations of many  
generations.  
<sup>5</sup> Strangers shall stand and  
feed your flocks,  
foreigners shall till your  
land and dress your  
vines;  
<sup>6</sup> but you shall be called  
priests of the LORD,  
you shall be named  
ministers of our God;  
you shall enjoy the wealth  
of the nations,  
and in their riches you  
shall glory.  
<sup>7</sup> Because their shame was  
double,

and dishonor was  
proclaimed as their lot,  
therefore they shall  
possess a double  
portion;  
everlasting joy shall be  
theirs.

8 For I the LORD love justice,  
I hate robbery and  
wrongdoing;  
I will faithfully give them  
their recompense,  
and I will make an  
everlasting covenant  
with them.

9 Their descendants shall be  
known among the  
nations,  
and their offspring  
among the peoples;  
all who see them shall  
acknowledge  
that they are a people  
whom the LORD has  
blessed.

10 I will greatly rejoice in the  
LORD,  
my whole being shall  
exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with  
the garments of  
salvation,  
he has covered me with  
the robe of  
righteousness,

as a bridegroom decks  
himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns  
herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth brings  
forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes  
what is sown in it to  
spring up,  
so the Lord God will cause  
righteousness and  
praise  
to spring up before all  
the nations.

*The Vindication and  
Salvation of Zion*

**62** For Zion's sake I will not  
keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake  
I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines  
out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a  
burning torch.

2 The nations shall see your  
vindication,  
and all the kings your  
glory;  
and you shall be called by  
a new name  
that the mouth of the  
LORD will give.

<sup>3</sup> You shall be a crown of  
beauty in the hand of  
the LORD,  
and a royal diadem in the  
hand of your God.  
<sup>4</sup> You shall no more be  
termed Forsaken,  
and your land shall no  
more be termed  
Desolate;  
but you shall be called My  
Delight Is in Her,  
and your land Married;  
for the LORD delights in  
you,  
and your land shall be  
married.  
<sup>5</sup> For as a young man  
marries a young  
woman,  
so shall your builder  
marry you,  
and as the bridegroom  
rejoices over the bride,  
so shall your God rejoice  
over you.

**Philippians 2:3–18 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish  
ambition or conceit, but in  
humility regard others as  
better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let  
each of you look not to your  
own interests, but to the  
interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Let the

same mind be in you that was  
in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the  
form of God,  
did not regard equality  
with God  
as something to be  
exploited,  
<sup>7</sup> but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a  
slave,  
being born in human  
likeness.  
And being found in human  
form,  
<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself  
and became obedient to  
the point of death—  
even death on a cross.  
<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also highly  
exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every  
name,  
<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of  
Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth  
and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup> and every tongue should  
confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the  
Father.

*Shining as Lights in the World*

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without murmuring and arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. <sup>16</sup> It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

<sup>17</sup> But even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrifice and the offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you— <sup>18</sup> and in the same way you also must be glad and rejoice with me.

**Psalm 73:1-20** (NRSV)

*Plea for Relief from Oppressors*

A Psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> Truly God is good to the upright,

to those who are pure in heart.

<sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;  
my steps had nearly slipped.

<sup>3</sup> For I was envious of the arrogant;  
I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

<sup>4</sup> For they have no pain;  
their bodies are sound and sleek.

<sup>5</sup> They are not in trouble as others are;  
they are not plagued like other people.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore pride is their necklace;  
violence covers them like a garment.

<sup>7</sup> Their eyes swell out with fatness;  
their hearts overflow with follies.

<sup>8</sup> They scoff and speak with malice;  
loftily they threaten oppression.

<sup>9</sup> They set their mouths against heaven,  
and their tongues range over the earth.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore the people turn and praise them,



and find no fault in them.  
11 And they say, "How can  
God know?  
Is there knowledge in the  
Most High?"  
12 Such are the wicked;  
always at ease, they  
increase in riches.  
13 All in vain I have kept my  
heart clean  
and washed my hands in  
innocence.  
14 For all day long I have been  
plagued,  
and am punished every  
morning.  
15 If I had said, "I will talk on  
in this way,"  
I would have been  
untrue to the circle of  
your children.  
16 But when I thought how to  
understand this,  
it seemed to me a  
wearisome task,  
17 until I went into the  
sanctuary of God;  
then I perceived their  
end.  
18 Truly you set them in  
slippery places;  
you make them fall to  
ruin.  
19 How they are destroyed in  
a moment,

swept away utterly by  
terrors!

20 They are like a dream  
when one awakes;  
on awaking you despise  
their phantoms.

### **Proverbs 18:6–7** (NRSV)

6 A fool's lips bring strife,  
and a fool's mouth  
invites a flogging.  
7 The mouths of fools are  
their ruin,  
and their lips a snare to  
themselves.

## **July 1**



### **Isaiah 62:6-64:12** (NRSV)

6 Upon your walls, O  
Jerusalem,  
I have posted sentinels;  
all day and all night  
they shall never be  
silent.  
You who remind the LORD,  
take no rest,  
and give him no rest  
until he establishes  
Jerusalem

and makes it renowned  
throughout the earth.  
8 The LORD has sworn by his  
right hand  
and by his mighty arm:  
I will not again give your  
grain  
to be food for your  
enemies,  
and foreigners shall not  
drink the wine  
for which you have  
labored;  
9 but those who garner it  
shall eat it  
and praise the LORD,  
and those who gather it  
shall drink it  
in my holy courts.  
10 Go through, go through  
the gates,  
prepare the way for the  
people;  
build up, build up the  
highway,  
clear it of stones,  
lift up an ensign over the  
peoples.  
11 The LORD has proclaimed  
to the end of the earth:  
Say to daughter Zion,  
“See, your salvation  
comes;  
his reward is with him,

and his recompense  
before him.”  
12 They shall be called, “The  
Holy People,  
The Redeemed of the  
LORD”;  
and you shall be called,  
“Sought Out,  
A City Not Forsaken.”

*Vengeance on Edom*

**63** “Who is this that comes  
from Edom,  
from Bozrah in garments  
stained crimson?  
Who is this so splendidly  
robed,  
marching in his great  
might?”  
“It is I, announcing  
vindication,  
mighty to save.”  
2 “Why are your robes red,  
and your garments like  
theirs who tread the  
wine press?”  
3 “I have trodden the wine  
press alone,  
and from the peoples no  
one was with me;  
I trod them in my anger  
and trampled them in my  
wrath;  
their juice spattered on my  
garments,

and stained all my robes.  
4 For the day of vengeance  
was in my heart,  
and the year for my  
redeeming work had  
come.  
5 I looked, but there was no  
helper;  
I stared, but there was  
no one to sustain me;  
so my own arm brought  
me victory,  
and my wrath sustained  
me.  
6 I trampled down peoples  
in my anger,  
I crushed them in my  
wrath,  
and I poured out their  
lifeblood on the earth.”

*God's Mercy Remembered*

7 I will recount the gracious  
deeds of the LORD,  
the praiseworthy acts of  
the LORD,  
because of all that the  
LORD has done for us,  
and the great favor to  
the house of Israel  
that he has shown them  
according to his mercy,  
according to the  
abundance of his  
steadfast love.

8 For he said, “Surely they  
are my people,  
children who will not  
deal falsely”;  
and he became their savior  
9 in all their distress.  
It was no messenger or  
angel  
but his presence that  
saved them;  
in his love and in his pity  
he redeemed them;  
he lifted them up and  
carried them all the  
days of old.  
10 But they rebelled  
and grieved his holy  
spirit;  
therefore he became their  
enemy;  
he himself fought against  
them.  
11 Then they remembered  
the days of old,  
of Moses his servant.  
Where is the one who  
brought them up out of  
the sea  
with the shepherds of his  
flock?  
Where is the one who put  
within them  
his holy spirit,  
12 who caused his glorious  
arm

to march at the right  
hand of Moses,  
who divided the waters  
before them  
to make for himself an  
everlasting name,  
13 who led them through  
the depths?  
Like a horse in the desert,  
they did not stumble.  
14 Like cattle that go down  
into the valley,  
the spirit of the LORD  
gave them rest.  
Thus you led your people,  
to make for yourself a  
glorious name.

*A Prayer of Penitence*

15 Look down from heaven  
and see,  
from your holy and  
glorious habitation.  
Where are your zeal and  
your might?  
The yearning of your  
heart and your  
compassion?  
They are withheld from  
me.  
16 For you are our father,  
though Abraham does  
not know us  
and Israel does not  
acknowledge us;

you, O LORD, are our  
father;  
our Redeemer from of  
old is your name.  
17 Why, O LORD, do you make  
us stray from your  
ways  
and harden our heart, so  
that we do not fear  
you?  
Turn back for the sake of  
your servants,  
for the sake of the tribes  
that are your heritage.  
18 Your holy people took  
possession for a little  
while;  
but now our adversaries  
have trampled down  
your sanctuary.  
19 We have long been like  
those whom you do  
not rule,  
like those not called by  
your name.

**64** O that you would tear  
open the heavens and  
come down,  
so that the mountains  
would quake at your  
presence—  
2 as when fire kindles  
brushwood

and the fire causes water  
to boil—  
to make your name known  
to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might  
tremble at your  
presence!

<sup>3</sup> When you did awesome  
deeds that we did not  
expect,  
you came down, the  
mountains quaked at  
your presence.

<sup>4</sup> From ages past no one has  
heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God  
besides you,  
who works for those who  
wait for him.

<sup>5</sup> You meet those who gladly  
do right,  
those who remember  
you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and  
we sinned;  
because you hid yourself  
we transgressed.

<sup>6</sup> We have all become like  
one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous  
deeds are like a filthy  
cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,

and our iniquities, like  
the wind, take us away.

<sup>7</sup> There is no one who calls  
on your name,  
or attempts to take hold  
of you;  
for you have hidden your  
face from us,  
and have delivered us  
into the hand of our  
iniquity.

<sup>8</sup> Yet, O LORD, you are our  
Father;  
we are the clay, and you  
are our potter;  
we are all the work of  
your hand.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be exceedingly  
angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember  
iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all  
your people.

<sup>10</sup> Your holy cities have  
become a wilderness,  
Zion has become a  
wilderness,  
Jerusalem a desolation.

<sup>11</sup> Our holy and beautiful  
house,  
where our ancestors  
praised you,  
has been burned by fire,

and all our pleasant places have become ruins.

- <sup>12</sup> After all this, will you restrain yourself, O LORD?  
Will you keep silent, and punish us so severely?

**Philippians 2:19–30 (NRSV)**

*Timothy and Epaphroditus*

- <sup>19</sup> I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may be cheered by news of you. <sup>20</sup> I have no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. <sup>21</sup> All of them are seeking their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup> But Timothy's worth you know, how like a son with a father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. <sup>23</sup> I hope therefore to send him as soon as I see how things go with me; <sup>24</sup> and I trust in the Lord that I will also come soon. <sup>25</sup> Still, I think it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus—my brother and co-worker and fellow soldier, your messenger and minister to my need; <sup>26</sup> for he has been longing for all of you, and has been distressed

because you heard that he was ill. <sup>27</sup> He was indeed so ill that he nearly died. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, so that I would not have one sorrow after another. <sup>28</sup> I am the more eager to send him, therefore, in order that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. <sup>29</sup> Welcome him then in the Lord with all joy, and honor such people, <sup>30</sup> because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for those services that you could not give me.

**Psalms 73:21–28 (NRSV)**

- <sup>21</sup> When my soul was embittered,  
when I was pricked in heart,  
<sup>22</sup> I was stupid and ignorant;  
I was like a brute beast toward you.  
<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless I am continually with you;  
you hold my right hand.  
<sup>24</sup> You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will receive me with honor.

25 Whom have I in heaven  
but you?

And there is nothing on  
earth that I desire  
other than you.

26 My flesh and my heart may  
fail,  
but God is the strength  
of my heart and my  
portion forever.

27 Indeed, those who are far  
from you will perish;  
you put an end to those  
who are false to you.

28 But for me it is good to be  
near God;  
I have made the Lord  
GOD my refuge,  
to tell of all your works.

**Proverbs 18:8** (NRSV)

8 The words of a whisperer  
are like delicious  
morsels;  
they go down into the inner  
parts of the body.

**July 2**



**Isaiah 65:1-25** (NRSV)

*The Righteousness  
of God's Judgment*

**65** I was ready to be sought  
out by those who did  
not ask,  
to be found by those  
who did not seek me.  
I said, "Here I am, here I  
am,"  
to a nation that did not  
call on my name.  
2 I held out my hands all day  
long  
to a rebellious people,  
who walk in a way that is  
not good,  
following their own  
devices;  
3 a people who provoke me  
to my face continually,  
sacrificing in gardens  
and offering incense on  
bricks;  
4 who sit inside tombs,  
and spend the night in  
secret places;  
who eat swine's flesh,  
with broth of  
abominable things in  
their vessels;  
5 who say, "Keep to yourself,  
do not come near me,  
for I am too holy for  
you."

These are a smoke in my  
nostrils,  
a fire that burns all day  
long.  
6 See, it is written before  
me:  
I will not keep silent, but  
I will repay;  
I will indeed repay into  
their laps  
7 their iniquities and their  
ancestors' iniquities  
together, says the  
Lord.  
because they offered  
incense on the  
mountains  
and reviled me on the  
hills,  
I will measure into their  
laps  
full payment for their  
actions.  
8 Thus says the LORD:  
As the wine is found in the  
cluster,  
and they say, "Do not  
destroy it,  
for there is a blessing in  
it,"  
so I will do for my servants'  
sake,  
and not destroy them all.

9 I will bring forth  
descendants from  
Jacob,  
and from Judah  
inheritors of my  
mountains;  
my chosen shall inherit it,  
and my servants shall  
settle there.  
10 Sharon shall become a  
pasture for flocks,  
and the Valley of Achor a  
place for herds to lie  
down,  
for my people who have  
sought me.  
11 But you who forsake the  
LORD,  
who forget my holy  
mountain,  
who set a table for Fortune  
and fill cups of mixed  
wine for Destiny;  
12 I will destine you to the  
sword,  
and all of you shall bow  
down to the slaughter;  
because, when I called,  
you did not answer,  
when I spoke, you did  
not listen,  
but you did what was evil  
in my sight,  
and chose what I did not  
delight in.



13 Therefore thus says the  
Lord God:  
My servants shall eat,  
but you shall be hungry;  
my servants shall drink,  
but you shall be thirsty;  
my servants shall rejoice,  
but you shall be put to  
shame;  
14 my servants shall sing for  
gladness of heart,  
but you shall cry out for  
pain of heart,  
and shall wail for anguish  
of spirit.  
15 You shall leave your name  
to my chosen to use as  
a curse,  
and the Lord God will put  
you to death;  
but to his servants he  
will give a different  
name.  
16 Then whoever invokes a  
blessing in the land  
shall bless by the God of  
faithfulness,  
and whoever takes an oath  
in the land  
shall swear by the God of  
faithfulness;  
because the former  
troubles are forgotten  
and are hidden from my  
sight.

*The Glorious New Creation*

17 For I am about to create  
new heavens  
and a new earth;  
the former things shall not  
be remembered  
or come to mind.  
18 But be glad and rejoice  
forever  
in what I am creating;  
for I am about to create  
Jerusalem as a joy,  
and its people as a  
delight.  
19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem,  
and delight in my people;  
no more shall the sound of  
weeping be heard in it,  
or the cry of distress.  
20 No more shall there be in  
it  
an infant that lives but a  
few days,  
or an old person who  
does not live out a  
lifetime;  
for one who dies at a  
hundred years will be  
considered a youth,  
and one who falls short  
of a hundred will be  
considered accursed.  
21 They shall build houses  
and inhabit them;

they shall plant vineyards  
 and eat their fruit.  
 22 They shall not build and  
 another inhabit;  
 they shall not plant and  
 another eat;  
 for like the days of a tree  
 shall the days of my  
 people be,  
 and my chosen shall long  
 enjoy the work of their  
 hands.  
 23 They shall not labor in  
 vain,  
 or bear children for  
 calamity;  
 for they shall be offspring  
 blessed by the LORD—  
 and their descendants as  
 well.  
 24 Before they call I will  
 answer,  
 while they are yet  
 speaking I will hear.  
 25 The wolf and the lamb  
 shall feed together,  
 the lion shall eat straw  
 like the ox;  
 but the serpent—its food  
 shall be dust!  
 They shall not hurt or  
 destroy  
 on all my holy mountain,  
 says the LORD.

**Philippians 3:1–3 (NRSV)**  
 Finally, my brothers and  
 sisters, rejoice in the Lord.

*Breaking with the Past*

To write the same things  
 to you is not troublesome to  
 me, and for you it is a  
 safeguard.

<sup>2</sup> Beware of the dogs,  
 beware of the evil workers,  
 beware of those who mutilate  
 the flesh! <sup>3</sup> For it is we who are  
 the circumcision, who worship  
 in the Spirit of God and boast  
 in Christ Jesus and have no  
 confidence in the flesh—

**Psalm 74:1-11 (NRSV)**

*Plea for Help in Time of  
 National Humiliation*

A Maskil of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> O God, why do you cast us  
 off forever?  
 Why does your anger  
 smoke against the  
 sheep of your pasture?  
<sup>2</sup> Remember your  
 congregation, which  
 you acquired long ago,  
 which you redeemed to  
 be the tribe of your  
 heritage.  
 Remember Mount Zion,  
 where you came to  
 dwell.

3 Direct your steps to the  
perpetual ruins;  
the enemy has destroyed  
everything in the  
sanctuary.

4 Your foes have roared  
within your holy place;  
they set up their  
emblems there.

5 At the upper entrance they  
hacked  
the wooden trellis with  
axes.

6 And then, with hatchets  
and hammers,  
they smashed all its  
carved work.

7 They set your sanctuary on  
fire;  
they desecrated the  
dwelling place of your  
name,  
bringing it to the ground.

8 They said to themselves,  
“We will utterly  
subdue them”;  
they burned all the  
meeting places of God  
in the land.

9 We do not see our  
emblems;  
there is no longer any  
prophet,

and there is no one  
among us who knows  
how long.

10 How long, O God, is the  
foe to scoff?

Is the enemy to revile  
your name forever?

11 Why do you hold back your  
hand;

why do you keep your  
hand in your bosom?

### **Proverbs 18:9–10** (NRSV)

9 One who is slack in work  
is close kin to a vandal.

10 The name of the LORD is a  
strong tower;  
the righteous run into it  
and are safe.

## **July 3**




### **Isaiah 66:1-9** (NRSV)

*The Worship God Demands*

**66** Thus says the LORD:  
Heaven is my throne  
and the earth is my  
footstool;  
what is the house that you  
would build for me,

and what is my resting  
place?

<sup>2</sup> All these things my hand  
has made,  
and so all these things  
are mine, says the  
Lord.



But this is the one to  
whom I will look,  
to the humble and  
contrite in spirit,  
who trembles at my  
word.

<sup>3</sup> Whoever slaughters an ox  
is like one who kills a  
human being;  
whoever sacrifices a  
lamb, like one who  
breaks a dog's neck;  
whoever presents a grain  
offering, like one who  
offers swine's blood;  
whoever makes a  
memorial offering of  
frankincense, like one  
who blesses an idol.

These have chosen their  
own ways,  
and in their  
abominations they  
take delight;

<sup>4</sup> I also will choose to mock  
them,  
and bring upon them  
what they fear;

because, when I called, no  
one answered,  
when I spoke, they did  
not listen;  
but they did what was evil  
in my sight,  
and chose what did not  
please me.

*The LORD Vindicates Zion*

<sup>5</sup> Hear the word of the LORD,  
you who tremble at his  
word:

Your own people who hate  
you  
and reject you for my  
name's sake  
have said, "Let the LORD be  
glorified,  
so that we may see your  
joy";  
but it is they who shall  
be put to shame.

<sup>6</sup> Listen, an uproar from the  
city!

A voice from the temple!  
The voice of the LORD,  
dealing retribution to his  
enemies!

<sup>7</sup> Before she was in labor  
she gave birth;  
before her pain came upon  
her  
she delivered a son.

<sup>8</sup> Who has heard of such a thing?  
Who has seen such things?  
Shall a land be born in one day?  
Shall a nation be delivered in one moment?  
Yet as soon as Zion was in labor  
she delivered her children.  
<sup>9</sup> Shall I open the womb and not deliver?  
says the LORD;  
shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb?  
says your God.

**Philippians 3:4–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.  
If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to

righteousness under the law, blameless.

<sup>7</sup> Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. <sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

*Pressing toward the Goal*

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

**Psalms 74:12-23 (NRSV)**

12 Yet God my King is from of  
old,  
working salvation in the  
earth.

13 You divided the sea by  
your might;  
you broke the heads of  
the dragons in the  
waters.

14 You crushed the heads of  
Leviathan;  
you gave him as food for  
the creatures of the  
wilderness.

15 You cut openings for  
springs and torrents;  
you dried up ever-  
flowing streams.

16 Yours is the day, yours also  
the night;  
you established the  
luminaries and the sun.

17 You have fixed all the  
bounds of the earth;  
you made summer and  
winter.

18 Remember this, O LORD,  
how the enemy scoffs,  
and an impious people  
reviles your name.

19 Do not deliver the soul of  
your dove to the wild  
animals;

do not forget the life of  
your poor forever.

20 Have regard for your  
covenant,  
for the dark places of the  
land are full of the  
haunts of violence.

21 Do not let the  
downtrodden be put to  
shame;  
let the poor and needy  
praise your name.

22 Rise up, O God, plead your  
cause;  
remember how the  
impious scoff at you all  
day long.

23 Do not forget the clamor  
of your foes,  
the uproar of your  
adversaries that goes  
up continually.

**Proverbs 18:11-12 (NRSV)**

11 The wealth of the rich is  
their strong city;  
in their imagination it is  
like a high wall.

12 Before destruction one's  
heart is haughty,  
but humility goes before  
honor.

## July 4



### Isaiah 66:10-24 (NRSV)

- <sup>10</sup> Rejoice with Jerusalem,  
and be glad for her,  
all you who love her;  
rejoice with her in joy,  
all you who mourn over  
her—
- <sup>11</sup> that you may nurse and be  
satisfied  
from her consoling  
breast;  
that you may drink deeply  
with delight  
from her glorious bosom.
- <sup>12</sup> For thus says the LORD:  
I will extend prosperity to  
her like a river,  
and the wealth of the  
nations like an  
overflowing stream;  
and you shall nurse and be  
carried on her arm,  
and dandled on her  
knees.
- <sup>13</sup> As a mother comforts her  
child,  
so I will comfort you;  
you shall be comforted in  
Jerusalem.

*The Reign and  
Indignation of God*

- <sup>14</sup> You shall see, and your  
heart shall rejoice;  
your bodies shall flourish  
like the grass;  
and it shall be known that  
the hand of the LORD is  
with his servants,  
and his indignation is  
against his enemies.
- <sup>15</sup> For the LORD will come in  
fire,  
and his chariots like the  
whirlwind,  
to pay back his anger in  
fury,  
and his rebuke in flames  
of fire.
- <sup>16</sup> For by fire will the LORD  
execute judgment,  
and by his sword, on all  
flesh;  
and those slain by the  
LORD shall be many.
- <sup>17</sup> Those who sanctify and  
purify themselves to go into  
the gardens, following the one  
in the center, eating the flesh  
of pigs, vermin, and rodents,  
shall come to an end together,  
says the LORD.
- <sup>18</sup> For I know their works  
and their thoughts, and I am  
coming to gather all nations  
and tongues; and they shall  
come and shall see my glory,

<sup>19</sup> and I will set a sign among them. From them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud—which draw the bow—to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. <sup>20</sup> They shall bring all your kindred from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring a grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. <sup>21</sup> And I will also take some of them as priests and as Levites, says the LORD.

<sup>22</sup> For as the new heavens  
and the new earth,  
which I will make,  
shall remain before me,  
says the LORD;  
so shall your  
descendants and your  
name remain.

<sup>23</sup> From new moon to new  
moon,  
and from sabbath to  
sabbath,

all flesh shall come to  
worship before me,  
says the LORD.

<sup>24</sup> And they shall go out  
and look at the dead bodies of  
the people who have rebelled  
against me; for their worm  
shall not die, their fire shall  
not be quenched, and they  
shall be an abhorrence to all  
flesh.

**Philippians 3:13–21 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> Beloved, I do not consider  
that I have made it my own;  
but this one thing I do:  
forgetting what lies behind  
and straining forward to what  
lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward  
the goal for the prize of the  
heavenly call of God in Christ  
Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let those of us then  
who are mature be of the  
same mind; and if you think  
differently about anything, this  
too God will reveal to you.

<sup>16</sup> Only let us hold fast to what  
we have attained.

<sup>17</sup> Brothers and sisters, join  
in imitating me, and observe  
those who live according to  
the example you have in us.

<sup>18</sup> For many live as enemies of  
the cross of Christ; I have  
often told you of them, and



now I tell you even with tears.  
<sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction;  
their god is the belly; and their  
glory is in their shame; their  
minds are set on earthly  
things. <sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is  
in heaven, and it is from there  
that we are expecting a Savior,  
the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup> He will  
transform the body of our  
humiliation that it may be  
conformed to the body of his  
glory, by the power that also  
enables him to make all things  
subject to himself.

### **Psalms 75:1-5 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for God's  
Wondrous Deeds*

To the leader: Do Not Destroy. A  
Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

- <sup>1</sup> We give thanks to you, O  
God;  
we give thanks; your  
name is near.  
People tell of your  
wondrous deeds.  
<sup>2</sup> At the set time that I  
appoint  
I will judge with equity.  
<sup>3</sup> When the earth totters,  
with all its inhabitants,  
it is I who keep its pillars  
steady. *Selah*  
<sup>4</sup> I say to the boastful, "Do  
not boast,"

- and to the wicked, "Do  
not lift up your horn;  
<sup>5</sup> do not lift up your horn on  
high,  
or speak with insolent  
neck."

### **Proverbs 18:13 (NRSV)**

- <sup>13</sup> If one gives answer before  
hearing,  
it is folly and shame.

## **July 5**



### **Jeremiah 1:1-19 (NRSV)**

The words of Jeremiah son of  
Hilkiah, of the priests who  
were in Anathoth in the land  
of Benjamin, <sup>2</sup> to whom the  
word of the LORD came in the  
days of King Josiah son of  
Amon of Judah, in the  
thirteenth year of his reign. <sup>3</sup> It  
came also in the days of King  
Jehoiakim son of Josiah of  
Judah, and until the end of the  
eleventh year of King Zedekiah  
son of Josiah of Judah, until  
the captivity of Jerusalem in  
the fifth month.

*Jeremiah's Call and  
Commission*

<sup>4</sup> Now the word of the LORD  
came to me saying,

<sup>5</sup> "Before I formed you in  
the womb I knew you,  
and before you were born  
I consecrated you;  
I appointed you a prophet  
to the nations."

<sup>6</sup> Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD!  
Truly I do not know  
how to speak, for I am  
only a boy." <sup>7</sup> But the  
LORD said to me,  
"Do not say, 'I am only a  
boy';  
for you shall go to all to  
whom I send you,  
and you shall speak  
whatever I command  
you.

<sup>8</sup> Do not be afraid of them,  
for I am with you to deliver  
you, says the LORD."

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD put out his  
hand and touched my  
mouth; and the LORD  
said to me,  
"Now I have put my words  
in your mouth.

<sup>10</sup> See, today I appoint you  
over nations and over  
kingdoms,

to pluck up and to pull  
down,

to destroy and to  
overthrow,

to build and to plant."

<sup>11</sup> The word of the LORD  
came to me, saying,

"Jeremiah, what do you see?"

And I said, "I see a branch of  
an almond tree." <sup>12</sup> Then the

LORD said to me, "You have  
seen well, for I am watching  
over my word to perform it."

<sup>13</sup> The word of the LORD came  
to me a second time, saying,  
"What do you see?" And I said,  
"I see a boiling pot, tilted away  
from the north."

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD said to  
me: Out of the north disaster  
shall break out on all the  
inhabitants of the land. <sup>15</sup> For

now I am calling all the tribes  
of the kingdoms of the north,  
says the LORD; and they shall

come and all of them shall set  
their thrones at the entrance  
of the gates of Jerusalem,  
against all its surrounding  
walls and against all the cities  
of Judah. <sup>16</sup> And I will utter my

judgments against them, for  
all their wickedness in  
forsaking me; they have made  
offerings to other gods, and

worshiped the works of their own hands. <sup>17</sup> But you, gird up your loins; stand up and tell them everything that I command you. Do not break down before them, or I will break you before them. <sup>18</sup> And I for my part have made you today a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall, against the whole land— against the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. <sup>19</sup> They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, says the LORD, to deliver you.

**Philippians 4:1–7 (NRSV)**

**4** <sup>1</sup> Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

*Exhortations*

<sup>2</sup> I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together

with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> **Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** <sup>7</sup> **And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

**Psalm 75:6-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> For not from the east or from the west and not from the wilderness comes lifting up;  
<sup>7</sup> but it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.  
<sup>8</sup> For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed; he will pour a draught from it,



and all the wicked of the  
earth  
shall drain it down to the  
dregs.

<sup>9</sup> But I will rejoice forever;  
I will sing praises to the  
God of Jacob.

<sup>10</sup> All the horns of the wicked  
I will cut off,  
but the horns of the  
righteous shall be  
exalted.

**Proverbs 18:14–15 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> The human spirit will  
endure sickness;  
but a broken spirit—who  
can bear?

<sup>15</sup> An intelligent mind  
acquires knowledge,  
and the ear of the wise  
seeks knowledge.

**July 6**



**Jeremiah 2:1-30 (NRSV)**

*God Pleads with  
Israel to Repent*

**2** The word of the LORD came  
to me, saying: <sup>2</sup> Go and

proclaim in the hearing of  
Jerusalem, Thus says the LORD:

I remember the devotion  
of your youth,  
your love as a bride,  
how you followed me in  
the wilderness,  
in a land not sown.

<sup>3</sup> Israel was holy to the LORD,  
the first fruits of his  
harvest.

All who ate of it were held  
guilty;  
disaster came upon  
them, says the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> Hear the word of the  
LORD, O house of Jacob, and all  
the families of the house of  
Israel. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD:

What wrong did your  
ancestors find in me  
that they went far from  
me,  
and went after worthless  
things, and became  
worthless themselves?

<sup>6</sup> They did not say, “Where  
is the LORD  
who brought us up from  
the land of Egypt,  
who led us in the  
wilderness,  
in a land of deserts and  
pits,

in a land of drought and  
deep darkness,  
in a land that no one  
passes through,  
where no one lives?"  
7 I brought you into a  
plentiful land  
to eat its fruits and its  
good things.  
But when you entered you  
defiled my land,  
and made my heritage  
an abomination.  
8 The priests did not say,  
"Where is the LORD?"  
Those who handle the  
law did not know me;  
the rulers transgressed  
against me;  
the prophets prophesied  
by Baal,  
and went after things  
that do not profit.  
9 Therefore once more I  
accuse you, says the  
LORD,  
and I accuse your  
children's children.  
10 Cross to the coasts of  
Cyprus and look,  
send to Kedar and  
examine with care;  
see if there has ever  
been such a thing.

11 Has a nation changed its  
gods,  
even though they are no  
gods?  
But my people have  
changed their glory  
for something that does  
not profit.  
12 Be appalled, O heavens, at  
this,  
be shocked, be utterly  
desolate, says the Lord,  
13 for my people have  
committed two evils:  
they have forsaken me,  
the fountain of living  
water,  
and dug out cisterns for  
themselves,  
cracked cisterns  
that can hold no water.  
14 Is Israel a slave? Is he a  
homeborn servant?  
Why then has he become  
plunder?  
15 The lions have roared  
against him,  
they have roared loudly.  
They have made his land a  
waste;  
his cities are in ruins,  
without inhabitant.  
16 Moreover, the people of  
Memphis and  
Tahpanhes

have broken the crown  
of your head.  
17 Have you not brought this  
upon yourself  
by forsaking the LORD  
your God,  
while he led you in the  
way?  
18 What then do you gain by  
going to Egypt,  
to drink the waters of  
the Nile?  
Or what do you gain by  
going to Assyria,  
to drink the waters of  
the Euphrates?  
19 Your wickedness will  
punish you,  
and your apostasies will  
convict you.  
Know and see that it is evil  
and bitter  
for you to forsake the  
LORD your God;  
the fear of me is not in  
you, says the Lord God  
of Hosts.  
20 For long ago you broke  
your yoke  
and burst your bonds,  
and you said, "I will not  
serve!"  
On every high hill  
and under every green  
tree

you sprawled and played  
the whore.  
21 Yet I planted you as a  
choice vine,  
from the purest stock.  
How then did you turn  
degenerate  
and become a wild vine?  
22 Though you wash yourself  
with lye  
and use much soap,  
the stain of your guilt is  
still before me, says  
the Lord GOD.  
23 How can you say, "I am not  
defiled,  
I have not gone after the  
Baals"?  
Look at your way in the  
valley;  
know what you have  
done—  
a restive young camel  
interlacing her tracks,  
24 a wild ass at home in the  
wilderness,  
in her heat sniffing the  
wind!  
Who can restrain her  
lust?  
None who seek her need  
weary themselves;  
in her month they will  
find her.

25 Keep your feet from going  
unshod  
and your throat from  
thirst.  
But you said, "It is  
hopeless,  
for I have loved  
strangers,  
and after them I will go."  
26 As a thief is shamed when  
caught,  
so the house of Israel  
shall be shamed—  
they, their kings, their  
officials,  
their priests, and their  
prophets,  
27 who say to a tree, "You are  
my father,"  
and to a stone, "You  
gave me birth."  
For they have turned their  
backs to me,  
and not their faces.  
But in the time of their  
trouble they say,  
"Come and save us!"  
28 But where are your gods  
that you made for  
yourself?  
Let them come, if they can  
save you,  
in your time of trouble;  
for you have as many gods

as you have towns, O  
Judah.

29 Why do you complain  
against me?

You have all rebelled  
against me, says the  
LORD.

30 In vain I have struck down  
your children;  
they accepted no  
correction.

Your own sword devoured  
your prophets  
like a ravening lion.

**Philippians 4:8–23** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Finally, beloved,  
whatever is true, whatever is  
honorable, whatever is just,  
whatever is pure, whatever is  
pleasing, whatever is  
commendable, if there is any  
excellence and if there is  
anything worthy of praise,  
think about these things.

<sup>9</sup> Keep on doing the things that  
you have learned and received  
and heard and seen in me, and  
the God of peace will be with  
you.

*Acknowledgment of the  
Philippians' Gift*

<sup>10</sup> I rejoice in the Lord  
greatly that now at last you

have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it.<sup>11</sup> Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have.

<sup>12</sup> I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need.

<sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me.<sup>14</sup> In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress.

<sup>15</sup> You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone.<sup>16</sup> For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once.<sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account.<sup>18</sup> I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant

offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.<sup>19</sup> And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.<sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

*Final Greetings  
and Benediction*

<sup>21</sup> Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends who are with me greet you.<sup>22</sup> All the saints greet you, especially those of the emperor's household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

**Psalm 76:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Israel's God—Judge  
of All the Earth*

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph.

A Song.

- 1 In Judah God is known,  
his name is great in  
Israel.
- 2 His abode has been  
established in Salem,  
his dwelling place in  
Zion.
- 3 There he broke the  
flashing arrows,



the shield, the sword,  
and the weapons of  
war. *Selah*

- 4 Glorious are you, more  
majestic  
than the everlasting  
mountains.
- 5 The stouthearted were  
stripped of their spoil;  
they sank into sleep;  
none of the troops  
was able to lift a hand.
- 6 At your rebuke, O God of  
Jacob,  
both rider and horse lay  
stunned.
- 7 But you indeed are  
awesome!  
Who can stand before  
you  
when once your anger is  
roused?

**Proverbs 18:16–18** (NRSV)

- 16 A gift opens doors;  
it gives access to the  
great.
- 17 The one who first states a  
case seems right,  
until the other comes  
and cross-examines.
- 18 Casting the lot puts an end  
to disputes  
and decides between  
powerful contenders.

**July 7**



**Jeremiah 2:31-3:20** (NRSV)

- 31 And you, O generation,  
behold the word of the  
LORD!  
Have I been a wilderness  
to Israel,  
or a land of thick  
darkness?  
Why then do my people  
say, "We are free,  
we will come to you no  
more"?
- 32 Can a girl forget her  
ornaments,  
or a bride her attire?  
Yet my people have  
forgotten me,  
days without number.
- 33 How well you direct your  
course  
to seek lovers!  
So that even to wicked  
women  
you have taught your  
ways.
- 34 Also on your skirts is found  
the lifeblood of the  
innocent poor,  
though you did not catch  
them breaking in.  
Yet in spite of all these  
things

35 you say, "I am innocent;  
surely his anger has  
turned from me."  
Now I am bringing you to  
judgment  
for saying, "I have not  
sinned."  
36 How lightly you gad about,  
changing your ways!  
You shall be put to shame  
by Egypt  
as you were put to  
shame by Assyria.  
37 From there also you will  
come away  
with your hands on your  
head;  
for the LORD has rejected  
those in whom you  
trust,  
and you will not prosper  
through them.

*Unfaithful Israel*

**3** If a man divorces his wife  
and she goes from him  
and becomes another  
man's wife,  
will he return to her?  
Would not such a land be  
greatly polluted?  
You have played the whore  
with many lovers;  
and would you return to  
me? says the LORD.

2 Look up to the bare  
heights, and see!  
Where have you not  
been lain with?  
By the waysides you have  
sat waiting for lovers,  
like a nomad in the  
wilderness.  
You have polluted the land  
with your whoring and  
wickedness.  
3 Therefore the showers  
have been withheld,  
and the spring rain has  
not come;  
yet you have the forehead  
of a whore,  
you refuse to be  
ashamed.  
4 Have you not just now  
called to me,  
"My Father, you are the  
friend of my youth—  
5 will he be angry forever,  
will he be indignant to  
the end?"  
This is how you have  
spoken,  
but you have done all the  
evil that you could.

*A Call to Repentance*

<sup>6</sup>The LORD said to me in  
the days of King Josiah: Have  
you seen what she did, that

faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and played the whore there? <sup>7</sup> And I thought, "After she has done all this she will return to me"; but she did not return, and her false sister Judah saw it. <sup>8</sup> She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce; yet her false sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. <sup>9</sup> Because she took her whoredom so lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree.

<sup>10</sup> Yet for all this her false sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but only in pretense, says the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to me: Faithless Israel has shown herself less guilty than false Judah. <sup>12</sup> Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say:

Return, faithless Israel,  
says the LORD.  
I will not look on you in  
anger,  
for I am merciful, says  
the LORD;  
I will not be angry forever.

<sup>13</sup> Only acknowledge your  
guilt,  
that you have rebelled  
against the LORD your  
God,  
and scattered your favors  
among strangers under  
every green tree,  
and have not obeyed my  
voice, says the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> Return, O faithless  
children, says the LORD,  
for I am your master;  
I will take you, one from a  
city and two from a  
family,  
and I will bring you to  
Zion.

<sup>15</sup> I will give you shepherds  
after my own heart, who will  
feed you with knowledge and  
understanding. <sup>16</sup> And when  
you have multiplied and  
increased in the land, in those  
days, says the LORD, they shall  
no longer say, "The ark of the  
covenant of the LORD." It shall  
not come to mind, or be  
remembered, or missed; nor  
shall another one be made.

<sup>17</sup> At that time Jerusalem shall  
be called the throne of the  
LORD, and all nations shall  
gather to it, to the presence of  
the LORD in Jerusalem, and

they shall no longer stubbornly follow their own evil will. <sup>18</sup> In those days the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land that I gave your ancestors for a heritage.

<sup>19</sup> I thought  
    how I would set you  
        among my children,  
and give you a pleasant  
    land,  
    the most beautiful  
        heritage of all the  
        nations.  
And I thought you would  
    call me, My Father,  
    and would not turn from  
    following me.

<sup>20</sup> Instead, as a faithless wife  
    leaves her husband,  
    so you have been  
    faithless to me, O  
    house of Israel,

**Colossians 1:1–10 (NRSV)**

*Salutation*

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,  
    <sup>2</sup> To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.


*Paul Thanks God  
for the Colossians*

<sup>3</sup> In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup> because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel <sup>6</sup> that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. <sup>7</sup> This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, <sup>8</sup> and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

<sup>9</sup> For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and

understanding, <sup>10</sup> so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.

**Psalm 76:8-12 (NRSV)**

 <sup>8</sup> From the heavens you uttered judgment; the earth feared and was still

<sup>9</sup> when God rose up to establish judgment, to save all the oppressed of the earth. *Selah*

<sup>10</sup> Human wrath serves only to praise you, when you bind the last bit of your wrath around you.

<sup>11</sup> Make vows to the LORD your God, and perform them; let all who are around him bring gifts to the one who is awesome,

<sup>12</sup> who cuts off the spirit of princes, who inspires fear in the kings of the earth.

**Proverbs 18:19 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> An ally offended is stronger than a city; such quarreling is like the bars of a castle.

**July 8**



**Jeremiah 3:21-4:18 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> A voice on the bare heights is heard, the plaintive weeping of Israel's children, because they have perverted their way, they have forgotten the LORD their God:

<sup>22</sup> Return, O faithless children, I will heal your faithlessness.

“Here we come to you; for you are the LORD our God.

<sup>23</sup> Truly the hills are a delusion, the orgies on the mountains.

Truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> “But from our youth the shameful thing has devoured all for which our ancestors had labored, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. <sup>25</sup> Let us lie down in our shame, and let our dishonor cover us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our ancestors, from our youth even to this day; and we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.”

**4** If you return, O Israel, says the Lord if you return to me, if you remove your abominations from my presence, and do not waver, <sup>2</sup> and if you swear, “As the LORD lives!” in truth, in justice, and in uprightness, then nations shall be blessed by him, and by him they shall boast.

<sup>3</sup> For thus says the LORD to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Break up your fallow ground,

and do not sow among thorns.

<sup>4</sup> Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, remove the foreskin of your hearts, O people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else my wrath will go forth like fire, and burn with no one to quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

*Invasion and Desolation of Judah Threatened*

<sup>5</sup> Declare in Judah, and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say: Blow the trumpet through the land; shout aloud and say, “Gather together, and let us go into the fortified cities!” <sup>6</sup> Raise a standard toward Zion, flee for safety, do not delay, for I am bringing evil from the north, and a great destruction.

7 A lion has gone up from its thicket,  
a destroyer of nations  
has set out;  
he has gone out from his place  
to make your land a waste;  
your cities will be ruins  
without inhabitant.

8 Because of this put on sackcloth,  
lament and wail:  
“The fierce anger of the LORD  
has not turned away  
from us.”

9 On that day, says the LORD,  
courage shall fail the king and the officials;  
the priests shall be appalled and the prophets  
astounded. <sup>10</sup> Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD,  
how utterly you have deceived this people  
and Jerusalem, saying, ‘It shall be well with you,’  
even while the sword is at the throat!”

<sup>11</sup> At that time it will be said to this people  
and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me  
out of the bare heights in the desert toward  
my poor people, not to winnow or cleanse—  
<sup>12</sup> a wind too strong for that. Now it is I

who speak in judgment against them.

<sup>13</sup> Look! He comes up like clouds,  
his chariots like the whirlwind;  
his horses are swifter than eagles—  
woe to us, for we are ruined!

<sup>14</sup> O Jerusalem, wash your heart clean of wickedness  
so that you may be saved.

How long shall your evil schemes lodge within you?

<sup>15</sup> For a voice declares from Dan and proclaims disaster from Mount Ephraim.

<sup>16</sup> Tell the nations, “Here they are!”  
Proclaim against Jerusalem,  
“Besiegers come from a distant land;  
they shout against the cities of Judah.

<sup>17</sup> They have closed in around her like watchers of a field,

because she has rebelled  
against me, says the  
LORD.

<sup>18</sup> Your ways and your doings  
have brought this upon  
you.

This is your doom; how  
bitter it is!

It has reached your very  
heart.”

**Colossians 1:11–17** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> May you be made strong  
with all the strength that  
comes from his glorious  
power, and may you be  
prepared to endure everything  
with patience, while joyfully  
<sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father,  
who has enabled you to share  
in the inheritance of the saints  
in the light. <sup>13</sup> He has rescued  
us from the power of darkness  
and transferred us into the  
kingdom of his beloved Son,  
<sup>14</sup> in whom we have  
redemption, the forgiveness of  
sins.

*The Supremacy of Christ*  
(Cp Jn 1:1–5)

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the  
invisible God, the firstborn of  
all creation; <sup>16</sup> for in him all  
things in heaven and on earth  
were created, things visible

and invisible, whether thrones  
or dominions or rulers or  
powers—all things have been  
created through him and for  
him. <sup>17</sup> He himself is before all  
things, and in him all things  
hold together.

**Psalm 77:1-14** (NRSV)

*God's Mighty Deeds Recalled*

To the leader: according to  
Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> I cry aloud to God,  
aloud to God, that he  
may hear me.
- <sup>2</sup> In the day of my trouble I  
seek the Lord;  
in the night my hand is  
stretched out without  
wearying;  
my soul refuses to be  
comforted.
- <sup>3</sup> I think of God, and I moan;  
I meditate, and my spirit  
faints. *Selah*
- <sup>4</sup> You keep my eyelids from  
closing;  
I am so troubled that I  
cannot speak.
- <sup>5</sup> I consider the days of old,  
and remember the years  
of long ago.
- <sup>6</sup> I commune with my heart  
in the night;  
I meditate and search my  
spirit:



7 “Will the Lord spurn  
 forever,  
 and never again be  
 favorable?  
 8 Has his steadfast love  
 ceased forever?  
 Are his promises at an  
 end for all time?  
 9 Has God forgotten to be  
 gracious?  
 Has he in anger shut up  
 his compassion?”  
*Selah*  
 10 And I say, “It is my grief  
 that the right hand of the  
 Most High has  
 changed.”  
 11 I will call to mind the  
 deeds of the LORD;  
 I will remember your  
 wonders of old.  
 12 I will meditate on all your  
 work,  
 and muse on your  
 mighty deeds.  
 13 Your way, O God, is holy.  
 What god is so great as  
 our God?  
 14 You are the God who  
 works wonders;  
 you have displayed your  
 might among the  
 peoples.

**Proverbs 18:20–21 (NRSV)**

20 From the fruit of the  
 mouth one’s stomach  
 is satisfied;  
 the yield of the lips  
 brings satisfaction.  
 21 Death and life are in the  
 power of the tongue,  
 and those who love it  
 will eat its fruits.

**July 9**



**Jeremiah 4:19-5:19 (NRSV)**

*Sorrow for a Doomed Nation*

19 My anguish, my anguish! I  
 writhe in pain!  
 Oh, the walls of my  
 heart!  
 My heart is beating wildly;  
 I cannot keep silent;  
 for I hear the sound of the  
 trumpet,  
 the alarm of war.  
 20 Disaster overtakes  
 disaster,  
 the whole land is laid  
 waste.  
 Suddenly my tents are  
 destroyed,

my curtains in a  
moment.  
21 How long must I see the  
standard,  
and hear the sound of  
the trumpet?  
22 “For my people are foolish,  
they do not know me;  
they are stupid children,  
they have no  
understanding.  
They are skilled in doing  
evil,  
but do not know how to  
do good.”  
23 I looked on the earth, and  
lo, it was waste and  
void;  
and to the heavens, and  
they had no light.  
24 I looked on the mountains,  
and lo, they were  
quaking,  
and all the hills moved to  
and fro.  
25 I looked, and lo, there was  
no one at all,  
and all the birds of the  
air had fled.  
26 I looked, and lo, the fruitful  
land was a desert,  
and all its cities were laid  
in ruins  
before the LORD, before  
his fierce anger.

27 For thus says the LORD:  
The whole land shall be a  
desolation; yet I will not make  
a full end.  
28 Because of this the earth  
shall mourn,  
and the heavens above  
grow black;  
for I have spoken, I have  
purposed;  
I have not relented nor  
will I turn back.  
29 At the noise of horseman  
and archer  
every town takes to  
flight;  
they enter thickets; they  
climb among rocks;  
all the towns are  
forsaken,  
and no one lives in them.  
30 And you, O desolate one,  
what do you mean that  
you dress in crimson,  
that you deck yourself  
with ornaments of  
gold,  
that you enlarge your  
eyes with paint?  
In vain you beautify  
yourself.  
Your lovers despise you;  
they seek your life.  
31 For I heard a cry as of a  
woman in labor,

anguish as of one  
bringing forth her first  
child,  
the cry of daughter Zion  
gasping for breath,  
stretching out her hands,  
“Woe is me! I am fainting  
before killers!”

*The Utter Corruption  
of God’s People*

**5** Run to and fro through  
the streets of  
Jerusalem,  
look around and take  
note!  
Search its squares and see  
if you can find one  
person  
who acts justly  
and seeks truth—  
so that I may pardon  
Jerusalem.  
<sup>2</sup> Although they say, “As the  
LORD lives,”  
yet they swear falsely.  
<sup>3</sup> O LORD, do your eyes not  
look for truth?  
You have struck them,  
but they felt no anguish;  
you have consumed them,  
but they refused to take  
correction.  
They have made their  
faces harder than rock;

they have refused to  
turn back.  
<sup>4</sup> Then I said, “These are  
only the poor,  
they have no sense;  
for they do not know the  
way of the LORD,  
the law of their God.  
<sup>5</sup> Let me go to the rich  
and speak to them;  
surely they know the way  
of the LORD,  
the law of their God.”  
But they all alike had  
broken the yoke,  
they had burst the  
bonds.  
<sup>6</sup> Therefore a lion from the  
forest shall kill them,  
a wolf from the desert  
shall destroy them.  
A leopard is watching  
against their cities;  
everyone who goes out  
of them shall be torn in  
pieces—  
because their  
transgressions are  
many,  
their apostasies are  
great.  
<sup>7</sup> How can I pardon you?  
Your children have  
forsaken me,

and have sworn by those  
who are no gods.  
When I fed them to the  
full,  
they committed adultery  
and trooped to the  
houses of prostitutes.  
8 They were well-fed lusty  
stallions,  
each neighing for his  
neighbor's wife.  
9 Shall I not punish them for  
these things? says the  
LORD;  
and shall I not bring  
retribution  
on a nation such as this?  
10 Go up through her vine-  
rows and destroy,  
but do not make a full  
end;  
strip away her branches,  
for they are not the  
LORD'S.  
11 For the house of Israel and  
the house of Judah  
have been utterly  
faithless to me, says  
the LORD.  
12 They have spoken falsely  
of the LORD,  
and have said, "He will  
do nothing.  
No evil will come upon us,

and we shall not see  
sword or famine."  
13 The prophets are nothing  
but wind,  
for the word is not in  
them.  
Thus shall it be done to  
them!  
14 Therefore thus says the  
LORD, the God of hosts:  
Because they have spoken  
this word,  
I am now making my  
words in your mouth a  
fire,  
and this people wood,  
and the fire shall  
devour them.  
15 I am going to bring upon  
you  
a nation from far away,  
O house of Israel, says  
the LORD.  
It is an enduring nation,  
it is an ancient nation,  
a nation whose language  
you do not know,  
nor can you understand  
what they say.  
16 Their quiver is like an open  
tomb;  
all of them are mighty  
warriors.  
17 They shall eat up your  
harvest and your food;

they shall eat up your  
sons and your  
daughters;  
they shall eat up your  
flocks and your herds;  
they shall eat up your  
vines and your fig  
trees;  
they shall destroy with the  
sword  
your fortified cities in  
which you trust.

<sup>18</sup> But even in those days,  
says the LORD, I will not make a  
full end of you. <sup>19</sup> And when  
your people say, “Why has the  
LORD our God done all these  
things to us?” you shall say to  
them, “As you have forsaken  
me and served foreign gods in  
your land, so you shall serve  
strangers in a land that is not  
yours.”

**Colossians 1:18–27** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> He is the head of the body,  
the church; he is the  
beginning, the firstborn from  
the dead, so that he might  
come to have first place in  
everything. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the  
fullness of God was pleased to  
dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him God  
was pleased to reconcile to  
himself all things, whether on

earth or in heaven, by making  
peace through the blood of his  
cross.

<sup>21</sup> And you who were once  
estranged and hostile in mind,  
doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> he has now  
reconciled in his fleshly body  
through death, so as to  
present you holy and  
blameless and irreproachable  
before him— <sup>23</sup> provided that  
you continue securely  
established and steadfast in  
the faith, without shifting from  
the hope promised by the  
gospel that you heard, which  
has been proclaimed to every  
creature under heaven. I, Paul,  
became a servant of this  
gospel.

*Paul's Interest  
in the Colossians*

<sup>24</sup> I am now rejoicing in my  
sufferings for your sake, and in  
my flesh I am completing what  
is lacking in Christ's afflictions  
for the sake of his body, that  
is, the church. <sup>25</sup> I became its  
servant according to God's  
commission that was given to  
me for you, to make the word  
of God fully known, <sup>26</sup> the  
mystery that has been hidden  
throughout the ages and

generations but has now been revealed to his saints. <sup>27</sup>To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

**Psalms 77:15-20** (NRSV)

- <sup>15</sup> With your strong arm you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*
- <sup>16</sup> When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; the very deep trembled.
- <sup>17</sup> The clouds poured out water; the skies thundered; your arrows flashed on every side.
- <sup>18</sup> The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook.
- <sup>19</sup> Your way was through the sea, your path, through the mighty waters;

yet your footprints were unseen.

- <sup>20</sup> You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

**Proverbs 18:22** (NRSV)

- <sup>22</sup> He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD.

**July 10**



**Jeremiah 5:20-6:15** (NRSV)

- <sup>20</sup> Declare this in the house of Jacob, proclaim it in Judah:
- <sup>21</sup> Hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but do not see, who have ears, but do not hear.
- <sup>22</sup> Do you not fear me? says the LORD; Do you not tremble before me?

I placed the sand as a  
boundary for the sea,  
a perpetual barrier that  
it cannot pass;  
though the waves toss,  
they cannot prevail,  
though they roar, they  
cannot pass over it.  
23 But this people has a  
stubborn and  
rebellious heart;  
they have turned aside  
and gone away.  
24 They do not say in their  
hearts,  
“Let us fear the LORD our  
God,  
who gives the rain in its  
season,  
the autumn rain and the  
spring rain,  
and keeps for us  
the weeks appointed for  
the harvest.”  
25 Your iniquities have turned  
these away,  
and your sins have  
deprived you of good.  
26 For scoundrels are found  
among my people;  
they take over the goods  
of others.  
Like fowlers they set a  
trap;

they catch human  
beings.  
27 Like a cage full of birds,  
their houses are full of  
treachery;  
therefore they have  
become great and rich,  
28 they have grown fat and  
sleek.  
They know no limits in  
deeds of wickedness;  
they do not judge with  
justice  
the cause of the orphan, to  
make it prosper,  
and they do not defend  
the rights of the needy.  
29 Shall I not punish them for  
these things? says the  
LORD,  
and shall I not bring  
retribution  
on a nation such as this?  
30 An appalling and horrible  
thing  
has happened in the  
land:  
31 the prophets prophesy  
falsely,  
and the priests rule as  
the prophets direct;  
my people love to have it  
so,  
but what will you do  
when the end comes?

*The Imminence and  
Horror of the Invasion*

**6** Flee for safety, O children  
of Benjamin,  
from the midst of  
Jerusalem!  
Blow the trumpet in Tekoa,  
and raise a signal on  
Beth-haccherem;  
for evil looms out of the  
north,  
and great destruction.  
<sup>2</sup> I have likened daughter  
Zion  
to the loveliest pasture.  
<sup>3</sup> Shepherds with their flocks  
shall come against her.  
They shall pitch their  
tents around her;  
they shall pasture, all in  
their places.  
<sup>4</sup> "Prepare war against her;  
up, and let us attack at  
noon!"  
"Woe to us, for the day  
declines,  
the shadows of evening  
lengthen!"  
<sup>5</sup> "Up, and let us attack by  
night,  
and destroy her  
palaces!"  
<sup>6</sup> For thus says the LORD of  
hosts:  
Cut down her trees;

cast up a siege ramp  
against Jerusalem.  
This is the city that must  
be punished;  
there is nothing but  
oppression within her.  
<sup>7</sup> As a well keeps its water  
fresh,  
so she keeps fresh her  
wickedness;  
violence and destruction  
are heard within her;  
sickness and wounds are  
ever before me.  
<sup>8</sup> Take warning, O  
Jerusalem,  
or I shall turn from you in  
disgust,  
and make you a  
desolation,  
an uninhabited land.  
<sup>9</sup> Thus says the LORD of  
hosts:  
Glean thoroughly as a vine  
the remnant of Israel;  
like a grape-gatherer, pass  
your hand again  
over its branches.  
<sup>10</sup> To whom shall I speak and  
give warning,  
that they may hear?  
See, their ears are closed,  
they cannot listen.



The word of the LORD is to  
them an object of  
scorn;  
they take no pleasure in  
it.

<sup>11</sup> But I am full of the wrath  
of the LORD;  
I am weary of holding it  
in.  
Pour it out on the children  
in the street,  
and on the gatherings of  
young men as well;  
both husband and wife  
shall be taken,  
the old folk and the very  
aged.

<sup>12</sup> Their houses shall be  
turned over to others,  
their fields and wives  
together;  
for I will stretch out my  
hand  
against the inhabitants  
of the land, says the  
LORD.

<sup>13</sup> For from the least to the  
greatest of them,  
everyone is greedy for  
unjust gain;  
and from prophet to  
priest,  
everyone deals falsely.

<sup>14</sup> They have treated the  
wound of my people  
carelessly,  
saying, "Peace, peace,"  
when there is no peace.

<sup>15</sup> They acted shamefully,  
they committed  
abomination;  
yet they were not  
ashamed,  
they did not know how  
to blush.

Therefore they shall fall  
among those who fall;  
at the time that I punish  
them, they shall be  
overthrown, says the  
LORD.


**Colossians 1:28–2:7** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> It is he whom we proclaim,  
warning everyone and  
teaching everyone in all  
wisdom, so that we may  
present everyone mature in  
Christ. <sup>29</sup> For this I toil and  
struggle with all the energy  
that he powerfully inspires  
within me.

**2** For I want you to know how  
much I am struggling for you,  
and for those in Laodicea, and  
for all who have not seen me  
face to face. <sup>2</sup> I want their

hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself,<sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.<sup>4</sup> I am saying this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments.<sup>5</sup> For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your morale and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

*Fullness of Life in Christ*



<sup>6</sup> As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him,<sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

**Psalms 78:1-22** (NRSV)

*God's Goodness and  
Israel's Ingratitude*

A Maskil of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;  
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.  
<sup>2</sup> I will open my mouth in a parable;

I will utter dark sayings  
from of old,  
<sup>3</sup> things that we have heard  
and known,  
that our ancestors have told us.  
<sup>4</sup> We will not hide them  
from their children;  
we will tell to the coming generation  
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,  
and the wonders that he has done.  
<sup>5</sup> He established a decree in Jacob,  
and appointed a law in Israel,  
which he commanded our ancestors  
to teach to their children;  
<sup>6</sup> that the next generation  
might know them,  
the children yet unborn,  
and rise up and tell them  
to their children,  
<sup>7</sup> so that they should set  
their hope in God,  
and not forget the works of God,  
but keep his commandments;  
<sup>8</sup> and that they should not  
be like their ancestors,

a stubborn and  
rebellious generation,  
a generation whose heart  
was not steadfast,  
whose spirit was not  
faithful to God.  
9 The Ephraimites, armed  
with the bow,  
turned back on the day  
of battle.  
10 They did not keep God's  
covenant,  
but refused to walk  
according to his law.  
11 They forgot what he had  
done,  
and the miracles that he  
had shown them.  
12 In the sight of their  
ancestors he worked  
marvels  
in the land of Egypt, in  
the fields of Zoan.  
13 He divided the sea and let  
them pass through it,  
and made the waters  
stand like a heap.  
14 In the daytime he led them  
with a cloud,  
and all night long with a  
fiery light.  
15 He split rocks open in the  
wilderness,

and gave them drink  
abundantly as from the  
deep.  
16 He made streams come  
out of the rock,  
and caused waters to  
flow down like rivers.  
17 Yet they sinned still more  
against him,  
rebellious against the  
Most High in the  
desert.  
18 They tested God in their  
heart  
by demanding the food  
they craved.  
19 They spoke against God,  
saying,  
"Can God spread a table  
in the wilderness?  
20 Even though he struck the  
rock so that water  
gushed out  
and torrents overflowed,  
can he also give bread,  
or provide meat for his  
people?"  
21 Therefore, when the LORD  
heard, he was full of  
rage;  
a fire was kindled against  
Jacob,  
his anger mounted  
against Israel,

22 because they had no faith  
in God,  
and did not trust his  
saving power.

**Proverbs 18:23–24 (NRSV)**

23 The poor use entreaties,  
but the rich answer  
roughly.

24 Some friends play at  
friendship  
but a true friend sticks  
closer than one's  
nearest kin.

## July 11



**Jeremiah 6:16-7:20 (NRSV)**

16 Thus says the LORD:  
Stand at the crossroads,  
and look,  
and ask for the ancient  
paths,  
where the good way lies;  
and walk in it,  
and find rest for your  
souls.  
But they said, “We will not  
walk in it.”

17 Also I raised up sentinels  
for you:  
“Give heed to the sound  
of the trumpet!”  
But they said, “We will not  
give heed.”  
18 Therefore hear, O nations,  
and know, O  
congregation, what will  
happen to them.  
19 Hear, O earth; I am going  
to bring disaster on this  
people,  
the fruit of their  
schemes,  
because they have not  
given heed to my  
words;  
and as for my teaching,  
they have rejected it.  
20 Of what use to me is  
frankincense that  
comes from Sheba,  
or sweet cane from a  
distant land?  
Your burnt offerings are  
not acceptable,  
nor are your sacrifices  
pleasing to me.  
21 Therefore thus says the  
LORD:  
See, I am laying before this  
people

stumbling blocks against  
which they shall  
stumble;  
parents and children  
together,  
neighbor and friend shall  
perish.

22 Thus says the LORD:  
See, a people is coming  
from the land of the  
north,  
a great nation is stirring  
from the farthest parts  
of the earth.

23 They grasp the bow and  
the javelin,  
they are cruel and have  
no mercy,  
their sound is like the  
roaring sea;  
they ride on horses,  
equipped like a warrior  
for battle,  
against you, O daughter  
Zion!

24 "We have heard news of  
them,  
our hands fall helpless;  
anguish has taken hold of  
us,  
pain as of a woman in  
labor.

25 Do not go out into the  
field,  
or walk on the road;

for the enemy has a sword,  
terror is on every side."

26 O my poor people, put on  
sackcloth,  
and roll in ashes;  
make mourning as for an  
only child,  
most bitter lamentation:  
for suddenly the destroyer  
will come upon us.

27 I have made you a tester  
and a refiner among  
my people  
so that you may know  
and test their ways.

28 They are all stubbornly  
rebellious,  
going about with  
slanders;  
they are bronze and iron,  
all of them act corruptly.

29 The bellows blow fiercely,  
the lead is consumed by  
the fire;  
in vain the refining goes  
on,  
for the wicked are not  
removed.

30 They are called "rejected  
silver,"  
for the LORD has rejected  
them.

*Jeremiah Proclaims God's  
Judgment on the Nation*  
(Cp Jer 26:4–6)

**7** The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:  
<sup>2</sup> Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah, you that enter these gates to worship the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. <sup>4</sup> Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD."

<sup>5</sup> For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, <sup>6</sup> if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, <sup>7</sup> then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

<sup>8</sup> Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail.

<sup>9</sup> Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, <sup>10</sup> and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, "We are safe!"—only to go on doing all these abominations? <sup>11</sup> Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the LORD. <sup>12</sup> Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. <sup>13</sup> And now, because you have done all these things, says the LORD, and when I spoke to you persistently, you did not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer, <sup>14</sup> therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your ancestors, just what I did to Shiloh. <sup>15</sup> And I will cast you out of my sight, just as I cast out all your kinsfolk, all the offspring of Ephraim.

### *The People's Disobedience*

<sup>16</sup> As for you, do not pray for this people, do not raise a cry or prayer on their behalf, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you. <sup>17</sup> Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? <sup>18</sup> The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger. <sup>19</sup> Is it I whom they provoke? says the LORD. Is it not themselves, to their own hurt? <sup>20</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: My anger and my wrath shall be poured out on this place, on human beings and animals, on the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched.

### **Colossians 2:8–12** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not

according to Christ. <sup>9</sup> For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, <sup>10</sup> and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. <sup>11</sup> In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; <sup>12</sup> when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

### **Psalm 78:23–31** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> Yet he commanded the skies above,  
and opened the doors of heaven;  
<sup>24</sup> he rained down on them  
manna to eat,  
and gave them the grain of heaven.  
<sup>25</sup> Mortals ate of the bread of angels;  
he sent them food in abundance.  
<sup>26</sup> He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens,  
and by his power he led out the south wind;

27 he rained flesh upon them  
like dust,  
winged birds like the  
sand of the seas;  
28 he let them fall within  
their camp,  
all around their  
dwellings.  
29 And they ate and were  
well filled,  
for he gave them what  
they craved.  
30 But before they had  
satisfied their craving,  
while the food was still in  
their mouths,  
31 the anger of God rose  
against them  
and he killed the  
strongest of them,  
and laid low the flower  
of Israel.

### **Proverbs 19:1–3 (NRSV)**

1 Better the poor walking  
in integrity  
than one perverse of  
speech who is a fool.  
2 Desire without knowledge  
is not good,  
and one who moves too  
hurriedly misses the  
way.  
3 One's own folly leads to  
ruin,

yet the heart rages  
against the LORD.

## **July 12**



### **Jeremiah 7:21-8:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh.  
<sup>22</sup> For in the day that I brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to them or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. <sup>23</sup> But this command I gave them, "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you." <sup>24</sup> Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but, in the stubbornness of their evil will, they walked in their own counsels, and looked backward rather than forward. <sup>25</sup> From the day that your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt until this



day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; <sup>26</sup> yet they did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks. They did worse than their ancestors did.

<sup>27</sup> So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. <sup>28</sup> You shall say to them: This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their lips.

<sup>29</sup> Cut off your hair and throw it away;  
raise a lamentation on the bare heights,  
for the LORD has rejected and forsaken  
the generation that provoked his wrath.

<sup>30</sup> For the people of Judah have done evil in my sight, says the LORD; they have set their abominations in the house that is called by my name, defiling it. <sup>31</sup> And they go on building the high place of Topheth, which is in the

valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire—which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind.

<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when it will no more be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter: for they will bury in Topheth until there is no more room. <sup>33</sup> The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the air, and for the animals of the earth; and no one will frighten them away.

<sup>34</sup> And I will bring to an end the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of the bride and bridegroom in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for the land shall become a waste.

**8** At that time, says the LORD, the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of its officials, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be brought out of their tombs; <sup>2</sup> and they shall be spread before the sun and the

moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and served, which they have followed, and which they have inquired of and worshiped; and they shall not be gathered or buried; they shall be like dung on the surface of the ground. <sup>3</sup> Death shall be preferred to life by all the remnant that remains of this evil family in all the places where I have driven them, says the LORD of hosts.

*The Blind Perversity  
of the Whole Nation*

<sup>4</sup> You shall say to them, Thus says the LORD:

When people fall, do they not get up again?  
If they go astray, do they not turn back?

<sup>5</sup> Why then has this people turned away in perpetual backsliding? They have held fast to deceit, they have refused to return.

<sup>6</sup> I have given heed and listened, but they do not speak honestly;

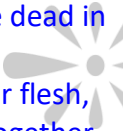
no one repents of wickedness, saying, "What have I done!"

All of them turn to their own course, like a horse plunging headlong into battle.

<sup>7</sup> Even the stork in the heavens knows its times; and the turtledove, swallow, and crane observe the time of their coming; but my people do not know the ordinance of the LORD.

**Colossians 2:13–23 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup> erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.



<sup>16</sup> Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths. <sup>17</sup> These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. <sup>18</sup> Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, <sup>19</sup> and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.

*Warnings against  
False Teachers*

<sup>20</sup> If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations, <sup>21</sup> “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”? <sup>22</sup> All these regulations refer to things that perish with use; they are simply human commands and teachings. <sup>23</sup> These have indeed an

appearance of wisdom in promoting self-imposed piety, humility, and severe treatment of the body, but they are of no value in checking self-indulgence.

**Psalm 78:32-39** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> In spite of all this they still sinned;  
they did not believe in his wonders.  
<sup>33</sup> So he made their days vanish like a breath,  
and their years in terror.  
<sup>34</sup> When he killed them, they sought for him;  
they repented and sought God earnestly.  
<sup>35</sup> They remembered that God was their rock,  
the Most High God their redeemer.  
<sup>36</sup> But they flattered him with their mouths;  
they lied to him with their tongues.  
<sup>37</sup> Their heart was not steadfast toward him;  
they were not true to his covenant.  
<sup>38</sup> Yet he, being compassionate,  
forgave their iniquity,

and did not destroy  
them;  
often he restrained his  
anger,  
and did not stir up all his  
wrath.

<sup>39</sup> He remembered that they  
were but flesh,  
a wind that passes and  
does not come again.

### **Proverbs 19:4–5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Wealth brings many  
friends,  
but the poor are left  
friendless.

<sup>5</sup> A false witness will not go  
unpunished,  
and a liar will not escape.

## **July 13**



### **Jeremiah 8:8–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> How can you say, “We are  
wise, and the law of the LORD  
is with us,” when, in fact, the  
false pen of the scribes has  
made it into a lie? <sup>9</sup> The wise  
shall be put to shame, they

shall be dismayed and taken;  
since they have rejected the  
word of the LORD, what  
wisdom is in them? <sup>10</sup>

Therefore I will give their  
wives to others and their fields  
to conquerors, because from  
the least to the greatest  
everyone is greedy for unjust  
gain; from prophet to priest  
everyone deals falsely. <sup>11</sup> They  
have treated the wound of my  
people carelessly, saying,  
“Peace, peace,” when there is  
no peace. <sup>12</sup> They acted  
shamefully, they committed  
abomination; yet they were  
not at all ashamed, they did  
not know how to blush.

Therefore they shall fall  
among those who fall; at the  
time when I punish them, they  
shall be overthrown, says the  
LORD. <sup>13</sup> When I wanted to  
gather them, says the LORD,  
there are no grapes on the  
vine, nor figs on the fig tree;  
even the leaves are withered,  
and what I gave them has  
passed away from them. <sup>14</sup>  
Why do we sit still? Gather  
together, let us go into the  
fortified cities and perish  
there; for the LORD our God  
has doomed us to perish, and

has given us poisoned water to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD. <sup>15</sup> We look for peace, but find no good, for a time of healing, but there is terror instead. <sup>16</sup> The snorting of their horses is heard from Dan; at the sound of the neighing of their stallions the whole land quakes. They come and devour the land and all that fills it, the city and those who live in it. <sup>17</sup> See, I am letting snakes loose among you, adders that cannot be charmed, and they shall bite you, says the LORD. <sup>18</sup> My joy is gone, grief is upon me, my heart is sick. <sup>19</sup> Hark, the cry of my poor people from far and wide in the land: “Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not in her?” (“Why have they provoked me to anger with their images, with their foreign idols?”) <sup>20</sup> “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” <sup>21</sup> For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt, I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me. <sup>22</sup> Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why

then has the health of my poor people not been restored?

### **Colossians 3:1–11** (NRSV)

#### *The New Life in Christ*

**3** So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup> for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

<sup>4</sup> When Christ **who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.**

<sup>5</sup> Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). <sup>6</sup> On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.

<sup>7</sup> These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. <sup>8</sup> But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices <sup>10</sup> and have clothed yourselves with

the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.<sup>11</sup> In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

**Psalms 78:40-55 (NRSV)**

<sup>40</sup> How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert!  
<sup>41</sup> They tested God again and again, and provoked the Holy One of Israel.  
<sup>42</sup> They did not keep in mind his power, or the day when he redeemed them from the foe;  
<sup>43</sup> when he displayed his signs in Egypt, and his miracles in the fields of Zoan.  
<sup>44</sup> He turned their rivers to blood, so that they could not drink of their streams.

<sup>45</sup> He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them, and frogs, which destroyed them.  
<sup>46</sup> He gave their crops to the caterpillar, and the fruit of their labor to the locust.  
<sup>47</sup> He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamores with frost.  
<sup>48</sup> He gave over their cattle to the hail, and their flocks to thunderbolts.  
<sup>49</sup> He let loose on them his fierce anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels.  
<sup>50</sup> He made a path for his anger; he did not spare them from death, but gave their lives over to the plague.  
<sup>51</sup> He struck all the firstborn in Egypt, the first issue of their strength in the tents of Ham.

52 Then he led out his people  
like sheep,  
and guided them in the  
wilderness like a flock.  
53 He led them in safety, so  
that they were not  
afraid;  
but the sea  
overwhelmed their  
enemies.  
54 And he brought them to  
his holy hill,  
to the mountain that his  
right hand had won.  
55 He drove out nations  
before them;  
he apportioned them for  
a possession  
and settled the tribes of  
Israel in their tents.

**Proverbs 19:6–7 (NRSV)**

6 Many seek the favor of the  
generous,  
and everyone is a friend  
to a giver of gifts.  
7 If the poor are hated even  
by their kin,  
how much more are they  
shunned by their  
friends!  
When they call after them,  
they are not there.

**July 14**



**Jeremiah 9:1–26 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> O that my head were a spring  
of water, and my eyes a  
fountain of tears, so that I  
might weep day and night for  
the slain of my poor people! <sup>2</sup>  
O that I had in the desert a  
traveler's lodging place, that I  
might leave my people and go  
away from them! For they are  
all adulterers, a band of  
traitors. <sup>3</sup> They bend their  
tongues like bows; they have  
grown strong in the land for  
falsehood, and not for truth;  
for they proceed from evil to  
evil, and they do not know me,  
says the LORD. <sup>4</sup> Beware of  
your neighbors, and put no  
trust in any of your kin; for all  
your kin are supplanters, and  
every neighbor goes around  
like a slanderer. <sup>5</sup> They all  
deceive their neighbors, and  
no one speaks the truth; they  
have taught their tongues to  
speak lies; they commit  
iniquity and are too weary to  
repent. <sup>6</sup> Oppression upon  
oppression, deceit upon  
deceit! They refuse to know  
me, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup> Therefore

thus says the LORD of hosts: I will now refine and test them, for what else can I do with my sinful people? <sup>8</sup> Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceit through the mouth. They all speak friendly words to their neighbors, but inwardly are planning to lay an ambush. <sup>9</sup> Shall I not punish them for these things? says the LORD; and shall I not bring retribution on a nation such as this? <sup>10</sup> Take up weeping and wailing for the mountains, and a lamentation for the pastures of the wilderness, because they are laid waste so that no one passes through, and the lowing of cattle is not heard; both the birds of the air and the animals have fled and are gone. <sup>11</sup> I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a lair of jackals; and I will make the towns of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant. <sup>12</sup> Who is wise enough to understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, so that they may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through? <sup>13</sup> And the LORD says: Because they

have forsaken my law that I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, or walked in accordance with it, <sup>14</sup> but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their ancestors taught them. <sup>15</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am feeding this people with wormwood, and giving them poisonous water to drink. <sup>16</sup> I will scatter them among nations that neither they nor their ancestors have known; and I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them. <sup>17</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider, and call for the mourning women to come; send for the skilled women to come; <sup>18</sup> let them quickly raise a dirge over us, so that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids flow with water. <sup>19</sup> For a sound of wailing is heard from Zion: "How we are ruined! We are utterly shamed, because we have left the land, because they have cast down our dwellings." <sup>20</sup> Hear, O women, the word of the LORD, and let your ears receive the word of his mouth;



teach to your daughters a dirge, and each to her neighbor a lament. <sup>21</sup> “Death has come up into our windows, it has entered our palaces, to cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the squares.” <sup>22</sup> Speak! Thus says the LORD: “Human corpses shall fall like dung upon the open field, like sheaves behind the reaper, and no one shall gather them.” <sup>23</sup> Thus says the LORD: Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom, do not let the mighty boast in their might, do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth; <sup>24</sup> but let those who boast boast in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD; I act with steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the LORD. <sup>25</sup> The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will attend to all those who are circumcised only in the foreskin: <sup>26</sup> Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, Moab, and all those with shaven temples who live in the desert. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the

house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.

**Colossians 3:12–17 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Psalms 78:56-59 (NRSV)**

<sup>56</sup> Yet they tested the Most High God,  
and rebelled against him.  
They did not observe his decrees,  
<sup>57</sup> but turned away and were faithless like their ancestors;  
they twisted like a treacherous bow.  
<sup>58</sup> For they provoked him to anger with their high places;  
they moved him to jealousy with their idols.  
<sup>59</sup> When God heard, he was full of wrath,  
and he utterly rejected Israel.

**Proverbs 19:8-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> To get wisdom is to love oneself;  
to keep understanding is to prosper.  
<sup>9</sup> A false witness will not go unpunished, and the liar will perish.

**July 15**



**Jeremiah 10:1-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> Hear the word that the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel. <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD: Do not learn the way of the nations, or be dismayed at the signs of the heavens; for the nations are dismayed at them. <sup>3</sup> For the customs of the peoples are false: a tree from the forest is cut down, and worked with an ax by the hands of an artisan; <sup>4</sup> people deck it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so that it cannot move. <sup>5</sup> Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor is it in them to do good. <sup>6</sup> There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is great in might. <sup>7</sup> Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? For that is your due; among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is no one like you. <sup>8</sup> They are both stupid

and foolish; the instruction given by idols is no better than wood!<sup>9</sup> Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz. They are the work of the artisan and of the hands of the goldsmith; their clothing is blue and purple; they are all the product of skilled workers.<sup>10</sup> But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.<sup>11</sup> Thus shall you say to them: The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens.<sup>12</sup> It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.<sup>13</sup> When he utters his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightnings for the rain, and he brings out the wind from his storehouses.<sup>14</sup> Everyone is stupid and without knowledge; goldsmiths are all put to shame by their idols; for

their images are false, and there is no breath in them.<sup>15</sup> They are worthless, a work of delusion; at the time of their punishment they shall perish.<sup>16</sup> Not like these is the LORD, the portion of Jacob, for he is the one who formed all things, and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance; the LORD of hosts is his name.<sup>17</sup> Gather up your bundle from the ground, O you who live under siege!<sup>18</sup> For thus says the LORD: I am going to sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and I will bring distress on them, so that they shall feel it.<sup>19</sup> Woe is me because of my hurt! My wound is severe. But I said, "Truly this is my punishment, and I must bear it."<sup>20</sup> My tent is destroyed, and all my cords are broken; my children have gone from me, and they are no more; there is no one to spread my tent again, and to set up my curtains.<sup>21</sup> For the shepherds are stupid, and do not inquire of the LORD; therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock is scattered.<sup>22</sup> Hear, a noise! Listen, it is coming— a great

commotion from the land of the north to make the cities of Judah a desolation, a lair of jackals. <sup>23</sup> I know, O LORD, that the way of human beings is not in their control, that mortals as they walk cannot direct their steps. <sup>24</sup> Correct me, O LORD, but in just measure; not in your anger, or you will bring me to nothing. <sup>25</sup> Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not know you, and on the peoples that do not call on your name; for they have devoured Jacob; they have devoured him and consumed him, and have laid waste his habitation.

**Colossians 3:18–4:6** (NRSV)

*Rules for Christian Households*

(Cp Eph 5:21–6:9)

<sup>18</sup> Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.

<sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart. <sup>22</sup> Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while

being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. <sup>23</sup> Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, <sup>24</sup> since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. <sup>25</sup> For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality.

**4** <sup>1</sup> Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

*Further Instructions*

<sup>2</sup> Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. <sup>3</sup> At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison, <sup>4</sup> so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should.

<sup>5</sup> Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time.

<sup>6</sup> Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt,

so that you may know how  
you ought to answer  
everyone.

**Psalms 78:60-64** (NRSV)

<sup>60</sup> He abandoned his dwelling  
at Shiloh,  
the tent where he dwelt  
among mortals,  
<sup>61</sup> and delivered his power to  
captivity,  
his glory to the hand of  
the foe.  
<sup>62</sup> He gave his people to the  
sword,  
and vented his wrath on  
his heritage.  
<sup>63</sup> Fire devoured their young  
men,  
and their girls had no  
marriage song.  
<sup>64</sup> Their priests fell by the  
sword,  
and their widows made  
no lamentation.

**Proverbs 19:10-12** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> It is not fitting for a fool to  
live in luxury,  
much less for a slave to  
rule over princes.  
<sup>11</sup> Those with good sense are  
slow to anger,  
and it is their glory to  
overlook an offense.

<sup>12</sup> A king's anger is like the  
growling of a lion,  
but his favor is like dew  
on the grass.

**July 16**



**Jeremiah 11:1-23** (NRSV)

*Israel and Judah Have Broken  
the Covenant*

**11** The word that came to  
Jeremiah from the LORD: <sup>2</sup> Hear  
the words of this covenant,  
and speak to the people of  
Judah and the inhabitants of  
Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> You shall say to  
them, Thus says the LORD, the  
God of Israel: Cursed be  
anyone who does not heed  
the words of this covenant,  
<sup>4</sup> which I commanded your  
ancestors when I brought  
them out of the land of Egypt,  
from the iron-smelter, saying,  
Listen to my voice, and do all  
that I command you. So shall  
you be my people, and I will  
be your God, <sup>5</sup> that I may  
perform the oath that I swore  
to your ancestors, to give

them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day. Then I answered, "So be it, LORD."

<sup>6</sup> And the LORD said to me: Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: Hear the words of this covenant and do them. <sup>7</sup> For I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice. <sup>8</sup> Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of an evil will. So I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.

<sup>9</sup> And the LORD said to me: Conspiracy exists among the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors of old, who refused to heed my words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the covenant that I made with their ancestors.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore, thus says the

LORD, assuredly I am going to bring disaster upon them that they cannot escape; though they cry out to me, I will not listen to them. <sup>12</sup> Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they will never save them in the time of their trouble.

<sup>13</sup> For your gods have become as many as your towns, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars to shame you have set up, altars to make offerings to Baal.

<sup>14</sup> As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble. <sup>15</sup> What right has my beloved in my house, when she has done vile deeds? Can vows and sacrificial flesh avert your doom? Can you then exult? <sup>16</sup> The LORD once called you, "A green olive tree, fair with goodly fruit"; but with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed.

<sup>17</sup> The LORD of hosts, who

planted you, has pronounced evil against you, because of the evil that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, provoking me to anger by making offerings to Baal.

*Jeremiah's Life Threatened*

- <sup>18</sup> It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew;  
then you showed me their evil deeds.
- <sup>19</sup> But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter.  
And I did not know it was against me  
that they devised schemes, saying,  
“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,  
let us cut him off from the land of the living,  
so that his name will no longer be remembered!”
- <sup>20</sup> But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind,  
let me see your retribution upon them,  
for to you I have committed my cause.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the people of Anathoth, who seek your life, and say, “You shall not prophesy in the name of the LORD, or you will die by our hand” — <sup>22</sup> therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: I am going to punish them; the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine; <sup>23</sup> and not even a remnant shall be left of them. For I will bring disaster upon the people of Anathoth, the year of their punishment.

**Colossians 4:7–18** (NRSV)

*Final Greetings and  
Benediction  
(Cp Eph 6:21–22)*

<sup>7</sup> Tychicus will tell you all the news about me; he is a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord. <sup>8</sup> I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts; <sup>9</sup> he is coming with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

<sup>10</sup> Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, as does Mark the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him. <sup>11</sup> And Jesus who is called Justus greets you. These are the only ones of the circumcision among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. <sup>12</sup> Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always wrestling in his prayers on your behalf, so that you may stand mature and fully assured in everything that God wills. <sup>13</sup> For I testify for him that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. <sup>14</sup> Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you. <sup>15</sup> Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. <sup>16</sup> And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea. <sup>17</sup> And say to Archippus, “See that you

complete the task that you have received in the Lord.”

<sup>18</sup> I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

**Psalms 78:65-69 (NRSV)**

<sup>65</sup> Then the Lord awoke as  
from sleep,  
like a warrior shouting  
because of wine.  
<sup>66</sup> He put his adversaries to  
rout;  
he put them to  
everlasting disgrace.  
<sup>67</sup> He rejected the tent of  
Joseph,  
he did not choose the  
tribe of Ephraim;  
<sup>68</sup> but he chose the tribe of  
Judah,  
Mount Zion, which he  
loves.  
<sup>69</sup> He built his sanctuary like  
the high heavens,  
like the earth, which he  
has founded forever.

**Proverbs 19:13-14 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> A stupid child is ruin to a  
father,  
and a wife’s quarreling is  
a continual dripping of  
rain.



<sup>14</sup> House and wealth are  
inherited from parents,  
but a prudent wife is  
from the LORD.

## July 17



### Jeremiah 12:1–13:7 (NRSV)

#### *Jeremiah Complains to God*

**12** You will be in the right, O  
LORD,  
when I lay charges  
against you;  
but let me put my case  
to you.  
Why does the way of the  
guilty prosper?  
Why do all who are  
treacherous thrive?

<sup>2</sup> You plant them, and they  
take root;  
they grow and bring  
forth fruit;  
you are near in their  
mouths  
yet far from their hearts.

<sup>3</sup> But you, O LORD, know me;  
You see me and test  
me—my heart is with  
you.

Pull them out like sheep  
for the slaughter,  
and set them apart for  
the day of slaughter.

<sup>4</sup> How long will the land  
mourn,  
and the grass of every  
field wither?

For the wickedness of  
those who live in it  
the animals and the birds  
are swept away,  
and because people said,  
“He is blind to our  
ways.”

#### *God Replies to Jeremiah*

<sup>5</sup> If you have raced with  
foot-runners and they  
have wearied you,  
how will you compete  
with horses?  
And if in a safe land you  
fall down,  
how will you fare in the  
thickets of the Jordan?

<sup>6</sup> For even your kinsfolk and  
your own family,  
even they have dealt  
treacherously with  
you;  
they are in full cry after  
you;  
do not believe them,

though they speak  
friendly words to you.  
7 I have forsaken my house,  
I have abandoned my  
heritage;  
I have given the beloved of  
my heart  
into the hands of her  
enemies.  
8 My heritage has become  
to me  
like a lion in the forest;  
she has lifted up her voice  
against me—  
therefore I hate her.  
9 Is the hyena greedy for my  
heritage at my  
command?  
Are the birds of prey all  
around her?  
Go, assemble all the wild  
animals;  
bring them to devour  
her.  
10 Many shepherds have  
destroyed my vineyard,  
they have trampled  
down my portion,  
they have made my  
pleasant portion  
a desolate wilderness.  
11 They have made it a  
desolation;  
desolate, it mourns to  
me.

The whole land is made  
desolate,  
but no one lays it to  
heart.  
12 Upon all the bare heights  
in the desert  
spoilings have come;  
for the sword of the LORD  
devours  
from one end of the land  
to the other;  
no one shall be safe.  
13 They have sown wheat and  
have reaped thorns,  
they have tired  
themselves out but  
profit nothing.  
They shall be ashamed of  
their harvests  
because of the fierce  
anger of the LORD.  
14 Thus says the LORD  
concerning all my evil  
neighbors who touch the  
heritage that I have given my  
people Israel to inherit: I am  
about to pluck them up from  
their land, and I will pluck up  
the house of Judah from  
among them. <sup>15</sup> And after I  
have plucked them up, I will  
again have compassion on  
them, and I will bring them  
again to their heritage and to  
their land, everyone of them.

<sup>16</sup> And then, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, “As the LORD lives,” as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of my people.

<sup>17</sup> But if any nation will not listen, then I will completely uproot it and destroy it, says the LORD.

### *The Linen Loincloth*

**13** Thus said the LORD to me, “Go and buy yourself a linen loincloth, and put it on your loins, but do not dip it in water.” <sup>2</sup> So I bought a loincloth according to the word of the LORD, and put it on my loins. <sup>3</sup> And the word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying, <sup>4</sup> “Take the loincloth that you bought and are wearing, and go now to the Euphrates, and hide it there in a cleft of the rock.” <sup>5</sup> So I went, and hid it by the Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me. <sup>6</sup> And after many days the LORD said to me, “Go now to the Euphrates, and take from there the loincloth that I commanded you to hide

there.” <sup>7</sup> Then I went to the Euphrates, and dug, and I took the loincloth from the place where I had hidden it. But now the loincloth was ruined; it was good for nothing.

### **1 Thessalonians 1:1–10** (NRSV) *Salutation*

**1** Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,  
To the church of the  
Thessalonians in God the  
Father and the Lord Jesus  
Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

### *The Thessalonians’ Faith and Example*

<sup>2</sup> We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly <sup>3</sup> remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be

among you for your sake.

<sup>6</sup> And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, <sup>7</sup> so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. <sup>8</sup> For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. <sup>9</sup> For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

**Psalms 78:70-72 (NRSV)**

<sup>70</sup> He chose his servant  
David,  
and took him from the  
sheepfolds;  
<sup>71</sup> from tending the nursing  
ewes he brought him  
to be the shepherd of his  
people Jacob,

of Israel, his inheritance.

<sup>72</sup> With upright heart he  
tended them,  
and guided them with  
skillful hand.

**Proverbs 19:15–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> Laziness brings on deep  
sleep;  
an idle person will suffer  
hunger.  
<sup>16</sup> Those who keep the  
commandment will  
live;  
those who are heedless  
of their ways will die.

**July 18**



**Jeremiah 13:8–14:10 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Then the word of the  
LORD came to me: <sup>9</sup> Thus says  
the LORD: Just so I will ruin the  
pride of Judah and the great  
pride of Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> This evil  
people, who refuse to hear my  
words, who stubbornly follow  
their own will and have gone  
after other gods to serve them  
and worship them, shall be

like this loincloth, which is good for nothing.<sup>11</sup> For as the loincloth clings to one's loins, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, says the LORD, in order that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory. But they would not listen.

*Symbol of the Wine-Jars*

<sup>12</sup>You shall speak to them this word: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Every wine-jar should be filled with wine. And they will say to you, "Do you think we do not know that every wine-jar should be filled with wine?"<sup>13</sup> Then you shall say to them: Thus says the LORD: I am about to fill all the inhabitants of this land—the kings who sit on David's throne, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness.<sup>14</sup> And I will dash them one against another, parents and children together, says the LORD. I will not pity or spare or have compassion when I destroy them.

*Exile Threatened*

- <sup>15</sup> Hear and give ear; do not be haughty,  
for the LORD has spoken.
- <sup>16</sup> Give glory to the LORD your God  
before he brings darkness,  
and before your feet stumble  
on the mountains at twilight;  
while you look for light,  
he turns it into gloom  
and makes it deep darkness.
- <sup>17</sup> But if you will not listen,  
my soul will weep in secret for your pride;  
my eyes will weep bitterly  
and run down with tears,  
because the LORD's flock  
has been taken captive.
- <sup>18</sup> Say to the king and the queen mother:  
"Take a lowly seat,  
for your beautiful crown  
has come down from your head."
- <sup>19</sup> The towns of the Negeb  
are shut up  
with no one to open them;

all Judah is taken into  
exile,  
wholly taken into exile.  
20 Lift up your eyes and see  
those who come from  
the north.  
Where is the flock that was  
given you,  
your beautiful flock?  
21 What will you say when  
they set as head over  
you  
those whom you have  
trained  
to be your allies?  
Will not pangs take hold of  
you,  
like those of a woman in  
labor?  
22 And if you say in your  
heart,  
“Why have these things  
come upon me?”  
it is for the greatness of  
your iniquity  
that your skirts are lifted  
up,  
and you are violated.  
23 Can Ethiopians change  
their skin  
or leopards their spots?  
Then also you can do good  
who are accustomed to  
do evil.  
24 I will scatter you like chaff

driven by the wind from  
the desert.  
25 This is your lot,  
the portion I have  
measured out to you,  
says the LORD,  
because you have  
forgotten me  
and trusted in lies.  
26 I myself will lift up your  
skirts over your face,  
and your shame will be  
seen.  
27 I have seen your  
abominations,  
your adulteries and  
neighings, your  
shameless  
prostitutions  
on the hills of the  
countryside.  
Woe to you, O Jerusalem!  
How long will it be  
before you are made  
clean?

#### *The Great Drought*

**14** The word of the LORD that  
came to Jeremiah concerning  
the drought:

<sup>2</sup> Judah mourns  
and her gates languish;  
they lie in gloom on the  
ground,

and the cry of Jerusalem  
goes up.  
3 Her nobles send their  
servants for water;  
they come to the  
cisterns,  
they find no water,  
they return with their  
vessels empty.  
They are ashamed and  
dismayed  
and cover their heads,  
4 because the ground is  
cracked.  
Because there has been  
no rain on the land  
the farmers are dismayed;  
they cover their heads.  
5 Even the doe in the field  
forsakes her newborn  
fawn  
because there is no  
grass.  
6 The wild asses stand on  
the bare heights,  
they pant for air like  
jackals;  
their eyes fail  
because there is no  
herbage.  
7 Although our iniquities  
testify against us,  
act, O LORD, for your  
name's sake;

our apostasies indeed are  
many,  
and we have sinned  
against you.  
8 O hope of Israel,  
its savior in time of  
trouble,  
why should you be like a  
stranger in the land,  
like a traveler turning  
aside for the night?  
9 Why should you be like  
someone confused,  
like a mighty warrior  
who cannot give help?  
Yet you, O LORD, are in the  
midst of us,  
and we are called by  
your name;  
do not forsake us!  
10 Thus says the LORD  
concerning this people:  
Truly they have loved to  
wander,  
they have not restrained  
their feet;  
therefore the LORD does  
not accept them,  
now he will remember  
their iniquity  
and punish their sins.

**1 Thessalonians 2:1–8** (NRSV)  
*Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica*  
(Cp Acts 17:1–9)

**2** You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, <sup>2</sup> but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. <sup>3</sup> For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, <sup>4</sup> but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup> As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; <sup>6</sup> nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, <sup>7</sup> though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. <sup>8</sup> So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you

not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

**Psalms 79:1-8** (NRSV)  
*Plea for Mercy for Jerusalem*

A Psalm of Asaph.

- <sup>1</sup> O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;  
they have defiled your holy temple;  
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
- <sup>2</sup> They have given the bodies of your servants to the birds of the air for food,  
the flesh of your faithful to the wild animals of the earth.
- <sup>3</sup> They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem,  
and there was no one to bury them.
- <sup>4</sup> We have become a taunt to our neighbors,  
mocked and derided by those around us.
- <sup>5</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?  
Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?



6 Pour out your anger on the nations  
that do not know you,  
and on the kingdoms  
that do not call on your  
name.  
7 For they have devoured  
Jacob  
and laid waste his  
habitation.  
8 Do not remember against  
us the iniquities of our  
ancestors;  
let your compassion  
come speedily to meet  
us,  
for we are brought very  
low.

**Proverbs 19:17** (NRSV)

**17** Whoever is kind to the  
poor lends to the LORD,  
and will be repaid in full.

**July 19**



**Jeremiah 14:11–15:9** (NRSV)

**11** The LORD said to me: Do  
not pray for the welfare of this  
people. **12** Although they fast, I

do not hear their cry, and  
although they offer burnt  
offering and grain offering, I  
do not accept them; but by  
the sword, by famine, and by  
pestilence I consume them.

*Denunciation of  
Lying Prophets*

**13** Then I said: “Ah, Lord  
GOD! Here are the prophets  
saying to them, ‘You shall not  
see the sword, nor shall you  
have famine, but I will give you  
true peace in this place.’ ”

**14** And the LORD said to me: The  
prophets are prophesying lies  
in my name; I did not send  
them, nor did I command  
them or speak to them. They  
are prophesying to you a lying  
vision, worthless divination,  
and the deceit of their own  
minds. **15** Therefore thus says  
the LORD concerning the  
prophets who prophesy in my  
name though I did not send  
them, and who say, “Sword  
and famine shall not come on  
this land”: By sword and  
famine those prophets shall be  
consumed. **16** And the people  
to whom they prophesy shall  
be thrown out into the streets  
of Jerusalem, victims of famine

and sword. There shall be no one to bury them— themselves, their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out their wickedness upon them.

<sup>17</sup> You shall say to them this word:  
Let my eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease, for the virgin daughter— my people—is struck down with a crushing blow, with a very grievous wound.

<sup>18</sup> If I go out into the field, look—those killed by the sword!  
And if I enter the city, look—those sick with famine!  
For both prophet and priest ply their trade throughout the land, and have no knowledge.

*The People Plead for Mercy*

<sup>19</sup> Have you completely rejected Judah?  
Does your heart loathe Zion?  
Why have you struck us down

so that there is no healing for us?  
We look for peace, but find no good;  
for a time of healing, but there is terror instead.

<sup>20</sup> We acknowledge our wickedness, O LORD, the iniquity of our ancestors, for we have sinned against you.  
<sup>21</sup> Do not spurn us, for your name's sake; do not dishonor your glorious throne; remember and do not break your covenant with us.

<sup>22</sup> Can any idols of the nations bring rain?  
Or can the heavens give showers?  
Is it not you, O LORD our God?  
We set our hope on you, for it is you who do all this.

*Punishment Is Inevitable*

**15** Then the LORD said to me: Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my heart would not turn toward this people. Send them out of my

sight, and let them go! <sup>2</sup> And when they say to you, “Where shall we go?” you shall say to them: Thus says the LORD:

Those destined for pestilence, to pestilence,  
and those destined for the sword, to the sword;  
those destined for famine, to famine,  
and those destined for captivity, to captivity.

<sup>3</sup> And I will appoint over them four kinds of destroyers, says the LORD: the sword to kill, the dogs to drag away, and the birds of the air and the wild animals of the earth to devour and destroy. <sup>4</sup> I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what King Manasseh son of Hezekiah of Judah did in Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> Who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem,  
or who will bemoan you?  
Who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?

<sup>6</sup> You have rejected me, says the LORD,  
you are going backward;

so I have stretched out my hand against you and destroyed you—

I am weary of relenting.  
<sup>7</sup> I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork in the gates of the land; I have bereaved them, I have destroyed my people;  
they did not turn from their ways.

<sup>8</sup> Their widows became more numerous than the sand of the seas;  
I have brought against the mothers of youths a destroyer at noonday;  
I have made anguish and terror fall upon her suddenly.

<sup>9</sup> She who bore seven has languished;  
she has swooned away; her sun went down while it was yet day;  
she has been shamed and disgraced.

And the rest of them I will give to the sword before their enemies,

**1 Thessalonians 2:9–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup>You remember our labor and toil, brothers and sisters; we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. <sup>10</sup>You are witnesses, and God also, how pure, upright, and blameless our conduct was toward you believers. <sup>11</sup>As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, <sup>12</sup>urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

<sup>13</sup>We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God’s word, which is also at work in you believers.

<sup>14</sup>For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews, <sup>15</sup>who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us

out; they displease God and oppose everyone <sup>16</sup>by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. Thus they have constantly been filling up the measure of their sins; but God’s wrath has overtaken them at last.

**Psalms 79:9-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Help us, O God of our salvation,  
for the glory of your name;  
deliver us, and forgive our sins,  
for your name’s sake.

<sup>10</sup> Why should the nations say,  
“Where is their God?”  
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants  
be known among the nations before our eyes.

<sup>11</sup> Let the groans of the prisoners come before you;  
according to your great power preserve those doomed to die.

- <sup>12</sup> Return sevenfold into the  
bosom of our  
neighbors  
the taunts with which  
they taunted you, O  
Lord!
- <sup>13</sup> Then we your people, the  
flock of your pasture,  
will give thanks to you  
forever;  
from generation to  
generation we will  
recount your praise.

**Proverbs 19:18–19** (NRSV)

- <sup>18</sup> Discipline your children  
while there is hope;  
do not set your heart on  
their destruction.
- <sup>19</sup> A violent tempered person  
will pay the penalty;  
if you effect a rescue,  
you will only have to  
do it again.

## July 20



**Jeremiah 15:10–16:15** (NRSV)

*Jeremiah Complains  
Again and Is Reassured*

<sup>10</sup> Woe is me, my mother,  
that you ever bore me, a man  
of strife and contention to the  
whole land! I have not lent,  
nor have I borrowed, yet all of  
them curse me. <sup>11</sup> The LORD  
said: Surely I have intervened  
in your life for good, surely I  
have imposed enemies on you  
in a time of trouble and in a  
time of distress. <sup>12</sup> Can iron  
and bronze break iron from  
the north?

<sup>13</sup> Your wealth and your  
treasures I will give as plunder,  
without price, for all your sins,  
throughout all your territory.

<sup>14</sup> I will make you serve your  
enemies in a land that you do  
not know, for in my anger a  
fire is kindled that shall burn  
forever.

<sup>15</sup> O LORD, you know;  
remember me and visit  
me,  
and bring down  
retribution for me on  
my persecutors.

In your forbearance do not  
take me away;  
know that on your  
account I suffer insult.  
16 Your words were found,  
and I ate them,  
and your words became  
to me a joy  
and the delight of my  
heart;  
for I am called by your  
name,  
O LORD, God of hosts.  
17 I did not sit in the company  
of merry-makers,  
nor did I rejoice;  
under the weight of your  
hand I sat alone,  
for you had filled me  
with indignation.  
18 Why is my pain unceasing,  
my wound incurable,  
refusing to be healed?  
Truly, you are to me like a  
deceitful brook,  
like waters that fail.  
19 Therefore thus says the  
LORD:  
If you turn back, I will take  
you back,  
and you shall stand  
before me.  
If you utter what is  
precious, and not what  
is worthless,

you shall serve as my  
mouth.  
It is they who will turn to  
you,  
not you who will turn to  
them.  
20 And I will make you to this  
people  
a fortified wall of bronze;  
they will fight against you,  
but they shall not prevail  
over you,  
for I am with you  
to save you and deliver  
you,  
says the Lord,  
21 I will deliver you out of the  
hand of the wicked,  
and redeem you from  
the grasp of the  
ruthless.

*Jeremiah's Celibacy  
and Message*

**16** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup>You shall not  
take a wife, nor shall you have  
sons or daughters in this place.  
<sup>3</sup>For thus says the LORD  
concerning the sons and  
daughters who are born in this  
place, and concerning the  
mothers who bear them and  
the fathers who beget them in  
this land: <sup>4</sup>They shall die of

deadly diseases. They shall not be lamented, nor shall they be buried; they shall become like dung on the surface of the ground. They shall perish by the sword and by famine, and their dead bodies shall become food for the birds of the air and for the wild animals of the earth.

<sup>5</sup> For thus says the LORD: Do not enter the house of mourning, or go to lament, or bemoan them; for I have taken away my peace from this people, says the LORD, my steadfast love and mercy.

<sup>6</sup> Both great and small shall die in this land; they shall not be buried, and no one shall lament for them; there shall be no gashing, no shaving of the head for them. <sup>7</sup> No one shall break bread for the mourner, to offer comfort for the dead; nor shall anyone give them the cup of consolation to drink for their fathers or their mothers. <sup>8</sup> You shall not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink. <sup>9</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to banish from this place, in your days

and before your eyes, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

<sup>10</sup> And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, "Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?" <sup>11</sup> then you shall say to them: It is because your ancestors have forsaken me, says the LORD, and have gone after other gods and have served and worshiped them, and have forsaken me and have not kept my law; <sup>12</sup> and because you have behaved worse than your ancestors, for here you are, every one of you, following your stubborn evil will, refusing to listen to me.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore I will hurl you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your ancestors have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.

*God Will Restore Israel*

(Cp Jer 23:7–8)

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, “As the LORD lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of Egypt,” <sup>15</sup> but “As the LORD lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the lands where he had driven them.” For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their ancestors.

**1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:13**

(NRSV)

*Paul’s Desire to Visit the  
Thessalonians Again*

<sup>17</sup>As for us, brothers and sisters, when, for a short time, we were made orphans by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face. <sup>18</sup>For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but Satan blocked our way. <sup>19</sup>For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? <sup>20</sup>Yes, you are our glory and joy!

**3**Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we decided to be left alone in Athens; <sup>2</sup>and we sent Timothy, our brother and co-worker for God in proclaiming the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you for the sake of your faith, <sup>3</sup>so that no one would be shaken by these persecutions. Indeed, you yourselves know that this is what we are destined for. <sup>4</sup>In fact, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we were to suffer persecution; so it turned out, as you know. <sup>5</sup>For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith; I was afraid that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor had been in vain.

*Timothy’s Encouraging Report*

<sup>6</sup>But Timothy has just now come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love. He has told us also that you always remember us kindly and long to see us—just as we long to see you. <sup>7</sup>For this reason, brothers and sisters, during all



our distress and persecution  
we have been encouraged  
about you through your faith.

<sup>8</sup> For we now live, if you  
continue to stand firm in the  
Lord. <sup>9</sup> How can we thank God  
enough for you in return for all  
the joy that we feel before our  
God because of you? <sup>10</sup> Night  
and day we pray most  
earnestly that we may see you  
face to face and restore  
whatever is lacking in your  
faith.

<sup>11</sup> Now may our God and  
Father himself and our Lord  
Jesus direct our way to you.

<sup>12</sup> And may the Lord make you  
increase and abound in love  
for one another and for all,  
just as we abound in love for  
you. <sup>13</sup> **And may he so**

**strengthen your hearts in  
holiness that you may be  
blameless before our God and  
Father at the coming of our  
Lord Jesus with all his saints.**

**Psalms 80:1-13 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Israel's Restoration*

To the leader: on Lilies, a  
Covenant. Of Asaph. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> Give ear, O Shepherd of  
Israel,

you who lead Joseph like  
a flock!

You who are enthroned  
upon the cherubim,  
shine forth

<sup>2</sup> before Ephraim and  
Benjamin and  
Manasseh.

Stir up your might,  
and come to save us!

<sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that  
we may be saved.

<sup>4</sup> O LORD God of hosts,  
how long will you be  
angry with your  
people's prayers?

<sup>5</sup> You have fed them with  
the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to  
drink in full measure.

<sup>6</sup> You make us the scorn of  
our neighbors;  
our enemies laugh  
among themselves.

<sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that  
we may be saved.

<sup>8</sup> You brought a vine out of  
Egypt;

you drove out the  
nations and planted it.

<sup>9</sup> You cleared the ground for  
it;

it took deep root and  
filled the land.

- <sup>10</sup> The mountains were  
covered with its shade,  
the mighty cedars with  
its branches;  
<sup>11</sup> it sent out its branches to  
the sea,  
and its shoots to the  
River.  
<sup>12</sup> Why then have you broken  
down its walls,  
so that all who pass  
along the way pluck its  
fruit?  
<sup>13</sup> The boar from the forest  
ravages it,  
and all that move in the  
field feed on it.

**Proverbs 19:20–21** (NRSV) <sup>20</sup>

- Listen to advice and  
accept instruction,  
that you may gain  
wisdom for the future.  
<sup>21</sup> The human mind may  
devise many plans,  
but it is the purpose of  
the LORD that will be  
established.

## July 21



**Jeremiah 16:16–17:27** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> I am now sending for  
many fishermen, says the  
LORD, and they shall catch  
them; and afterward I will  
send for many hunters, and  
they shall hunt them from  
every mountain and every hill,  
and out of the clefts of the  
rocks. <sup>17</sup> For my eyes are on all  
their ways; they are not  
hidden from my presence, nor  
is their iniquity concealed  
from my sight. <sup>18</sup> And I will  
doubly repay their iniquity and  
their sin, because they have  
polluted my land with the  
carcasses of their detestable  
idols, and have filled my  
inheritance with their  
abominations.

<sup>19</sup> O LORD, my strength and  
my stronghold,  
my refuge in the day of  
trouble,  
to you shall the nations  
come  
from the ends of the  
earth and say:  
Our ancestors have  
inherited nothing but  
lies,

worthless things in which  
there is no profit.

<sup>20</sup> Can mortals make for  
themselves gods?

Such are no gods!

<sup>21</sup> “Therefore I am surely  
going to teach them, this time  
I am going to teach them my  
power and my might, and they  
shall know that my name is  
the LORD.”

### *Judah’s Sin and Punishment*

**17** The sin of Judah is written  
with an iron pen; with a  
diamond point it is engraved  
on the tablet of their hearts,  
and on the horns of their  
altars, <sup>2</sup> while their children  
remember their altars and  
their sacred poles, beside  
every green tree, and on the  
high hills, <sup>3</sup> on the mountains  
in the open country. Your  
wealth and all your treasures I  
will give for spoil as the price  
of your sin throughout all your  
territory. <sup>4</sup> By your own act  
you shall lose the heritage that  
I gave you, and I will make you  
serve your enemies in a land  
that you do not know, for in  
my anger a fire is kindled that  
shall burn forever.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD:

Cursed are those who trust  
in mere mortals  
and make mere flesh  
their strength,  
whose hearts turn away  
from the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> They shall be like a shrub  
in the desert,  
and shall not see when  
relief comes.

They shall live in the  
parched places of the  
wilderness,  
in an uninhabited salt  
land.

<sup>7</sup> Blessed are those who  
trust in the LORD,  
whose trust is the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> They shall be like a tree  
planted by water,  
sending out its roots by  
the stream.

It shall not fear when heat  
comes,  
and its leaves shall stay  
green;  
in the year of drought it is  
not anxious,  
and it does not cease to  
bear fruit.

<sup>9</sup> The heart is devious above  
all else;  
it is perverse—  
who can understand it?

<sup>10</sup> I the LORD test the mind

and search the heart,  
to give to all according to  
their ways,  
according to the fruit of  
their doings.

11 Like the partridge hatching  
what it did not lay,  
so are all who amass  
wealth unjustly;  
in mid-life it will leave  
them,  
and at their end they will  
prove to be fools.

12 O glorious throne, exalted  
from the beginning,  
shrine of our sanctuary!

13 O hope of Israel! O LORD!  
All who forsake you shall  
be put to shame;  
those who turn away from  
you shall be recorded  
in the underworld,  
for they have forsaken  
the fountain of living  
water, the LORD.

*Jeremiah Prays for Vindication*

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I  
shall be healed;  
save me, and I shall be  
saved;  
for you are my praise.

15 See how they say to me,  
“Where is the word of  
the LORD?”

Let it come!”

16 But I have not run away  
from being a shepherd  
in your service,  
nor have I desired the  
fatal day.

You know what came from  
my lips;  
it was before your face.

17 Do not become a terror to  
me;  
you are my refuge in the  
day of disaster;

18 Let my persecutors be  
shamed,  
but do not let me be  
shamed;  
let them be dismayed,  
but do not let me be  
dismayed;  
bring on them the day of  
disaster;  
destroy them with  
double destruction!

*Hallow the Sabbath Day*

19 Thus said the LORD to  
me: Go and stand in the  
People’s Gate, by which the  
kings of Judah enter and by  
which they go out, and in all  
the gates of Jerusalem, <sup>20</sup>and  
say to them: Hear the word of  
the LORD, you kings of Judah,  
and all Judah, and all the

inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by these gates. <sup>21</sup> Thus says the LORD: For the sake of your lives, take care that you do not bear a burden on the sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> And do not carry a burden out of your houses on the sabbath or do any work, but keep the sabbath day holy, as I commanded your ancestors. <sup>23</sup> Yet they did not listen or incline their ear; they stiffened their necks and would not hear or receive instruction.

<sup>24</sup> But if you listen to me, says the LORD, and bring in no burden by the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but keep the sabbath day holy and do no work on it, <sup>25</sup> then there shall enter by the gates of this city kings who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their officials, the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall be inhabited forever.

<sup>26</sup> And people shall come from the towns of Judah and the places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, from the Shephelah, from the hill

country, and from the Negeb, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and frankincense, and bringing thank offerings to the house of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> But if you do not listen to me, to keep the sabbath day holy, and to carry in no burden through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates; it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be quenched.

#### **1 Thessalonians 4:1–12 (NRSV)**

##### *A Life Pleasing to God*

**4** Finally, brothers and sisters, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that, as you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God (as, in fact, you are doing), you should do so more and more. <sup>2</sup> For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. <sup>3</sup> For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; <sup>4</sup> that each one of you know how to control your own body in holiness and honor, <sup>5</sup> not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know

God; <sup>6</sup> that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we have already told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. <sup>7</sup> For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness. <sup>8</sup> Therefore whoever rejects this rejects not human authority but God, who also gives his Holy Spirit to you.

<sup>9</sup> Now concerning love of the brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anyone write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another; <sup>10</sup> and indeed you do love all the brothers and sisters throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, beloved, to do so more and more, <sup>11</sup> to aspire to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we directed you, <sup>12</sup> so that you may behave properly toward outsiders and be dependent on no one.

**Psalms 80:14-19 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Turn again, O God of hosts;  
look down from heaven,  
and see;

have regard for this vine,  
<sup>15</sup> the stock that your right  
hand planted.  
<sup>16</sup> They have burned it with  
fire, they have cut it  
down;  
may they perish at the  
rebuke of your  
countenance.  
<sup>17</sup> But let your hand be upon  
the one at your right  
hand,  
the one whom you made  
strong for yourself.  
<sup>18</sup> Then we will never turn  
back from you;  
give us life, and we will  
call on your name.  
<sup>19</sup> Restore us, O LORD God of  
hosts;  
let your face shine, that  
we may be saved.

**Proverbs 19:22-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>22</sup> What is desirable in a  
person is loyalty,  
and it is better to be  
poor than a liar.  
<sup>23</sup> The fear of the LORD is life  
indeed;  
filled with it one rests  
secure and suffers no  
harm.

## July 22



### **Jeremiah 18:1–23** (NRSV)

#### *The Potter and the Clay*

**18** The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

<sup>2</sup> “Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” <sup>3</sup> So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. <sup>4</sup> The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

<sup>5</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>6</sup> Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the LORD. Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, <sup>8</sup> but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. <sup>9</sup> And at another

moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, <sup>10</sup> but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it.

<sup>11</sup> Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the LORD: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

#### *Israel’s Stubborn Idolatry*

<sup>12</sup> But they say, “It is no use! We will follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of our evil will.”

<sup>13</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD:

Ask among the nations:

Who has heard the like of this?

The virgin Israel has done a most horrible thing.

<sup>14</sup> Does the snow of Lebanon leave the crags of Sirion?

Do the mountain waters  
run dry,  
the cold flowing  
streams?

15 But my people have  
forgotten me,  
they burn offerings to a  
delusion;  
they have stumbled in  
their ways,  
in the ancient roads,  
and have gone into  
bypaths,  
not the highway,  
16 making their land a horror,  
a thing to be hissed at  
forever.

All who pass by it are  
horrified  
and shake their heads.

17 Like the wind from the  
east,  
I will scatter them before  
the enemy.  
I will show them my back,  
not my face,  
in the day of their  
calamity.

*A Plot against Jeremiah*

18 Then they said, "Come,  
let us make plots against  
Jeremiah—for instruction shall  
not perish from the priest, nor  
counsel from the wise, nor the

word from the prophet. Come,  
let us bring charges against  
him, and let us not heed any  
of his words."

19 Give heed to me, O LORD,  
and listen to what my  
adversaries say!

20 Is evil a recompense for  
good?  
Yet they have dug a pit  
for my life.

Remember how I stood  
before you  
to speak good for them,  
to turn away your wrath  
from them.

21 Therefore give their  
children over to  
famine;  
hurl them out to the  
power of the sword,  
let their wives become  
childless and widowed.  
May their men meet  
death by pestilence,  
their youths be slain by  
the sword in battle.

22 May a cry be heard from  
their houses,  
when you bring the  
marauder suddenly  
upon them!  
For they have dug a pit to  
catch me,



and laid snares for my feet.

<sup>23</sup> Yet you, O LORD, know all their plotting to kill me. Do not forgive their iniquity, do not blot out their sin from your sight. Let them be tripped up before you; deal with them while you are angry.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:3

(NRSV)

#### *The Coming of the Lord*

<sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. <sup>16</sup> For **the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the**

archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

<sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.

**5** Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you.

<sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape!

### Psalm 81:1-7 (NRSV)

#### *God's Appeal to Stubborn Israel*

To the leader: according to The Gittith. Of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> Sing aloud to God our strength;

shout for joy to the God  
of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup> Raise a song, sound the  
tambourine,  
the sweet lyre with the  
harp.

<sup>3</sup> Blow the trumpet at the  
new moon,  
at the full moon, on our  
festal day.

<sup>4</sup> For it is a statute for Israel,  
an ordinance of the God  
of Jacob.

<sup>5</sup> He made it a decree in  
Joseph,  
when he went out over  
the land of Egypt.

I hear a voice I had not  
known:

<sup>6</sup> "I relieved your shoulder  
of the burden;  
your hands were freed  
from the basket.

<sup>7</sup> In distress you called, and I  
rescued you;

I answered you in the  
secret place of  
thunder;

I tested you at the  
waters of Meribah.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 19:24–25** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> The lazy person buries a  
hand in the dish,

and will not even bring it  
back to the mouth.

<sup>25</sup> Strike a scoffer, and the  
simple will learn  
prudence;  
reprove the intelligent,  
and they will gain  
knowledge.

## July 23



**Jeremiah 19:1–20:6** (NRSV)

*The Broken Earthenware Jug*

**19** Thus said the LORD: Go  
and buy a potter's  
earthenware jug. Take with  
you some of the elders of the  
people and some of the senior  
priests, <sup>2</sup> and go out to the  
valley of the son of Hinnom at  
the entry of the Potsherd  
Gate, and proclaim there the  
words that I tell you. <sup>3</sup> You  
shall say: Hear the word of the  
LORD, O kings of Judah and  
inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus  
says the LORD of hosts, the God  
of Israel: I am going to bring  
such disaster upon this place  
that the ears of everyone who

hears of it will tingle. <sup>4</sup> Because the people have forsaken me, and have profaned this place by making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they nor their ancestors nor the kings of Judah have known, and because they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent, <sup>5</sup> and gone on building the high places of Baal to burn their children in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or decree, nor did it enter my mind; <sup>6</sup> therefore the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when this place shall no more be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter. <sup>7</sup> And in this place I will make void the plans of Judah and Jerusalem, and will make them fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of those who seek their life. I will give their dead bodies for food to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth. <sup>8</sup> And I will make this city a horror, a thing to be hissed at; everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters.

<sup>9</sup> And I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and all shall eat the flesh of their neighbors in the siege, and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life afflict them.

<sup>10</sup> Then you shall break the jug in the sight of those who go with you, <sup>11</sup> and shall say to them: Thus says the LORD of hosts: So will I break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, so that it can never be mended. In Topheth they shall bury until there is no more room to bury. <sup>12</sup> Thus will I do to this place, says the LORD, and to its inhabitants, making this city like Topheth. <sup>13</sup> And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled like the place of Topheth—all the houses upon whose roofs offerings have been made to the whole host of heaven, and libations have been poured out to other gods.

<sup>14</sup> When Jeremiah came from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy, he stood in the court of the

LORD's house and said to all the people: <sup>15</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am now bringing upon this city and upon all its towns all the disaster that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks, refusing to hear my words.

*Jeremiah Persecuted  
by Pashhur*

**20** Now the priest Pashhur son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things.

<sup>2</sup> Then Pashhur struck the prophet Jeremiah, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD. <sup>3</sup> The next morning when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, The LORD has named you not Pashhur but "Terror-all-around." <sup>4</sup> For thus says the LORD: I am making you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies while you look on. And I will give all Judah into the hand of

the king of Babylon; he shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall kill them with the sword. <sup>5</sup> I will give all the wealth of this city, all its gains, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hand of their enemies, who shall plunder them, and seize them, and carry them to Babylon. <sup>6</sup> And you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house, shall go into captivity, and to Babylon you shall go; there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsely.

**1 Thessalonians 5:4–11** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; <sup>5</sup> for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

<sup>6</sup> So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; <sup>7</sup> for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the

breastplate of faith and love,  
and for a helmet the hope of  
salvation. <sup>9</sup> For God has  
destined us not for wrath but  
for obtaining salvation  
through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
<sup>10</sup> who died for us, so that  
whether we are awake or  
asleep we may live with him.  
<sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one  
another and build up each  
other, as indeed you are  
doing.

**Psalms 81:8–16** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Hear, O my people, while I  
admonish you;  
O Israel, if you would but  
listen to me!  
<sup>9</sup> There shall be no strange  
god among you;  
you shall not bow down  
to a foreign god.  
<sup>10</sup> I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you up out  
of the land of Egypt.  
Open your mouth wide  
and I will fill it.  
<sup>11</sup> “But my people did not  
listen to my voice;  
Israel would not submit  
to me.  
<sup>12</sup> So I gave them over to  
their stubborn hearts,

to follow their own  
counsels.

<sup>13</sup> O that my people would  
listen to me,  
that Israel would walk in  
my ways!  
<sup>14</sup> Then I would quickly  
subdue their enemies,  
and turn my hand  
against their foes.  
<sup>15</sup> Those who hate the LORD  
would cringe before  
him,  
and their doom would  
last forever.  
<sup>16</sup> I would feed you with the  
finest of the wheat,  
and with honey from the  
rock I would satisfy  
you.”

**Proverbs 19:26** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> Those who do violence to  
their father and chase  
away their mother  
are children who cause  
shame and bring  
reproach.

July 24



**Jeremiah 20:7–21:14** (NRSV)

*Jeremiah Denounces  
His Persecutors*

7 O LORD, you have enticed  
me,  
and I was enticed;  
you have overpowered  
me,  
and you have prevailed.  
I have become a  
laughingstock all day  
long;  
everyone mocks me.  
8 For whenever I speak, I  
must cry out,  
I must shout, “Violence  
and destruction!”  
For the word of the LORD  
has become for me  
a reproach and derision  
all day long.  
9 If I say, “I will not mention  
him,  
or speak any more in his  
name,”  
then within me there is  
something like a  
burning fire  
shut up in my bones;  
I am weary with holding it  
in,  
and I cannot.

10 For I hear many  
whispering:  
“Terror is all around!  
Denounce him! Let us  
denounce him!”  
All my close friends  
are watching for me to  
stumble.  
“Perhaps he can be  
enticed,  
and we can prevail  
against him,  
and take our revenge on  
him.”  
11 But the LORD is with me  
like a dread warrior;  
therefore my  
persecutors will  
stumble,  
and they will not prevail.  
They will be greatly  
shamed,  
for they will not succeed.  
Their eternal dishonor  
will never be forgotten.  
12 O LORD of hosts, you test  
the righteous,  
you see the heart and  
the mind;  
let me see your retribution  
upon them,  
for to you I have  
committed my cause.  
13 Sing to the LORD;  
praise the LORD!

For he has delivered the  
life of the needy  
from the hands of  
evildoers.

14 Cursed be the day  
on which I was born!  
The day when my mother  
bore me,  
let it not be blessed!

15 Cursed be the man  
who brought the news to  
my father, saying,  
“A child is born to you, a  
son,”  
making him very glad.

16 Let that man be like the  
cities  
that the LORD overthrew  
without pity;  
let him hear a cry in the  
morning

17 and an alarm at noon,  
because he did not kill me  
in the womb;  
so my mother would  
have been my grave,  
and her womb forever  
great.

18 Why did I come forth from  
the womb  
to see toil and sorrow,  
and spend my days in  
shame?

*Jerusalem Will Fall to  
Nebuchadrezzar*

**21** This is the word that came  
to Jeremiah from the LORD,  
when King Zedekiah sent to  
him Pashhur son of Malchiah  
and the priest Zephaniah son  
of Maaseiah, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Please  
inquire of the LORD on our  
behalf, for King  
Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon is  
making war against us;  
perhaps the LORD will perform  
a wonderful deed for us, as he  
has often done, and will make  
him withdraw from us.”

<sup>3</sup> Then Jeremiah said to  
them: <sup>4</sup> Thus you shall say to  
Zedekiah: Thus says the LORD,  
the God of Israel: I am going to  
turn back the weapons of war  
that are in your hands and  
with which you are fighting  
against the king of Babylon  
and against the Chaldeans  
who are besieging you outside  
the walls; and I will bring them  
together into the center of this  
city. <sup>5</sup> I myself will fight against  
you with outstretched hand  
and mighty arm, in anger, in  
fury, and in great wrath. <sup>6</sup> And  
I will strike down the  
inhabitants of this city, both  
human beings and animals;

they shall die of a great pestilence. <sup>7</sup> Afterward, says the LORD, I will give King Zedekiah of Judah, and his servants, and the people in this city—those who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine—into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, into the hands of their enemies, into the hands of those who seek their lives. He shall strike them down with the edge of the sword; he shall not pity them, or spare them, or have compassion.

<sup>8</sup> And to this people you shall say: Thus says the LORD: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. <sup>9</sup> Those who stay in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but those who go out and surrender to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have their lives as a prize of war. <sup>10</sup> For I have set my face against this city for evil and not for good, says the LORD: it shall be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

*Message to the House of David*

<sup>11</sup> To the house of the king of Judah say: Hear the word of the LORD, <sup>12</sup> O house of David! Thus says the LORD:

Execute justice in the morning,  
and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed,  
or else my wrath will go forth like fire,  
and burn, with no one to quench it,  
because of your evil doings.

<sup>13</sup> See, I am against you, O inhabitant of the valley,  
O rock of the plain, you who say, “Who can come down against us, or who can enter our places of refuge?”

<sup>13</sup> See, I am against you, O inhabitant of the valley,  
O rock of the plain,  
says the LORD;  
you who say, “Who can come down against us, or who can enter our places of refuge?”



<sup>14</sup> I will punish you according  
to the fruit of your  
doings,  
says the LORD;  
I will kindle a fire in its  
forest,  
and it shall devour all  
that is around it.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:12–28**

(NRSV)

*Final Exhortations,*

*Greetings, and Benediction*

<sup>12</sup> But we appeal to you,  
brothers and sisters, to  
respect those who labor  
among you, and have charge  
of you in the Lord and  
admonish you; <sup>13</sup> esteem them  
very highly in love because of  
their work. Be at peace among  
yourselves. <sup>14</sup> And we urge  
you, beloved, to admonish the  
idlers, encourage the  
fainthearted, help the weak,  
be patient with all of them.  
<sup>15</sup> See that none of you repays  
evil for evil, but always seek to  
do good to one another and to  
all. <sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray  
without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> give thanks  
in all circumstances; for this is  
the will of God in Christ Jesus  
for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the  
Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise the

words of prophets, <sup>21</sup> but test  
everything; hold fast to what is  
good; <sup>22</sup> abstain from every  
form of evil.

<sup>23</sup> May the God of peace  
himself sanctify you entirely;  
and may your spirit and soul  
and body be kept sound and  
blameless at the coming of our  
Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> The one  
who calls you is faithful, and  
he will do this.

<sup>25</sup> Beloved, pray for us.

<sup>26</sup> Greet all the brothers  
and sisters with a holy kiss. <sup>27</sup> I  
solemnly command you by the  
Lord that this letter be read to  
all of them.

<sup>28</sup> The grace of our Lord  
Jesus Christ be with you.

### **Psalm 82:1-5 (NRSV)**

*A Plea for Justice*

A Psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> God has taken his place in  
the divine council;  
in the midst of the gods  
he holds judgment:  
<sup>2</sup> “How long will you judge  
unjustly  
and show partiality to  
the wicked? *Selah*  
<sup>3</sup> Give justice to the weak  
and the orphan;

maintain the right of the  
lowly and the  
destitute.

- 4 Rescue the weak and the  
needy;  
deliver them from the  
hand of the wicked.”
- 5 They have neither  
knowledge nor  
understanding,  
they walk around in  
darkness;  
all the foundations of the  
earth are shaken.

**Proverbs 19:27–29 (NRSV)**

- 27 Cease straying, my child,  
from the words of  
knowledge,  
in order that you may  
hear instruction.
- 28 A worthless witness mocks  
at justice,  
and the mouth of the  
wicked devours  
iniquity.
- 29 Condemnation is ready for  
scoffers,  
and flogging for the  
backs of fools.

## July 25



**Jeremiah 22:1–30 (NRSV)**

*Exhortation to Repent*

**22** Thus says the LORD: Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, <sup>2</sup> and say: Hear the word of the LORD, O King of Judah sitting on the throne of David—you, and your servants, and your people who enter these gates. <sup>3</sup> Thus says the LORD: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place. <sup>4</sup> For if you will indeed obey this word, then through the gates of this house shall enter kings who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their servants, and their people. <sup>5</sup> But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, says the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. <sup>6</sup> For thus says the

LORD concerning the house of  
the king of Judah:

You are like Gilead to me,  
like the summit of  
Lebanon;  
but I swear that I will make  
you a desert,  
an uninhabited city.

<sup>7</sup> I will prepare destroyers  
against you,  
all with their weapons;  
they shall cut down your  
choicest cedars  
and cast them into the  
fire.

<sup>8</sup> And many nations will  
pass by this city, and all of  
them will say one to another,  
“Why has the LORD dealt in this  
way with that great city?”

<sup>9</sup> And they will answer,  
“Because they abandoned the  
covenant of the LORD their  
God, and worshiped other  
gods and served them.”

<sup>10</sup> Do not weep for him who  
is dead,  
nor bemoan him;  
weep rather for him who  
goes away,  
for he shall return no  
more  
to see his native land.

*Message to the Sons of Josiah*

<sup>11</sup> For thus says the LORD  
concerning Shallum son of  
King Josiah of Judah, who  
succeeded his father Josiah,  
and who went away from this  
place: He shall return here no  
more, <sup>12</sup> but in the place  
where they have carried him  
captive he shall die, and he  
shall never see this land again.

<sup>13</sup> Woe to him who builds his  
house by  
unrighteousness,  
and his upper rooms by  
injustice;

who makes his neighbors  
work for nothing,  
and does not give them  
their wages;

<sup>14</sup> who says, “I will build  
myself a spacious  
house  
with large upper rooms,”  
and who cuts out windows  
for it,  
paneling it with cedar,  
and painting it with  
vermilion.

<sup>15</sup> Are you a king  
because you compete in  
cedar?  
Did not your father eat and  
drink

and do justice and  
 righteousness?  
 Then it was well with  
 him.

16 He judged the cause of the  
 poor and needy;  
 then it was well.  
 Is not this to know me?  
 says the LORD.

17 But your eyes and heart  
 are only on your  
 dishonest gain,  
 for shedding innocent  
 blood,  
 and for practicing  
 oppression and  
 violence.

18 Therefore thus says the  
 LORD concerning King  
 Jehoiakim son of Josiah of  
 Judah:  
 They shall not lament for  
 him, saying,  
 "Alas, my brother!" or  
 "Alas, sister!"  
 They shall not lament for  
 him, saying,  
 "Alas, lord!" or "Alas, his  
 majesty!"

19 With the burial of a donkey  
 he shall be buried—  
 dragged off and thrown  
 out beyond the gates  
 of Jerusalem.

20 Go up to Lebanon, and cry  
 out,  
 and lift up your voice in  
 Bashan;  
 cry out from Abarim,  
 for all your lovers are  
 crushed.

21 I spoke to you in your  
 prosperity,  
 but you said, "I will not  
 listen."  
 This has been your way  
 from your youth,  
 for you have not obeyed  
 my voice.

22 The wind shall shepherd all  
 your shepherds,  
 and your lovers shall go  
 into captivity;  
 then you will be ashamed  
 and dismayed  
 because of all your  
 wickedness.

23 O inhabitant of Lebanon,  
 nested among the  
 cedars,  
 how you will groan when  
 pangs come upon you,  
 pain as of a woman in  
 labor!

*Judgment on Coniah  
 (Jehoiachin)*

24 As I live, says the LORD,  
 even if King Coniah son of

Jehoiakim of Judah were the signet ring on my right hand, even from there I would tear you off <sup>25</sup> and give you into the hands of those who seek your life, into the hands of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and into the hands of the Chaldeans. <sup>26</sup> I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. <sup>27</sup> But they shall not return to the land to which they long to return.

<sup>28</sup> Is this man Coniah a despised broken pot, a vessel no one wants? Why are he and his offspring hurled out and cast away in a land that they do not know?

<sup>29</sup> O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD!

<sup>30</sup> Thus says the LORD: Record this man as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days; for none of his offspring shall succeed

in sitting on the throne of David, and ruling again in Judah.

## **2 Thessalonians 1:1–6** (NRSV) *Salutation*

**1** Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,  
To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### *Thanksgiving*

<sup>3</sup> We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing. <sup>4</sup> Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring.

### *The Judgment at Christ's Coming*

<sup>5</sup> This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God,

and is intended to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. <sup>6</sup> For it is indeed just of God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

**Psalms 82:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> I say, "You are gods,  
children of the Most  
High, all of you;  
<sup>7</sup> nevertheless, you shall die  
like mortals,  
and fall like any prince."  
<sup>8</sup> Rise up, O God, judge the  
earth;  
for all the nations belong  
to you!

**Proverbs 20:1** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Wine is a mocker, strong  
drink a brawler, and  
whoever is led astray  
by it is not wise.

**July 26**



**Jeremiah 23:1–20** (NRSV)  
*Restoration after Exile*

**23** Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. <sup>4</sup> I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

*The Righteous Branch of David*  
(Jer 16:14–15)

<sup>5</sup> The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>6</sup> In his days Judah will be saved

and Israel will live in safety.  
And this is the name by which  
he will be called: "The LORD is  
our righteousness."

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the days are  
surely coming, says the LORD,  
when it shall no longer be said,  
"As the LORD lives who brought  
the people of Israel up out of  
the land of Egypt," <sup>8</sup> but "As  
the LORD lives who brought out  
and led the offspring of the  
house of Israel out of the land  
of the north and out of all the  
lands where he had driven  
them." Then they shall live in  
their own land.

*False Prophets of Hope*

<sup>9</sup> Concerning the prophets: My  
heart is crushed within me, all  
my bones shake; I have  
become like a drunkard, like  
one overcome by wine,  
because of the LORD and  
because of his holy words.

<sup>10</sup> For the land is full of  
adulterers; because of the  
curse the land mourns, and  
the pastures of the wilderness  
are dried up. Their course has  
been evil, and their might is  
not right.

<sup>11</sup> Both prophet and priest are  
ungodly; even in my house I

have found their wickedness,  
says the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore their way shall  
be to them  
like slippery paths in the  
darkness,  
into which they shall be  
driven and fall;  
for I will bring disaster  
upon them  
in the year of their  
punishment,  
says the Lord,

<sup>13</sup> In the prophets of Samaria  
I saw a disgusting thing:  
they prophesied by Baal  
and led my people Israel  
astray.

<sup>14</sup> But in the prophets of  
Jerusalem  
I have seen a more  
shocking thing:  
they commit adultery and  
walk in lies;  
they strengthen the  
hands of evildoers,  
so that no one turns  
from wickedness;  
all of them have become  
like Sodom to me,  
and its inhabitants like  
Gomorrah.

15 Therefore thus says the  
LORD of hosts  
concerning the  
prophets:  
“I am going to make them  
eat wormwood,  
and give them poisoned  
water to drink;  
for from the prophets of  
Jerusalem  
ungodliness has spread  
throughout the land.”

16 Thus says the LORD of hosts:  
Do not listen to the words of  
the prophets who prophesy to  
you; they are deluding you.  
They speak visions of their  
own minds, not from the  
mouth of the LORD.

18 For who has stood in the  
council of the LORD  
so as to see and to hear  
his word?  
Who has given heed to  
his word so as to  
proclaim it?

19 Look, the storm of the  
LORD!  
Wrath has gone forth,  
a whirling tempest;  
it will burst upon the  
head of the wicked.

20 The anger of the LORD will  
not turn back

until he has executed  
and accomplished  
the intents of his mind.  
In the latter days you will  
understand it clearly.

**2 Thessalonians 1:7–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> and to give relief to the  
afflicted as well as to us, when  
the Lord Jesus is revealed from  
heaven with his mighty angels  
<sup>8</sup> in flaming fire, inflicting  
vengeance on those who do  
not know God and on those  
who do not obey the gospel of  
our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> These will  
suffer the punishment of  
eternal destruction, separated  
from the presence of the Lord  
and from the glory of his  
might, <sup>10</sup> when he comes to be  
glorified by his saints and to  
be marveled at on that day  
among all who have believed,  
because our testimony to you  
was believed. <sup>11</sup> To this end we  
always pray for you, asking  
that our God will make you  
worthy of his call and will fulfill  
by his power every good  
resolve and work of faith, <sup>12</sup> so  
that the name of our Lord  
Jesus may be glorified in you,  
and you in him, according to



the grace of our God and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

**Psalms 83:1-8** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Judgment  
on Israel's Foes*

A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.

- 1 O God, do not keep  
silence;  
do not hold your peace  
or be still, O God!
- 2 Even now your enemies  
are in tumult;  
those who hate you have  
raised their heads.
- 3 They lay crafty plans  
against your people;  
they consult together  
against those you  
protect.
- 4 They say, "Come, let us  
wipe them out as a  
nation;  
let the name of Israel be  
remembered no  
more."
- 5 They conspire with one  
accord;  
against you they make a  
covenant—
- 6 the tents of Edom and the  
Ishmaelites,  
Moab and the Hagrites,  
Gebal and Ammon and  
Amalek,

- Philistia with the  
inhabitants of Tyre;  
8 Assyria also has joined  
them;  
they are the strong arm  
of the children of Lot.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 20:2-3** (NRSV)

- 2 The dread anger of a king  
is like the growling of a  
lion;  
anyone who provokes  
him to anger forfeits  
life itself.
- 3 It is honorable to refrain  
from strife, but every  
fool is quick to quarrel.

**July 27**



**Jeremiah 23:21-24:10** (NRSV)

- 21 I did not send the  
prophets,  
yet they ran;  
I did not speak to them,  
yet they prophesied.
- 22 But if they had stood in my  
council,

then they would have  
proclaimed my words  
to my people,  
and they would have  
turned them from their  
evil way,  
and from the evil of their  
doings.

<sup>23</sup> Am I a God nearby, says  
the LORD, and not a God far  
off? <sup>24</sup> Who can hide in secret  
places so that I cannot see  
them? says the LORD. Do I not  
fill heaven and earth? says the  
LORD. <sup>25</sup> I have heard what the  
prophets have said who  
prophesy lies in my name,  
saying, "I have dreamed, I  
have dreamed!" <sup>26</sup> How long?  
Will the hearts of the prophets  
ever turn back—those who  
prophesy lies, and who  
prophesy the deceit of their  
own heart? <sup>27</sup> They plan to  
make my people forget my  
name by their dreams that  
they tell one another, just as  
their ancestors forgot my  
name for Baal. <sup>28</sup> Let the  
prophet who has a dream tell  
the dream, but let the one  
who has my word speak my  
word faithfully. What has  
straw in common with wheat?  
says the LORD. <sup>29</sup> Is not my

word like fire, says the LORD,  
and like a hammer that breaks  
a rock in pieces? <sup>30</sup> See,  
therefore, I am against the  
prophets, says the LORD, who  
steal my words from one  
another. <sup>31</sup> See, I am against  
the prophets, says the LORD,  
who use their own tongues  
and say, "Says the LORD."

<sup>32</sup> See, I am against those who  
prophesy lying dreams, says  
the LORD, and who tell them,  
and who lead my people  
astray by their lies and their  
recklessness, when I did not  
send them or appoint them; so  
they do not profit this people  
at all, says the LORD.

<sup>33</sup> When this people, or a  
prophet, or a priest asks you,  
"What is the burden of the  
LORD?" you shall say to them,  
"You are the burden, and I will  
cast you off, says the LORD."

<sup>34</sup> And as for the prophet,  
priest, or the people who say,  
"The burden of the LORD," I  
will punish them and their  
households. <sup>35</sup> Thus shall you  
say to one another, among  
yourselves, "What has the  
LORD answered?" or "What has  
the LORD spoken?" <sup>36</sup> But "the  
burden of the LORD" you shall

mention no more, for the burden is everyone's own word, and so you pervert the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God. <sup>37</sup> Thus you shall ask the prophet, "What has the LORD answered you?" or "What has the LORD spoken?" <sup>38</sup> But if you say, "the burden of the LORD," thus says the LORD: Because you have said these words, "the burden of the LORD," when I sent to you, saying, You shall not say, "the burden of the LORD," <sup>39</sup> therefore, I will surely lift you up and cast you away from my presence, you and the city that I gave to you and your ancestors. <sup>40</sup> And I will bring upon you everlasting disgrace and perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

#### *The Good and the Bad Figs*

**24** The LORD showed me two baskets of figs placed before the temple of the LORD. This was after King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon had taken into exile from Jerusalem King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, together with the officials of Judah, the artisans, and the smiths, and had brought them

to Babylon. <sup>2</sup> One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad that they could not be eaten. <sup>3</sup> And the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs, the good figs very good, and the bad figs very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten."

<sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. <sup>6</sup> I will set my eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not pluck them up. <sup>7</sup> I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.

<sup>8</sup> But thus says the LORD: Like the bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten, so will I treat King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, the remnant of Jerusalem who

remain in this land, and those who live in the land of Egypt.<sup>9</sup> I will make them a horror, an evil thing, to all the kingdoms of the earth—a disgrace, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places where I shall drive them.<sup>10</sup> And I will send sword, famine, and pestilence upon them, until they are utterly destroyed from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 (NRSV)**  
*The Man of Lawlessness*

**2** As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters,<sup>2</sup> not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here.<sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction.<sup>4</sup> He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his

seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God.<sup>5</sup> Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?<sup>6</sup> And you know what is now restraining him, so that he may be revealed when his time comes.<sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who now restrains it is removed.<sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming.<sup>9</sup> The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, lying wonders,<sup>10</sup> and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.<sup>11</sup> For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false,<sup>12</sup> so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.

**Psalm 83:9-18** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Do to them as you did to  
Midian,  
as to Sisera and Jabin at  
the Wadi Kishon,  
<sup>10</sup> who were destroyed at En-  
dor,  
who became dung for  
the ground.  
<sup>11</sup> Make their nobles like  
Oreb and Zeeb,  
all their princes like  
Zebah and Zalmunna,  
<sup>12</sup> who said, "Let us take the  
pastures of God  
for our own possession."  
<sup>13</sup> O my God, make them like  
whirling dust,  
like chaff before the  
wind.  
<sup>14</sup> As fire consumes the  
forest,  
as the flame sets the  
mountains ablaze,  
<sup>15</sup> so pursue them with your  
tempest  
and terrify them with  
your hurricane.  
<sup>16</sup> Fill their faces with shame,  
so that they may seek  
your name, O LORD.  
<sup>17</sup> Let them be put to shame  
and dismayed forever;  
let them perish in  
disgrace.

<sup>18</sup> Let them know that you  
alone,  
whose name is the LORD,  
are the Most High over  
all the earth.

**Proverbs 20:4-6** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> The lazy person does not  
plow in season;  
harvest comes, and there  
is nothing to be found.  
<sup>5</sup> The purposes in the  
human mind are like  
deep water,  
but the intelligent will  
draw them out.  
<sup>6</sup> Many proclaim themselves  
loyal,  
but who can find one  
worthy of trust?

**July 28**



**Jeremiah 25:1-38** (NRSV)

*The Babylonian  
Captivity Foretold*

**25** The word that came to  
Jeremiah concerning all the  
people of Judah, in the fourth  
year of King Jehoiakim son of

Josiah of Judah (that was the first year of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon),<sup>2</sup> which the prophet Jeremiah spoke to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem:<sup>3</sup> For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, to this day, the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened.<sup>4</sup> And though the LORD persistently sent you all his servants the prophets, you have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear<sup>5</sup> when they said, "Turn now, everyone of you, from your evil way and wicked doings, and you will remain upon the land that the LORD has given to you and your ancestors from of old and forever;<sup>6</sup> do not go after other gods to serve and worship them, and do not provoke me to anger with the work of your hands. Then I will do you no harm."<sup>7</sup> Yet you did not listen to me, says the LORD, and so you have provoked me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words,<sup>9</sup> I am going to send for all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, even for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations around; I will utterly destroy them, and make them an object of horror and of hissing, and an everlasting disgrace.<sup>10</sup> And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and the sound of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.<sup>11</sup> This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.<sup>12</sup> Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste.<sup>13</sup> I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written

in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. <sup>14</sup> For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.

*The Cup of God's Wrath*

<sup>15</sup> For thus the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. <sup>16</sup> They shall drink and stagger and go out of their minds because of the sword that I am sending among them.

<sup>17</sup> So I took the cup from the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it: <sup>18</sup> Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, its kings and officials, to make them a desolation and a waste, an object of hissing and of cursing, as they are today; <sup>19</sup> Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his officials, and all his people; <sup>20</sup> all the mixed people; all the kings of the land of Uz; all the kings of the land of the Philistines—

Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; <sup>21</sup> Edom, Moab, and the Ammonites; <sup>22</sup> all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastland across the sea; <sup>23</sup> Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who have shaven temples; <sup>24</sup> all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the mixed peoples that live in the desert; <sup>25</sup> all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media; <sup>26</sup> all the kings of the north, far and near, one after another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth. And after them the king of Sheshach shall drink.

<sup>27</sup> Then you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink, get drunk and vomit, fall and rise no more, because of the sword that I am sending among you.

<sup>28</sup> And if they refuse to accept the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them: Thus says the LORD of hosts: You must drink! <sup>29</sup> See, I am beginning to bring disaster on the city that is called by my name, and how can you

possibly avoid punishment?  
You shall not go unpunished,  
for I am summoning a sword  
against all the inhabitants of  
the earth, says the LORD of  
hosts.

<sup>30</sup>You, therefore, shall  
prophesy against them all  
these words, and say to them:

The LORD will roar from on  
high,  
and from his holy  
habitation utter his  
voice;  
he will roar mightily  
against his fold,  
and shout, like those  
who tread grapes,  
against all the  
inhabitants of the  
earth.

<sup>31</sup>The clamor will resound to  
the ends of the earth,  
for the LORD has an  
indictment against the  
nations;  
he is entering into  
judgment with all flesh,  
and the guilty he will put  
to the sword,  
says, the Lord,

<sup>32</sup>Thus says the LORD of  
hosts:  
See, disaster is spreading  
from nation to nation,

and a great tempest is  
stirring  
from the farthest parts  
of the earth!

<sup>33</sup>Those slain by the LORD  
on that day shall extend from  
one end of the earth to the  
other. They shall not be  
lamented, or gathered, or  
buried; they shall become  
dung on the surface of the  
ground.

<sup>34</sup>Wail, you shepherds, and  
cry out;  
roll in ashes, you lords of  
the flock,  
for the days of your  
slaughter have come—  
and your dispersions,  
and you shall fall like a  
choice vessel.

<sup>35</sup>Flight shall fail the  
shepherds,  
and there shall be no  
escape for the lords of  
the flock.

<sup>36</sup>Hark! the cry of the  
shepherds,  
and the wail of the lords  
of the flock!

For the LORD is despoiling  
their pasture,  
and the peaceful folds  
are devastated,

<sup>37</sup>



because of the fierce  
anger of the LORD.  
<sup>38</sup> Like a lion he has left his  
covert;  
for their land has  
become a waste  
because of the cruel  
sword,  
and because of his fierce  
anger.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17

(NRSV)

*Chosen for Salvation*

<sup>13</sup> But we must always give  
thanks to God for you,  
brothers and sisters beloved  
by the Lord, because **God  
chose you as the first fruits for  
salvation through  
sanctification by the Spirit and  
through belief in the truth.**

<sup>14</sup> **For this purpose he called  
you through our proclamation  
of the good news, so that you  
may obtain the glory of our  
Lord Jesus Christ.** <sup>15</sup> So then,  
brothers and sisters, stand  
firm and hold fast to the  
traditions that you were  
taught by us, either by word of  
mouth or by our letter.

<sup>16</sup> Now may our Lord Jesus  
Christ himself and God our  
Father, who loved us and

through grace gave us eternal  
comfort and good hope,  
<sup>17</sup> comfort your hearts and  
strengthen them in every good  
work and word.

## Psalm 84:1-4 (NRSV)

*The Joy of Worship  
in the Temple*

To the leader: according to  
The Gittith. Of the Korahites.

A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> How lovely is your dwelling  
place,  
O LORD of hosts!  
<sup>2</sup> My soul longs, indeed it  
faints  
for the courts of the  
LORD;  
my heart and my flesh sing  
for joy  
to the living God.  
<sup>3</sup> Even the sparrow finds a  
home,  
and the swallow a nest  
for herself,  
where she may lay her  
young,  
at your altars, O LORD of  
hosts,  
my King and my God.  
<sup>4</sup> Happy are those who live  
in your house,  
ever singing your praise.

*Selah*

**Proverbs 20:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> The righteous walk in integrity—  
happy are the children  
who follow them!

**July 29**



**Jeremiah 26:1–24** (NRSV)  
*Jeremiah's Prophecies  
in the Temple*  
(Jer 7:1–15)

**26** At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came from the LORD: <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the LORD; speak to them all the words that I command you; do not hold back a word. <sup>3</sup> It may be that they will listen, all of them, and will turn from their evil way, that I may change my mind about the disaster that I intend to bring on them because of their evil doings.

<sup>4</sup> You shall say to them: Thus says the LORD: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, <sup>5</sup> and to heed the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently—though you have not heeded— <sup>6</sup> then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.

<sup>7</sup> The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. <sup>8</sup> And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die!" <sup>9</sup> Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, "This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant'?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house

to the house of the LORD and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. <sup>11</sup> Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears."

<sup>12</sup> Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, "It is the LORD who sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard.

<sup>13</sup> Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will change his mind about the disaster that he has pronounced against you. <sup>14</sup> But as for me, here I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. <sup>15</sup> Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will be bringing innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

<sup>16</sup> Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God." <sup>17</sup> And some of the elders of the land arose and said to all the assembled people, <sup>18</sup> "Micah of Moresheth, who prophesied during the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, said to all the people of Judah: 'Thus says the LORD of hosts,

Zion shall be plowed as a field;

Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.'

<sup>19</sup> Did King Hezekiah of Judah and all Judah actually put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and did not the LORD change his mind about the disaster that he had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring great disaster on ourselves!"

<sup>20</sup> There was another man prophesying in the name of the LORD, Uriah son of

Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this city and against this land in words exactly like those of Jeremiah. <sup>21</sup> And when King Jehoiakim, with all his warriors and all the officials, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard of it, he was afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt. <sup>22</sup> Then King Jehoiakim sent Elnathan son of Achbor and men with him to Egypt, <sup>23</sup> and they took Uriah from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who struck him down with the sword and threw his dead body into the burial place of the common people.

<sup>24</sup> But the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah so that he was not given over into the hands of the people to be put to death.

## **2 Thessalonians 3:1–5 (NRSV)**

### *Request for Prayer*

**3** Finally, brothers and sisters, pray for us, so that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified everywhere, just as it is among you, <sup>2</sup> and that we may be rescued from wicked and evil people; for not

all have faith. <sup>3</sup> But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one. <sup>4</sup> And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will go on doing the things that we command. <sup>5</sup> May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

## **Psalms 84:5-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.  
<sup>6</sup> As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools.  
<sup>7</sup> They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion.  
<sup>8</sup> O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob!  
*Selah*  
<sup>9</sup> Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed.

<sup>10</sup> For a day in your courts is better  
than a thousand  
elsewhere.

I would rather be a  
doorkeeper in the  
house of my God  
than live in the tents of  
wickedness.

<sup>11</sup> For the LORD God is a sun  
and shield;  
he bestows favor and  
honor.

No good thing does the  
LORD withhold  
from those who walk  
uprightly.

<sup>12</sup> O LORD of hosts,  
happy is everyone who  
trusts in you.

### **Proverbs 20:8–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> A king who sits on the  
throne of judgment  
winnows all evil with his  
eyes.

<sup>9</sup> Who can say, “I have made  
my heart clean;  
I am pure from my sin”?

<sup>10</sup> Diverse weights and  
diverse measures  
are both alike an  
abomination to the  
LORD.

## **July 30**



### **Jeremiah 27:1–22 (NRSV)**

#### *The Sign of the Yoke*

**27** In the beginning of the  
reign of King Zedekiah son of  
Josiah of Judah, this word  
came to Jeremiah from the  
LORD. <sup>2</sup> Thus the LORD said to  
me: Make yourself a yoke of  
straps and bars, and put them  
on your neck. <sup>3</sup> Send word to  
the king of Edom, the king of  
Moab, the king of the  
Ammonites, the king of Tyre,  
and the king of Sidon by the  
hand of the envoys who have  
come to Jerusalem to King  
Zedekiah of Judah. <sup>4</sup> Give them  
this charge for their masters:  
Thus says the LORD of hosts,  
the God of Israel: This is what  
you shall say to your masters:  
<sup>5</sup> It is I who by my great power  
and my outstretched arm have  
made the earth, with the  
people and animals that are  
on the earth, and I give it to  
whomever I please. <sup>6</sup> Now I  
have given all these lands into  
the hand of King  
Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon,  
my servant, and I have given  
him even the wild animals of

the field to serve him. <sup>7</sup> All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson, until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings shall make him their slave.

<sup>8</sup> But if any nation or kingdom will not serve this king, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, then I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, says the LORD, until I have completed its destruction by his hand. <sup>9</sup> “You, therefore, must not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who are saying to you, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon.’”

<sup>10</sup> For they are prophesying a lie to you, with the result that you will be removed far from your land; I will drive you out, and you will perish. <sup>11</sup> But any nation that will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will leave on its own land, says the LORD, to till it and live there.

<sup>12</sup> I spoke to King Zedekiah of Judah in the same way: Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. <sup>13</sup> Why should you and your people die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, as the LORD has spoken concerning any nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? <sup>14</sup> Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are telling you not to serve the king of Babylon, for they are prophesying a lie to you. <sup>15</sup> I have not sent them, says the LORD, but they are prophesying falsely in my name, with the result that I will drive you out and you will perish, you and the prophets who are prophesying to you.

<sup>16</sup> Then I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus says the LORD: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who are prophesying to you, saying, “The vessels of the LORD’s house will soon be brought back from Babylon,” for they are prophesying a lie to you. <sup>17</sup> Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should

this city become a desolation?  
<sup>18</sup> If indeed they are prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, then let them intercede with the LORD of hosts, that the vessels left in the house of the LORD, in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem may not go to Babylon. <sup>19</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, the sea, the stands, and the rest of the vessels that are left in this city, <sup>20</sup> which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did not take away when he took into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem— <sup>21</sup> thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels left in the house of the LORD, in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: <sup>22</sup> They shall be carried to Babylon, and there they shall stay, until the day when I give attention to them, says the LORD. Then I will bring them up and restore them to this place.

**2 Thessalonians 3:6–18 (NRSV)**  
(NRSV)

*Warning against Idleness*

<sup>6</sup> Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. <sup>7</sup> For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, <sup>8</sup> and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. <sup>9</sup> This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. <sup>10</sup> For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. <sup>11</sup> For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. <sup>12</sup> Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

<sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not

be weary in doing what is right.

<sup>14</sup> Take note of those who do not obey what we say in this letter; have nothing to do with them, so that they may be ashamed. <sup>15</sup> Do not regard them as enemies, but warn them as believers.

*Final Greetings  
and Benediction*

<sup>16</sup> Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with all of you.

<sup>17</sup> I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the mark in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.

<sup>18</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.

**Psalm 85:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for the Restoration  
of God's Favor*

To the leader. Of the  
Korahites. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> LORD, you were favorable  
to your land;  
you restored the  
fortunes of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup> You forgave the iniquity of  
your people;

you pardoned all their  
sin. *Selah*

<sup>3</sup> You withdrew all your  
wrath;  
you turned from your  
hot anger.

<sup>4</sup> Restore us again, O God of  
our salvation,  
and put away your  
indignation toward us.

<sup>5</sup> Will you be angry with us  
forever?

Will you prolong your  
anger to all  
generations?

<sup>6</sup> Will you not revive us  
again,

so that your people may  
rejoice in you?

<sup>7</sup> Show us your steadfast  
love, O LORD,  
and grant us your  
salvation.

**Proverbs 20:11 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> Even children make  
themselves known by  
their acts,  
by whether what they do  
is pure and right.



## July 31



**Jeremiah 28:1–17** (NRSV)

*Hananiah Opposes  
Jeremiah and Dies*

**28** In that same year, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the fifth month of the fourth year, the prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and all the people, saying,  
<sup>2</sup> “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. <sup>3</sup> Within two years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of the LORD’s house, which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took away from this place and carried to Babylon. <sup>4</sup> I will also bring back to this place King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, and all the exiles from Judah who went to Babylon, says the LORD, for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of

the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD; <sup>6</sup> and the prophet Jeremiah said, “Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. <sup>7</sup> But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. <sup>8</sup> The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. <sup>9</sup> As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet.”

<sup>10</sup> Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, and broke it. <sup>11</sup> And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, “Thus says the LORD: This is how I will break the yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon from the neck of all the nations within two years.”

At this, the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

<sup>12</sup>Sometime after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:

<sup>13</sup>Go, tell Hananiah, Thus says the LORD: You have broken wooden bars only to forge iron bars in place of them! <sup>14</sup>For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put an iron yoke on the neck of all these nations so that they may serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and they shall indeed serve him; I have even given him the wild animals. <sup>15</sup>And the prophet Jeremiah said to the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, and you made this people trust in a lie.

<sup>16</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD: I am going to send you off the face of the earth. Within this year you will be dead, because you have spoken rebellion against the LORD."

<sup>17</sup>In that same year, in the seventh month, the prophet Hananiah died.

## **1 Timothy 1:1–11** (NRSV)

### *Salutation*

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my loyal child in the faith:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

### *Warning against False Teachers*

<sup>3</sup>I urge you, as I did when I was on my way to Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach any different doctrine, <sup>4</sup>and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training that is known by faith. <sup>5</sup>But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. <sup>6</sup>Some people have deviated from these and turned to meaningless talk, <sup>7</sup>desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or

the things about which they make assertions.

<sup>8</sup> Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it legitimately. <sup>9</sup> This means understanding that the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or mother, for murderers, <sup>10</sup> fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching <sup>11</sup> that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

**Psalms 85:8-13** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,  
for he will speak peace  
to his people,  
to his faithful, to those  
who turn to him in  
their hearts.  
<sup>9</sup> Surely his salvation is at  
hand for those who  
fear him,  
that his glory may dwell  
in our land.

<sup>10</sup> Steadfast love and  
faithfulness will meet;  
righteousness and peace  
will kiss each other.  
<sup>11</sup> Faithfulness will spring up  
from the ground,  
and righteousness will  
look down from the  
sky.  
<sup>12</sup> The LORD will give what is  
good,  
and our land will yield its  
increase.  
<sup>13</sup> Righteousness will go  
before him,  
and will make a path for  
his steps.

**Proverbs 20:12** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> The hearing ear and  
the seeing eye—  
the LORD has made them  
both.

## August 1



**Jeremiah 29:1–32** (NRSV)

*Jeremiah's Letter to  
the Exiles in Babylon*

**29** These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. <sup>2</sup> This was after King Jeconiah, and the queen mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the artisans, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> The letter was sent by the hand of Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah sent to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It said: <sup>4</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: <sup>5</sup> Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. <sup>6</sup> Take

wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. <sup>7</sup> But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. <sup>8</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, <sup>9</sup> for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> For thus says the LORD: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup> For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. <sup>12</sup> Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. <sup>13</sup> When you search for me, you will find

me; if you seek me with all your heart, <sup>14</sup> I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile. <sup>p</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Because you have said, “The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon,” —

<sup>16</sup> Thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who live in this city, your kinsfolk who did not go out with you into exile: <sup>17</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, I am going to let loose on them sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will make them like rotten figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten.

<sup>18</sup> I will pursue them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, and will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be an object of cursing, and horror, and hissing, and a derision among all the nations

where I have driven them, <sup>19</sup> because they did not heed my words, says the LORD, when I persistently sent to you my servants the prophets, but they would not listen, says the LORD. <sup>20</sup> But now, all you exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon, hear the word of the LORD: <sup>21</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying a lie to you in my name: I am going to deliver them into the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he shall kill them before your eyes. <sup>22</sup> And on account of them this curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon: “The LORD make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,” <sup>23</sup> because they have perpetrated outrage in Israel and have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives, and have spoken in my name lying words that I did not command them; I am the one who knows and bears witness, says the LORD.

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<sup>a</sup> See Matthew 7:7-8

### *The Letter of Shemaiah*

<sup>24</sup>To Shemaiah of Nehelam you shall say: <sup>25</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: In your own name you sent a letter to all the people who are in Jerusalem, and to the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah, and to all the priests, saying, <sup>26</sup>The LORD himself has made you priest instead of the priest Jehoiada, so that there may be officers in the house of the LORD to control any madman who plays the prophet, to put him in the stocks and the collar.

<sup>27</sup>So now why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who plays the prophet for you? <sup>28</sup>For he has actually sent to us in Babylon, saying, "It will be a long time; build houses and live in them, and plant gardens and eat what they produce."

<sup>29</sup>The priest Zephaniah read this letter in the hearing of the prophet Jeremiah.

<sup>30</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: <sup>31</sup>Send to all the exiles, saying, Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah of Nehelam: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to

you, though I did not send him, and has led you to trust in a lie, <sup>32</sup>therefore thus says the LORD: I am going to punish Shemaiah of Nehelam and his descendants; he shall not have anyone living among this people to see the good that I am going to do to my people, says the LORD, for he has spoken rebellion against the LORD.

### **1 Timothy 1:12–20 (NRSV)**

#### *Gratitude for Mercy*

*(Cp Acts 8:1–3; 9:1–19)*

<sup>12</sup>I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, <sup>13</sup>even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, <sup>14</sup>and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. <sup>16</sup>But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me,

as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. <sup>17</sup> To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>18</sup> I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, <sup>19</sup> having faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in the faith; <sup>20</sup> among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

**Psalm 86:1-7 (NRSV)**

*Supplication for Help against Enemies*

A Prayer of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Incline your ear, O LORD,  
and answer me,  
for I am poor and needy.
- <sup>2</sup> Preserve my life, for I am  
devoted to you;

save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God; <sup>3</sup> be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long.

- <sup>4</sup> Gladden the soul of your servant,  
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

- <sup>5</sup> For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.

- <sup>6</sup> Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;  
listen to my cry of supplication.

- <sup>7</sup> In the day of my trouble I call on you,  
for you will answer me.

**Proverbs 20:13–15 (NRSV)**

- <sup>13</sup> Do not love sleep, or else you will come to poverty;  
open your eyes, and you will have plenty of bread.
- <sup>14</sup> “Bad, bad,” says the buyer,  
then goes away and boasts.

<sup>15</sup> There is gold, and  
abundance of costly  
stones;  
but the lips informed by  
knowledge are a  
precious jewel.

## August 2



**Jeremiah 30:1–24** (NRSV)  
*Restoration Promised for Israel  
and Judah*

**30** The word that came to  
Jeremiah from the LORD: <sup>2</sup> Thus  
says the LORD, the God of  
Israel: Write in a book all the  
words that I have spoken to  
you. <sup>3</sup> For the days are surely  
coming, says the LORD, when I  
will restore the fortunes of my  
people, Israel and Judah, says  
the LORD, and I will bring them  
back to the land that I gave to  
their ancestors and they shall  
take possession of it.

<sup>4</sup> These are the words that  
the LORD spoke concerning  
Israel and Judah:

<sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD:

We have heard a cry of  
panic,  
of terror, and no peace.

<sup>6</sup> Ask now, and see,  
can a man bear a child?  
Why then do I see every  
man  
with his hands on his  
loins like a woman in  
labor?

Why has every face  
turned pale?

<sup>7</sup> Alas! that day is so great  
there is none like it;  
it is a time of distress for  
Jacob;  
yet he shall be rescued  
from it.

<sup>8</sup> On that day, says the  
LORD of hosts, I will break the  
yoke from off his neck, and I  
will burst his bonds, and  
strangers shall no more make  
a servant of him. <sup>9</sup> But they  
shall serve the LORD their God  
and David their king, whom I  
will raise up for them.

<sup>10</sup> But as for you, have no  
fear, my servant Jacob,  
says the LORD,  
and do not be dismayed,  
O Israel;  
for I am going to save you  
from far away,



- and your offspring from  
the land of their  
captivity.  
Jacob shall return and have  
quiet and ease,  
and no one shall make  
him afraid.
- 11 For I am with you, says the  
LORD, to save you;  
I will make an end of all  
the nations  
among which I scattered  
you,  
but of you I will not  
make an end.  
I will chastise you in just  
measure,  
and I will by no means  
leave you unpunished.
- 12 For thus says the LORD:  
Your hurt is incurable,  
your wound is grievous.
- 13 There is no one to uphold  
your cause,  
no medicine for your  
wound,  
no healing for you.
- 14 All your lovers have  
forgotten you;  
they care nothing for  
you;  
for I have dealt you the  
blow of an enemy,  
the punishment of a  
merciless foe,
- because your guilt is great,  
because your sins are so  
numerous.
- 15 Why do you cry out over  
your hurt?  
Your pain is incurable.  
Because your guilt is great,  
because your sins are so  
numerous,  
I have done these things  
to you.
- 16 Therefore all who devour  
you shall be devoured,  
and all your foes,  
everyone of them, shall  
go into captivity;  
those who plunder you  
shall be plundered,  
and all who prey on you I  
will make a prey.
- 17 For I will restore health to  
you,  
and your wounds I will  
heal,  
says the Lord,  
because they have called  
you an outcast:  
“It is Zion; no one cares  
for her!”
- 18 Thus says the LORD:  
I am going to restore the  
fortunes of the tents of  
Jacob,  
and have compassion on  
his dwellings;

the city shall be rebuilt  
upon its mound,  
and the citadel set on its  
rightful site.

19 Out of them shall come  
thanksgiving,  
and the sound of  
merrymakers.

I will make them many,  
and they shall not be  
few;

I will make them  
honored, and they shall  
not be disdained.

20 Their children shall be as  
of old,  
their congregation shall  
be established before  
me;  
and I will punish all who  
oppress them.

21 Their prince shall be one of  
their own,  
their ruler shall come  
from their midst;  
I will bring him near, and  
he shall approach me,  
for who would otherwise  
dare to approach me?  
says the Lord,

22 And you shall be my  
people,  
and I will be your God.

23 Look, the storm of the  
LORD!

Wrath has gone forth,  
a whirling tempest;  
it will burst upon the  
head of the wicked.


24 The fierce anger of the  
LORD will not turn back  
until he has executed  
and accomplished  
the intents of his mind.  
In the latter days you will  
understand this.

### **1 Timothy 2:1–7 (NRSV)**

#### *Instructions concerning Prayer*

**2** First of all, then, I urge that  
supplications, prayers,  
intercessions, and  
thanksgivings be made for  
everyone, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all  
who are in high positions, so  
that we may lead a quiet and  
peaceable life in all godliness  
and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is right and  
is acceptable in the sight of  
God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires  
everyone to be saved and to  
come to the knowledge of the  
truth. <sup>5</sup> For

there is one God;  
there is also one  
mediator between God  
and humankind,  
Christ Jesus, himself  
human,



6 who gave himself a  
ransom for all  
—this was attested at the right  
time. <sup>7</sup> For this I was appointed  
a herald and an apostle (I am  
telling the truth, I am not  
lying), a teacher of the  
Gentiles in faith and truth.

**Psalms 86:8-17 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> There is none like you  
among the gods, O  
Lord,  
nor are there any works  
like yours.  
<sup>9</sup> All the nations you have  
made shall come  
and bow down before  
you, O Lord,  
and shall glorify your  
name.  
<sup>10</sup> For you are great and do  
wondrous things;  
you alone are God.  
<sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, O  
LORD,  
that I may walk in your  
truth;  
give me an undivided  
heart to revere your  
name.  
<sup>12</sup> I give thanks to you, O Lord  
my God, with my  
whole heart,

and I will glorify your  
name forever.  
<sup>13</sup> For great is your steadfast  
love toward me;  
you have delivered my  
soul from the depths of  
Sheol.  
<sup>14</sup> O God, the insolent rise up  
against me;  
a band of ruffians seeks  
my life,  
and they do not set you  
before them.  
<sup>15</sup> But you, O Lord, are a God  
merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and  
abounding in steadfast  
love and faithfulness.  
<sup>16</sup> Turn to me and be  
gracious to me;  
give your strength to  
your servant;  
save the child of your  
serving girl.  
<sup>17</sup> Show me a sign of your  
favor,  
so that those who hate  
me may see it and be  
put to shame,  
because you, LORD, have  
helped me and  
comforted me.

**Proverbs 20:16–18 (NRSV)**

- <sup>16</sup> Take the garment of one  
who has given surety  
for a stranger;  
seize the pledge given as  
surety for foreigners.
- <sup>17</sup> Bread gained by deceit is  
sweet,  
but afterward the mouth  
will be full of gravel.
- <sup>18</sup> Plans are established by  
taking advice;  
wage war by following  
wise guidance.

**August 3**



**Jeremiah 31:1–26 (NRSV)**

*The Joyful Return of the Exiles*

**31** At that time, says the  
LORD, I will be the God of all  
the families of Israel, and they  
shall be my people.

- <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD:  
The people who survived  
the sword  
found grace in the  
wilderness;  
when Israel sought for  
rest,

- <sup>3</sup> the LORD appeared to  
him from far away.  
I have loved you with an  
everlasting love;  
therefore I have  
continued my  
faithfulness to you.
- <sup>4</sup> Again I will build you, and  
you shall be built,  
O virgin Israel!  
Again you shall take your  
tambourines,  
and go forth in the dance  
of the merrymakers.
- <sup>5</sup> Again you shall plant  
vineyards  
on the mountains of  
Samaria;  
the planters shall plant,  
and shall enjoy the fruit.
- <sup>6</sup> For there shall be a day  
when sentinels will call  
in the hill country of  
Ephraim:  
“Come, let us go up to  
Zion,  
to the LORD our God.”
- <sup>7</sup> For thus says the LORD:  
Sing aloud with gladness  
for Jacob,  
and raise shouts for the  
chief of the nations;  
proclaim, give praise, and  
say,

“Save, O LORD, your  
people,  
the remnant of Israel.”  
8 See, I am going to bring  
them from the land of  
the north,  
and gather them from  
the farthest parts of  
the earth,  
among them the blind and  
the lame,  
those with child and  
those in labor,  
together;  
a great company, they  
shall return here.  
9 With weeping they shall  
come,  
and with consolations I  
will lead them back,  
I will let them walk by  
brooks of water,  
in a straight path in  
which they shall not  
stumble;  
for I have become a father  
to Israel,  
and Ephraim is my  
firstborn.  
10 Hear the word of the LORD,  
O nations,  
and declare it in the  
coastlands far away;  
say, “He who scattered  
Israel will gather him,

and will keep him as a  
shepherd a flock.”  
11 For the LORD has ransomed  
Jacob,  
and has redeemed him  
from hands too strong  
for him.  
12 They shall come and sing  
aloud on the height of  
Zion,  
and they shall be radiant  
over the goodness of  
the LORD,  
over the grain, the wine,  
and the oil,  
and over the young of  
the flock and the herd;  
their life shall become like  
a watered garden,  
and they shall never  
languish again.  
13 Then shall the young  
women rejoice in the  
dance,  
and the young men and  
the old shall be merry.  
I will turn their mourning  
into joy,  
I will comfort them, and  
give them gladness for  
sorrow.  
14 I will give the priests their  
fill of fatness,

and my people shall be  
satisfied with my  
bounty,  
says the Lord,

15 Thus says the LORD:  
A voice is heard in Ramah,  
lamentation and bitter  
weeping.

Rachel is weeping for her  
children;  
she refuses to be  
comforted for her  
children,  
because they are no  
more.

16 Thus says the LORD:  
Keep your voice from  
weeping,  
and your eyes from  
tears;  
for there is a reward for  
your work,  
says the Lord,  
they shall come back  
from the land of the  
enemy;

17 there is hope for your  
future,  
says the Lord,  
your children shall come  
back to their own  
country.

18 Indeed I heard Ephraim  
pleading:

“You disciplined me, and I  
took the discipline;  
I was like a calf  
untrained.

Bring me back, let me  
come back,  
for you are the LORD my  
God.

19 For after I had turned away  
I repented;  
and after I was  
discovered, I struck my  
thigh;  
I was ashamed, and I was  
dismayed  
because I bore the  
disgrace of my youth.”

20 Is Ephraim my dear son?  
Is he the child I delight  
in?  
As often as I speak against  
him,  
I still remember him.  
Therefore I am deeply  
moved for him;  
I will surely have mercy  
on him,  
Says the Lord,

21 Set up road markers for  
yourself,  
make yourself  
guideposts;  
consider well the highway,

the road by which you  
went.

Return, O virgin Israel,  
return to these your  
cities.

<sup>22</sup> How long will you waver,  
O faithless daughter?  
For the LORD has created a  
new thing on the earth:  
a woman encompasses a  
man.

<sup>23</sup> Thus says the LORD of  
hosts, the God of Israel: Once  
more they shall use these  
words in the land of Judah and  
in its towns when I restore  
their fortunes:

“The LORD bless you, O  
abode of  
righteousness,  
O holy hill!”

<sup>24</sup> And Judah and all its towns  
shall live there together, and  
the farmers and those who  
wander with their flocks.

<sup>25</sup> I will satisfy the weary,  
and all who are faint I  
will replenish.

<sup>26</sup> Thereupon I awoke and  
looked, and my sleep was  
pleasant to me.

### **1 Timothy 2:8–15 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> I desire, then, that in  
every place the men should

pray, lifting up holy hands  
without anger or argument;  
<sup>9</sup> also that the women should  
dress themselves modestly  
and decently in suitable  
clothing, not with their hair  
braided, or with gold, pearls,  
or expensive clothes, <sup>10</sup> but  
with good works, as is proper  
for women who profess  
reverence for God. <sup>11</sup> Let a  
woman learn in silence with  
full submission. <sup>12</sup> I permit no  
woman to teach or to have  
authority over a man; she is to  
keep silent. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was  
formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup> and  
Adam was not deceived, but  
the woman was deceived and  
became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup> Yet  
she will be saved through  
childbearing, provided they  
continue in faith and love and  
holiness, with modesty.

### **Psalm 87:1-3 (NRSV)**

*The Joy of Living in Zion*  
Of the Korahites. A Psalm. A  
Song.

<sup>1</sup> On the holy mount stands  
the city he founded;  
<sup>2</sup> the LORD loves the gates  
of Zion  
more than all the  
dwellings of Jacob.

<sup>3</sup> Glorious things are spoken  
of you,  
O city of God. *Selah*

**Proverbs 20:19** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> A gossip reveals secrets;  
therefore do not  
associate with a  
babblor.

**August 4**



**Jeremiah 31:27–32:5** (NRSV)

*Individual Retribution*

<sup>27</sup> The days are surely  
coming, says the LORD, when I  
will sow the house of Israel  
and the house of Judah with  
the seed of humans and the  
seed of animals. <sup>28</sup> And just as I  
have watched over them to  
pluck up and break down, to  
overthrow, destroy, and bring  
evil, so I will watch over them  
to build and to plant, says the  
LORD. <sup>29</sup> In those days they  
shall no longer say:

“The parents have eaten  
sour grapes,

and the children’s teeth  
are set on edge.”

<sup>30</sup> But all shall die for their own  
sins; the teeth of everyone  
who eats sour grapes shall be  
set on edge.

*A New Covenant*

<sup>31</sup> The days are surely  
coming, says the LORD, when I  
will make a new covenant with  
the house of Israel and the  
house of Judah. <sup>32</sup> It will not be  
like the covenant that I made  
with their ancestors when I  
took them by the hand to  
bring them out of the land of  
Egypt—a covenant that they  
broke, though I was their  
husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup> But  
this is the covenant that I will  
make with the house of Israel  
after those days, says the  
LORD: I will put my law within  
them, and I will write it on  
their hearts; and I will be their  
God, and they shall be my  
people. <sup>34</sup> No longer shall they  
teach one another, or say to  
each other, “Know the LORD,”  
for they shall all know me,  
from the least of them to the  
greatest, says the LORD; for I  
will forgive their iniquity, and  
remember their sin no more.



35 Thus says the LORD,  
who gives the sun for light  
by day  
and the fixed order of  
the moon and the stars  
for light by night,  
who stirs up the sea so  
that its waves roar—  
the LORD of hosts is his  
name:

36 If this fixed order were  
ever to cease  
from my presence, says  
the LORD,  
then also the offspring of  
Israel would cease  
to be a nation before me  
forever.

37 Thus says the LORD:  
If the heavens above can  
be measured,  
and the foundations of  
the earth below can be  
explored,  
then I will reject all the  
offspring of Israel  
because of all they have  
done,  
says the Lord,

*Jerusalem to Be Enlarged*

38 The days are surely  
coming, says the LORD, when  
the city shall be rebuilt for the  
LORD from the tower of

Hananel to the Corner Gate.

39 And the measuring line shall  
go out farther, straight to the  
hill Gareb, and shall then turn  
to Goah. 40 The whole valley of  
the dead bodies and the  
ashes, and all the fields as far  
as the Wadi Kidron, to the  
corner of the Horse Gate  
toward the east, shall be  
sacred to the LORD. It shall  
never again be uprooted or  
overthrown.

*Jeremiah Buys a  
Field During the Siege*

**32** The word that came to  
Jeremiah from the LORD in the  
tenth year of King Zedekiah of  
Judah, which was the  
eighteenth year of  
Nebuchadrezzar. 2 At that time  
the army of the king of  
Babylon was besieging  
Jerusalem, and the prophet  
Jeremiah was confined in the  
court of the guard that was in  
the palace of the king of  
Judah, 3 where King Zedekiah  
of Judah had confined him.  
Zedekiah had said, “Why do  
you prophesy and say: Thus  
says the LORD: I am going to  
give this city into the hand of  
the king of Babylon, and he

shall take it; <sup>4</sup> King Zedekiah of Judah shall not escape out of the hands of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye; <sup>5</sup> and he shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall remain until I attend to him, says the LORD; though you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed?”

### **1 Timothy 3:1–5 (NRSV)**

#### *Qualifications of Bishops*

**3** The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, <sup>3</sup> not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way— <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church?

### **Psalms 87:4–7 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Among those who know me I mention Rahab and Babylon; Philistia too, and Tyre, with Ethiopia—  
“This one was born there,” they say.  
<sup>5</sup> And of Zion it shall be said, “This one and that one were born in it”; for the Most High himself will establish it.  
<sup>6</sup> The LORD records, as he registers the peoples, “This one was born there.” *Selah*  
<sup>7</sup> Singers and dancers alike say,  
“All my springs are in you.”

### **Proverbs 20:20–21 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> If you curse father or mother,  
your lamp will go out in utter darkness.  
<sup>21</sup> An estate quickly acquired in the beginning will not be blessed in the end.

## August 5



### Jeremiah 32:6–44 (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came to me:  
<sup>7</sup> Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is going to come to you and say, “Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.” <sup>8</sup> Then my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the LORD, and said to me, “Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.” Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> And I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. <sup>10</sup> I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. <sup>11</sup> Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy; <sup>12</sup> and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch son of

Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard. <sup>13</sup> In their presence I charged Baruch, saying, <sup>14</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. <sup>15</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.

#### *Jeremiah Prays for Understanding*

<sup>16</sup> After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying: <sup>17</sup> Ah Lord GOD! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you. <sup>18</sup> You show steadfast love to the thousandth generation, but

repay the guilt of parents into the laps of their children after them, O great and mighty God whose name is the LORD of hosts,<sup>19</sup> great in counsel and mighty in deed; whose eyes are open to all the ways of mortals, rewarding all according to their ways and according to the fruit of their doings.<sup>20</sup> You showed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to this day in Israel and among all humankind, and have made yourself a name that continues to this very day.<sup>21</sup> You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with great terror;<sup>22</sup> and you gave them this land, which you swore to their ancestors to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey;<sup>23</sup> and they entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or follow your law; of all you commanded them to do, they did nothing. Therefore you have made all these disasters come upon them.<sup>24</sup> See, the siege ramps have been cast up against the city to take it, and

the city, faced with sword, famine, and pestilence, has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it. What you spoke has happened, as you yourself can see.<sup>25</sup> Yet you, O Lord GOD, have said to me, “Buy the field for money and get witnesses”—though the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans.

*God's Assurance of the  
People's Return*

<sup>26</sup>The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: <sup>27</sup>See, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too hard for me? <sup>28</sup>Therefore, thus says the LORD: I am going to give this city into the hands of the Chaldeans and into the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he shall take it. <sup>29</sup>The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city shall come, set it on fire, and burn it, with the houses on whose roofs offerings have been made to Baal and libations have been poured out to other gods, to provoke me to anger. <sup>30</sup>For the people of Israel and the people of Judah have done

nothing but evil in my sight from their youth; the people of Israel have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their hands, says the LORD. <sup>31</sup> This city has aroused my anger and wrath, from the day it was built until this day, so that I will remove it from my sight <sup>32</sup> because of all the evil of the people of Israel and the people of Judah that they did to provoke me to anger—they, their kings and their officials, their priests and their prophets, the citizens of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>33</sup> They have turned their backs to me, not their faces; though I have taught them persistently, they would not listen and accept correction. <sup>34</sup> They set up their abominations in the house that bears my name, and defiled it. <sup>35</sup> They built the high places of Baal in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter my mind that they should do this abomination, causing Judah to sin.

<sup>36</sup> Now therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, “It is being given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence’’: <sup>37</sup> See, I am going to gather them from all the lands to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation; I will bring them back to this place, and I will settle them in safety. <sup>38</sup> They shall be my people, and I will be their God. <sup>39</sup> I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for all time, for their own good and the good of their children after them. <sup>40</sup> I will make an everlasting covenant with them, never to draw back from doing good to them; and I will put the fear of me in their hearts, so that they may not turn from me. <sup>41</sup> I will rejoice in doing good to them, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul. <sup>42</sup> For thus says the LORD: Just as I have brought all this great disaster upon this people, so I will bring upon

them all the good fortune that I now promise them. <sup>43</sup> Fields shall be bought in this land of which you are saying, It is a desolation, without human beings or animals; it has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans. <sup>44</sup> Fields shall be bought for money, and deeds shall be signed and sealed and witnessed, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, of the hill country, of the Shephelah, and of the Negeb; for I will restore their fortunes, says the LORD.

### **1 Timothy 3:6–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil.

#### *Qualifications of Deacons*

<sup>8</sup> Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money; <sup>9</sup> they must hold fast to the mystery

of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let them first be tested; then, if they prove themselves blameless, let them serve as deacons. <sup>11</sup> Women likewise must be serious, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let deacons be married only once, and let them manage their children and their households well; <sup>13</sup> for those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

#### *The Mystery of Our Religion*

<sup>14</sup> I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, <sup>15</sup> if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth. <sup>16</sup> Without any doubt, the mystery of our religion is great:

He was revealed in flesh,  
vindicated in spirit,  
seen by angels,  
proclaimed among  
Gentiles,

believed in throughout  
the world,  
taken up in glory.

**Psalms 88:1-12 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Help in  
Despondency*

A Song. A Psalm of the  
Korahites. To the leader:  
according to Mahalath

Leannoth. A Maskil of Heman  
the Ezrahite.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, God of my  
salvation,  
when, at night, I cry out  
in your presence,  
<sup>2</sup> let my prayer come before  
you;  
incline your ear to my  
cry.  
<sup>3</sup> For my soul is full of  
troubles,  
and my life draws near to  
Sheol.  
<sup>4</sup> I am counted among those  
who go down to the  
Pit;  
I am like those who have  
no help,  
<sup>5</sup> like those forsaken among  
the dead,  
like the slain that lie in  
the grave,  
like those whom you  
remember no more,

for they are cut off from  
your hand.

<sup>6</sup> You have put me in the  
depths of the Pit,  
in the regions dark and  
deep.  
<sup>7</sup> Your wrath lies heavy upon  
me,  
and you overwhelm me  
with all your waves.  
*Selah*  
<sup>8</sup> You have caused my  
companions to shun  
me;  
you have made me a  
thing of horror to  
them.  
I am shut in so that I  
cannot escape;  
<sup>9</sup> my eye grows dim  
through sorrow.  
Every day I call on you, O  
LORD;  
I spread out my hands to  
you.  
<sup>10</sup> Do you work wonders for  
the dead?  
Do the shades rise up to  
praise you? *Selah*  
<sup>11</sup> Is your steadfast love  
declared in the grave,  
or your faithfulness in  
Abaddon?

**Proverbs 20:22–23 (NRSV)**

- <sup>22</sup> Do not say, “I will repay evil”;  
wait for the LORD, and he  
will help you.
- <sup>23</sup> Differing weights are an  
abomination to the  
LORD,  
and false scales are not  
good.

**August 6**



**Jeremiah 33:1–22 (NRSV)**

*Healing after Punishment*

**33** The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still confined in the court of the guard: <sup>2</sup>Thus says the LORD who made the earth, the LORD who formed it to establish it—the LORD is his name: <sup>3</sup>Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. <sup>4</sup>For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city and the houses of the

kings of Judah that were torn down to make a defense against the siege ramps and before the sword: <sup>5</sup>The Chaldeans are coming in to fight and to fill them with the dead bodies of those whom I shall strike down in my anger and my wrath, for I have hidden my face from this city because of all their wickedness. <sup>6</sup>I am going to bring it recovery and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them abundance of prosperity and security. <sup>7</sup>I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and rebuild them as they were at first. <sup>8</sup>I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me. <sup>9</sup>And this city shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them; they shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the prosperity I provide for it. <sup>10</sup>Thus says the LORD: In this place of which you say, “It is a waste without human beings or animals,” in the



towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without inhabitants, human or animal, there shall once more be heard <sup>11</sup> the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings to the house of the LORD:

“Give thanks to the LORD of hosts,  
for the LORD is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever!”

For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: In this place that is waste, without human beings or animals, and in all its towns there shall again be pasture for shepherds resting their flocks. <sup>13</sup> In the towns of the hill country, of the Shephelah, and of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin, the places around Jerusalem, and in the towns of Judah, flocks shall again pass under the hands of the one who counts them, says the LORD.

*The Righteous Branch and the Covenant with David*

<sup>14</sup> The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>15</sup> In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.”

<sup>17</sup> For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, <sup>18</sup> and the levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to make grain offerings, and to make sacrifices for all time.

<sup>19</sup> The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: <sup>20</sup> Thus says the LORD: If any of you could break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night would not come at their appointed time, <sup>21</sup> only then could my covenant with my

servant David be broken, so that he would not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with my ministers the Levites. <sup>22</sup> Just as the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will increase the offspring of my servant David, and the Levites who minister to me.

**1 Timothy 4:1–6 (NRSV)**  
*False Asceticism*

**4** Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will renounce the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, <sup>2</sup> through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared with a hot iron. <sup>3</sup> They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. <sup>4</sup> For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving; <sup>5</sup> for it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer.

*A Good Minister of Jesus Christ*

<sup>6</sup> If you put these instructions before the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound teaching that you have followed.

**Psalms 88:13–18 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> Are your wonders known in the darkness,  
or your saving help in the land of forgetfulness?  
<sup>13</sup> But I, O LORD, cry out to you;  
in the morning my prayer comes before you.  
<sup>14</sup> O LORD, why do you cast me off?  
Why do you hide your face from me?  
<sup>15</sup> Wretched and close to death from my youth up,  
I suffer your terrors; I am desperate.  
<sup>16</sup> Your wrath has swept over me;  
your dread assaults destroy me.  
<sup>17</sup> They surround me like a flood all day long;

from all sides they close  
in on me.

<sup>18</sup> You have caused friend  
and neighbor to shun  
me;  
my companions are in  
darkness.

**Proverbs 20:24–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> All our steps are ordered  
by the LORD;  
how then can we  
understand our own  
ways?

<sup>25</sup> It is a snare for one to say  
rashly, “It is holy,”  
and begin to reflect only  
after making a vow.

**August 7**



**Jeremiah 33:23–34:22 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup>The word of the LORD  
came to Jeremiah: <sup>24</sup>Have you  
not observed how these  
people say, “The two families  
that the LORD chose have been  
rejected by him,” and how  
they hold my people in such  
contempt that they no longer

regard them as a nation?

<sup>25</sup> Thus says the LORD: Only if I  
had not established my  
covenant with day and night  
and the ordinances of heaven  
and earth, <sup>26</sup>would I reject the  
offspring of Jacob and of my  
servant David and not choose  
any of his descendants as  
rulers over the offspring of  
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For  
I will restore their fortunes,  
and will have mercy upon  
them.

*Death in Captivity  
Predicted for Zedekiah*

**34** The word that came to  
Jeremiah from the LORD, when  
King Nebuchadrezzar of  
Babylon and all his army and  
all the kingdoms of the earth  
and all the peoples under his  
dominion were fighting  
against Jerusalem and all its  
cities: <sup>2</sup>Thus says the LORD, the  
God of Israel: Go and speak to  
King Zedekiah of Judah and  
say to him: Thus says the LORD:  
I am going to give this city into  
the hand of the king of  
Babylon, and he shall burn it  
with fire. <sup>3</sup>And you yourself  
shall not escape from his  
hand, but shall surely be

captured and handed over to him; you shall see the king of Babylon eye to eye and speak with him face to face; and you shall go to Babylon. <sup>4</sup> Yet hear the word of the LORD, O King Zedekiah of Judah! Thus says the LORD concerning you: You shall not die by the sword; <sup>5</sup> you shall die in peace. And as spices were burned for your ancestors, the earlier kings who preceded you, so they shall burn spices for you and lament for you, saying, "Alas, lord!" For I have spoken the word, says the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah, in Jerusalem, <sup>7</sup> when the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left, Lachish and Azekah; for these were the only fortified cities of Judah that remained.

### *Treacherous Treatment of Slaves*

<sup>8</sup> The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in

Jerusalem to make a proclamation of liberty to them— <sup>9</sup> that all should set free their Hebrew slaves, male and female, so that no one should hold another Judean in slavery. <sup>10</sup> And they obeyed, all the officials and all the people who had entered into the covenant that all would set free their slaves, male or female, so that they would not be enslaved again; they obeyed and set them free. <sup>11</sup> But afterward they turned around and took back the male and female slaves they had set free, and brought them again into subjection as slaves. <sup>12</sup> The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD: <sup>13</sup> Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I myself made a covenant with your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, saying, <sup>14</sup> "Every seventh year each of you must set free any Hebrews who have been sold to you and have served you six years; you must set them free from your service." But your ancestors did not listen to me or incline their ears to me.

<sup>15</sup> You yourselves recently repented and did what was right in my sight by proclaiming liberty to one another, and you made a covenant before me in the house that is called by my name; <sup>16</sup> but then you turned around and profaned my name when each of you took back your male and female slaves, whom you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them again into subjection to be your slaves. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, thus says the LORD: You have not obeyed me by granting a release to your neighbors and friends; I am going to grant a release to you, says the LORD—a release to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine. I will make you a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. <sup>18</sup> And those who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant that they made before me, I will make like the calf when they cut it in two and passed between its parts: <sup>19</sup> the officials of Judah, the officials of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who

passed between the parts of the calf <sup>20</sup> shall be handed over to their enemies and to those who seek their lives. Their corpses shall become food for the birds of the air and the wild animals of the earth.

<sup>21</sup> And as for King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials, I will hand them over to their enemies and to those who seek their lives, to the army of the king of Babylon, which has withdrawn from you. <sup>22</sup> I am going to command, says the LORD, and will bring them back to this city; and they will fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire. The towns of Judah I will make a desolation without inhabitant.

### **1 Timothy 4:7–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Have nothing to do with profane myths and old wives' tales. Train yourself in godliness, <sup>8</sup> **for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.** <sup>9</sup> The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance.

<sup>10</sup> For to this end we toil and struggle, because we have our

hope set on the living God,  
who is the Savior of all people,  
especially of those who  
believe.

<sup>1</sup> These are the things you  
must insist on and teach. <sup>12</sup> Let  
no one despise your youth,  
but set the believers an  
example in speech and  
conduct, in love, in faith, in  
purity. <sup>13</sup> Until I arrive, give  
attention to the public reading  
of scripture, to exhorting, to  
teaching. <sup>14</sup> Do not neglect the  
gift that is in you, which was  
given to you through prophecy  
with the laying on of hands by  
the council of elders. <sup>15</sup> Put  
these things into practice,  
devote yourself to them, so  
that all may see your progress.  
<sup>16</sup> Pay close attention to  
yourself and to your teaching;  
continue in these things, for in  
doing this you will save both  
yourself and your hearers.

**Psalms 89:1-6 (NRSV)**

*God's Covenant with David*

A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

<sup>1</sup> I will sing of your steadfast  
love, O LORD, forever;  
with my mouth I will  
proclaim your

faithfulness to all  
generations.

- <sup>2</sup> I declare that your  
steadfast love is  
established forever;  
your faithfulness is as  
firm as the heavens.
- <sup>3</sup> You said, "I have made a  
covenant with my  
chosen one,  
I have sworn to my  
servant David:
- <sup>4</sup> 'I will establish your  
descendants forever,  
and build your throne for  
all generations.' "
- Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> Let the heavens praise  
your wonders, O LORD,  
your faithfulness in the  
assembly of the holy  
ones.
- <sup>6</sup> For who in the skies can be  
compared to the LORD?  
Who among the  
heavenly beings is like  
the LORD,

**Proverbs 20:26-27 (NRSV)**

- <sup>26</sup> A wise king winnows the  
wicked,  
and drives the wheel  
over them.
- <sup>27</sup> The human spirit is the  
lamp of the LORD,

searching every inmost part.

## August 8



### Jeremiah 35:1–19 (NRSV)

#### *The Rechabites Commended*

**35** The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah: <sup>2</sup> Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them, and bring them to the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers; then offer them wine to drink. <sup>3</sup> So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah, and his brothers, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites. <sup>4</sup> I brought them to the house of the LORD into the chamber of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was near the chamber of the officials, above the chamber of Maaseiah son of Shallum, keeper of the threshold. <sup>5</sup> Then I set before the Rechabites

pitchers full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, “Have some wine.” <sup>6</sup> But they answered, “We will drink no wine, for our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us, ‘You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your children; <sup>7</sup> nor shall you ever build a house, or sow seed; nor shall you plant a vineyard, or even own one; but you shall live in tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you reside.’ <sup>8</sup> We have obeyed the charge of our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in all that he commanded us, to drink no wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, <sup>9</sup> and not to build houses to live in. We have no vineyard or field or seed; <sup>10</sup> but we have lived in tents, and have obeyed and done all that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us. <sup>11</sup> But when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon came up against the land, we said, ‘Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Arameans.’”

That is why we are living in Jerusalem.”

<sup>12</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: <sup>13</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Go and say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Can you not learn a lesson and obey my words? says the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> The command has been carried out that Jonadab son of Rechab gave to his descendants to drink no wine; and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their ancestor’s command. But I myself have spoken to you persistently, and you have not obeyed me. <sup>15</sup> I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, “Turn now everyone of you from your evil way, and amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall live in the land that I gave to you and your ancestors.” But you did not incline your ear or obey me. <sup>16</sup> The descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have carried out the command that their ancestor gave them, but this people has

not obeyed me. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem every disaster that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken to them and they have not listened, I have called to them and they have not answered.

<sup>18</sup> But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said: Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the command of your ancestor Jonadab, and kept all his precepts, and done all that he commanded you, <sup>19</sup> therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab son of Rechab shall not lack a descendant to stand before me for all time.

## **1 Timothy 5:1–16 (NRSV)**

### *Duties toward Believers*

**5** Do not speak harshly to an older man, but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers, <sup>2</sup> to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity.



<sup>3</sup> Honor widows who are really widows. <sup>4</sup> If a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some repayment to their parents; for this is pleasing in God's sight. <sup>5</sup> The real widow, left alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day; <sup>6</sup> but the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. <sup>7</sup> Give these commands as well, so that they may be above reproach. <sup>8</sup> And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

<sup>9</sup> Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once; <sup>10</sup> she must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way. <sup>11</sup> But refuse to put younger widows on the list; for when their sensual

desires alienate them from Christ, they want to marry, <sup>12</sup> and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge.

<sup>13</sup> Besides that, they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house; and they are not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say. <sup>14</sup> So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, and manage their households, so as to give the adversary no occasion to revile us. <sup>15</sup> For some have already turned away to follow Satan. <sup>16</sup> If any believing woman has relatives who are really widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so that it can assist those who are real widows.

**Psalm 89:7-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> a God feared in the council  
of the holy ones,  
great and awesome  
above all that are  
around him?

<sup>8</sup> O LORD God of hosts,  
who is as mighty as you,  
O LORD?



Your faithfulness  
surrounds you.

<sup>9</sup> You rule the raging of the sea;  
when its waves rise, you still them.

<sup>10</sup> You crushed Rahab like a carcass;  
you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.

<sup>11</sup> The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours;  
the world and all that is in it—you have founded them.

<sup>12</sup> The north and the south—you created them;  
Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your name.

<sup>13</sup> You have a mighty arm;  
strong is your hand, high your right hand.

**Proverbs 20:28–30** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Loyalty and faithfulness preserve the king,  
and his throne is upheld by righteousness.

<sup>29</sup> The glory of youths is their strength,  
but the beauty of the aged is their gray hair.

<sup>30</sup> Blows that wound cleanse away evil;  
beatings make clean the innermost parts.

## August 9



**Jeremiah 36:1–32** (NRSV)  
*The Scroll Read in the Temple*

**36** In the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD: <sup>2</sup>Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today. <sup>3</sup>It may be that when the house of Judah hears of all the disasters that I intend to do to them, all of them may turn from their evil ways, so that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

<sup>4</sup>Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at Jeremiah's dictation all the

words of the LORD that he had spoken to him.<sup>5</sup> And Jeremiah ordered Baruch, saying, "I am prevented from entering the house of the LORD;<sup>6</sup> so you go yourself, and on a fast day in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house you shall read the words of the LORD from the scroll that you have written at my dictation. You shall read them also in the hearing of all the people of Judah who come up from their towns.<sup>7</sup> It may be that their plea will come before the LORD, and that all of them will turn from their evil ways, for great is the anger and wrath that the LORD has pronounced against this people."<sup>8</sup> And Baruch son of Neriah did all that the prophet Jeremiah ordered him about reading from the scroll the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

<sup>9</sup> In the fifth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the towns of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD.<sup>10</sup> Then, in the hearing of all the people,

Baruch read the words of Jeremiah from the scroll, in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah son of Shaphan the secretary, which was in the upper court, at the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house.

*The Scroll Read in the Palace*

<sup>11</sup> When Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan heard all the words of the LORD from the scroll,<sup>12</sup> he went down to the king's house, into the secretary's chamber; and all the officials were sitting there: Elishama the secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the officials.<sup>13</sup> And Micaiah told them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the scroll in the hearing of the people.<sup>14</sup> Then all the officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah son of Shelemiah son of Cushi to say to Baruch, "Bring the scroll that you read in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them.

<sup>15</sup> And they said to him, "Sit down and read it to us." So Baruch read it to them.

<sup>16</sup> When they heard all the words, they turned to one another in alarm, and said to Baruch, "We certainly must report all these words to the king." <sup>17</sup> Then they questioned Baruch, "Tell us now, how did you write all these words? Was it at his dictation?"

<sup>18</sup> Baruch answered them, "He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them with ink on the scroll." <sup>19</sup> Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah, and let no one know where you are."

#### *Jehoiakim Burns the Scroll*

<sup>20</sup> Leaving the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the secretary, they went to the court of the king; and they reported all the words to the king. <sup>21</sup> Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he took it from the chamber of Elishama the secretary; and Jehudi read it to the king and all the officials who stood beside the king. <sup>22</sup> Now the king was sitting in his winter apartment (it was the ninth

month), and there was a fire burning in the brazier before him. <sup>23</sup> As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut them off with a penknife and throw them into the fire in the brazier, until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier. <sup>24</sup> Yet neither the king, nor any of his servants who heard all these words, was alarmed, nor did they tear their garments.

<sup>25</sup> Even when Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah urged the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them.

<sup>26</sup> And the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's son and Seraiah son of Azriel and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest the secretary Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. But the LORD hid them.

#### *Jeremiah Dictates Another*

<sup>27</sup> Now, after the king had burned the scroll with the words that Baruch wrote at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: <sup>28</sup> Take another scroll and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll, which King Jehoiakim of

Judah has burned. <sup>29</sup> And concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah you shall say: Thus says the LORD, You have dared to burn this scroll, saying, Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will cut off from it human beings and animals?

<sup>30</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah: He shall have no one to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night. <sup>31</sup> And I will punish him and his offspring and his servants for their iniquity; I will bring on them, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the people of Judah, all the disasters with which I have threatened them—but they would not listen.

<sup>32</sup> Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the secretary Baruch son of Neriah, who wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned in the fire; and many

similar words were added to them.

### **1 Timothy 5:17–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; <sup>18</sup> for the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and, "**The laborer deserves to be paid.**" <sup>19</sup> Never accept any accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup> As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear.

<sup>21</sup> In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I warn you to keep these instructions without prejudice, doing nothing on the basis of partiality. <sup>22</sup> Do not ordain anyone hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

<sup>23</sup> No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

<sup>24</sup> The sins of some people are conspicuous and precede

them to judgment, while the sins of others follow them there. <sup>25</sup> So also good works are conspicuous; and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden.

**Psalms 89:14-18 (NRSV)**

- <sup>14</sup> Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;  
steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.
- <sup>15</sup> Happy are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O LORD, in the light of your countenance;
- <sup>16</sup> they exult in your name all day long,  
and extol your righteousness.
- <sup>17</sup> For you are the glory of their strength;  
by your favor our horn is exalted.
- <sup>18</sup> For our shield belongs to the LORD,  
our king to the Holy One of Israel.

**Proverbs 21:1-2 (NRSV)**

- <sup>1</sup> The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD;  
he turns it wherever he will.
- <sup>2</sup> All deeds are right in the sight of the doer,  
but the LORD weighs the heart.

**August 10**



**Jeremiah 37:1-21 (NRSV)**

*Zedekiah's Vain Hope*  
(2 Kings 24:17; 2 Chr 36:10)

**37** Zedekiah son of Josiah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon made king in the land of Judah, succeeded Coniah son of Jehoiakim. <sup>2</sup> But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the LORD that he spoke through the prophet Jeremiah.

<sup>3</sup> King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to the prophet

Jeremiah saying, "Please pray for us to the LORD our God."

<sup>4</sup> Now Jeremiah was still going in and out among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison. <sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the army of Pharaoh had come out of Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news of them, they withdrew from Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>7</sup> Thus says the LORD, God of Israel: This is what the two of you shall say to the king of Judah, who sent you to me to inquire of me; Pharaoh's army, which set out to help you, is going to return to its own land, to Egypt. <sup>8</sup> And the Chaldeans shall return and fight against this city; they shall take it and burn it with fire. <sup>9</sup> Thus says the LORD: Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely go away from us," for they will not go away. <sup>10</sup> Even if you defeated the whole army of Chaldeans who are fighting against you, and there remained of them only wounded men in their tents,

they would rise up and burn this city with fire.

### *Jeremiah Is Imprisoned*

<sup>11</sup> Now when the Chaldean army had withdrawn from Jerusalem at the approach of Pharaoh's army, <sup>12</sup> Jeremiah set out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to receive his share of property among the people there. <sup>13</sup> When he reached the Benjamin Gate, a sentinel there named Irijah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah arrested the prophet Jeremiah saying, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." <sup>14</sup> And Jeremiah said, "That is a lie; I am not deserting to the Chaldeans." But Irijah would not listen to him, and arrested Jeremiah and brought him to the officials. <sup>15</sup> The officials were enraged at Jeremiah, and they beat him and imprisoned him in the house of the secretary Jonathan, for it had been made a prison. <sup>16</sup> Thus Jeremiah was put in the cistern house, in the cells, and remained there many days.

<sup>17</sup> Then King Zedekiah sent for him, and received him. The

king questioned him secretly in his house, and said, "Is there any word from the LORD?" Jeremiah said, "There is!" Then he said, "You shall be handed over to the king of Babylon." <sup>18</sup> Jeremiah also said to King Zedekiah, "What wrong have I done to you or your servants or this people, that you have put me in prison? <sup>19</sup> Where are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you and against this land'? <sup>20</sup> Now please hear me, my lord king: be good enough to listen to my plea, and do not send me back to the house of the secretary Jonathan to die there." <sup>21</sup> So King Zedekiah gave orders, and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guard; and a loaf of bread was given him daily from the bakers' street, until all the bread of the city was gone. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

### **1 Timothy 6:1–11 (NRSV)**

Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all

honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. <sup>2</sup> Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church; rather they must serve them all the more, since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved.

### *False Teaching and True Riches*

Teach and urge these duties. <sup>3</sup> Whoever teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that is in accordance with godliness, <sup>4</sup> is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words. From these come envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, <sup>5</sup> and wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. <sup>6</sup> **Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment;** <sup>7</sup> for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take



nothing out of it; <sup>8</sup> but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. <sup>9</sup> But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup> For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

*The Good Fight of Faith*

<sup>11</sup> But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.

**Psalms 89:19-37 (NRSV)**

<sup>19</sup> Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:  
“I have set the crown on one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people.  
<sup>20</sup> I have found my servant David; with my holy oil I have anointed him;

<sup>21</sup> my hand shall always remain with him; my arm also shall strengthen him.  
<sup>22</sup> The enemy shall not outwit him, the wicked shall not humble him.  
<sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.  
<sup>24</sup> My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him; and in my name his horn shall be exalted.  
<sup>25</sup> I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.  
<sup>26</sup> He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!’  
<sup>27</sup> I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.  
<sup>28</sup> Forever I will keep my steadfast love for him, and my covenant with him will stand firm.  
<sup>29</sup> I will establish his line forever,

and his throne as long as  
the heavens endure.  
30 If his children forsake my  
law  
and do not walk  
according to my  
ordinances,  
31 if they violate my statutes  
and do not keep my  
commandments,  
32 then I will punish their  
transgression with the  
rod  
and their iniquity with  
scourges;  
33 but I will not remove from  
him my steadfast love,  
or be false to my  
faithfulness.  
34 I will not violate my  
covenant,  
or alter the word that  
went forth from my  
lips.  
35 Once and for all I have  
sworn by my holiness;  
I will not lie to David.  
36 His line shall continue  
forever,  
and his throne endure  
before me like the sun.  
37 It shall be established  
forever like the moon,  
an enduring witness in  
the skies.” *Selah*

### **Proverbs 21:3 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> To do righteousness and  
justice  
is more acceptable to the  
LORD than sacrifice.

## **August 11**



### **Jeremiah 38:1–28 (NRSV)**

*Jeremiah in the Cistern*

**38** Now Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people, <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD, Those who stay in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but those who go out to the Chaldeans shall live; they shall have their lives as a prize of war, and live. <sup>3</sup> Thus says the LORD, This city shall surely be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon and be taken. <sup>4</sup> Then the officials said to the king, “This man ought to be put to death, because he

is discouraging the soldiers who are left in this city, and all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm.”<sup>5</sup> King Zedekiah said, “Here he is; he is in your hands; for the king is powerless against you.”<sup>6</sup> So they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king’s son, which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. Now there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

*Jeremiah Is Rescued  
by Ebed-melech*

<sup>7</sup> Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch in the king’s house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. The king happened to be sitting at the Benjamin Gate,<sup>8</sup> So Ebed-melech left the king’s house and spoke to the king,<sup>9</sup> “My lord king, these men have acted wickedly in all they did to the prophet Jeremiah by throwing him into the cistern to die there of hunger, for there is no bread

left in the city.”<sup>10</sup> Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, “Take three men with you from here, and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the cistern before he dies.”<sup>11</sup> So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king, to a wardrobe of the storehouse, and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes.<sup>12</sup> Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, “Just put the rags and clothes between your armpits and the ropes.” Jeremiah did so.<sup>13</sup> Then they drew Jeremiah up by the ropes and pulled him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

*Zedekiah Consults  
Jeremiah Again*

<sup>14</sup> King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah and received him at the third entrance of the temple of the LORD. The king said to Jeremiah, “I have something to ask you; do not hide anything from me.”

<sup>15</sup> Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “If I tell you, you will put me to death, will you not? And if I give you advice, you will not listen to me.” <sup>16</sup> So King Zedekiah swore an oath in secret to Jeremiah, “As the LORD lives, who gave us our lives, I will not put you to death or hand you over to these men who seek your life.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, If you will only surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. <sup>18</sup> But if you do not surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city shall be handed over to the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand.” <sup>19</sup> King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “I am afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, for I might be handed over to them and they would abuse me.” <sup>20</sup> Jeremiah said, “That will not happen. Just obey the

voice of the LORD in what I say to you, and it shall go well with you, and your life shall be spared. <sup>21</sup> But if you are determined not to surrender, this is what the LORD has shown me— <sup>22</sup> a vision of all the women remaining in the house of the king of Judah being led out to the officials of the king of Babylon and saying,

‘Your trusted friends have seduced you and have overcome you; Now that your feet are stuck in the mud, they desert you.’

<sup>23</sup> All your wives and your children shall be led out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand, but shall be seized by the king of Babylon; and this city shall be burned with fire.”


<sup>24</sup> Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “Do not let anyone else know of this conversation, or you will die. <sup>25</sup> If the officials should hear that I have spoken with you, and they should come and say to you, ‘Just tell us what you said to the king; do not conceal it from us, or we will put you to death. What

did the king say to you?’  
<sup>26</sup> then you shall say to them, ‘I was presenting my plea to the king not to send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.’ ” <sup>27</sup> All the officials did come to Jeremiah and questioned him; and he answered them in the very words the king had commanded. So they stopped questioning him, for the conversation had not been overheard. <sup>28</sup> And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

### **1 Timothy 6:12–21 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

<sup>13</sup> In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you <sup>14</sup> to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> **which he will**



**bring about at the right time—  
he who is the blessed and only  
Sovereign, the King of kings  
and Lord of lords. <sup>16</sup> It is he  
alone who has immortality  
and dwells in unapproachable  
light, whom no one has ever  
seen or can see; to him be  
honor and eternal dominion.  
Amen.**

<sup>17</sup> As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, <sup>19</sup> thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

### *Personal Instructions and Benediction*

<sup>20</sup> Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge; <sup>21</sup> by professing it some have

missed the mark as regards  
the faith.

Grace be with you.

**Psalms 89:38-45 (NRSV)**

<sup>38</sup> But now you have spurned  
and rejected him;  
you are full of wrath  
against your anointed.  
<sup>39</sup> You have renounced the  
covenant with your  
servant;  
you have defiled his  
crown in the dust.  
<sup>40</sup> You have broken through  
all his walls;  
you have laid his  
strongholds in ruins.  
<sup>41</sup> All who pass by plunder  
him;  
he has become the scorn  
of his neighbors.  
<sup>42</sup> You have exalted the right  
hand of his foes;  
you have made all his  
enemies rejoice.  
<sup>43</sup> Moreover, you have  
turned back the edge  
of his sword,  
and you have not  
supported him in  
battle.  
<sup>44</sup> You have removed the  
scepter from his hand,

and hurled his throne to  
the ground.

<sup>45</sup> You have cut short the  
days of his youth;  
you have covered him  
with shame. *Selah*

**Proverbs 21:4 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Haughty eyes and a proud  
heart—  
the lamp of the wicked—are  
sin.

**August 12**



**Jeremiah 39:1–40:6 (NRSV)**

*The Fall of Jerusalem*  
(*2 Kings 25:1–12; Jer 52:4–16*)

**39** In the ninth year of King  
Zedekiah of Judah, in the tenth  
month, King Nebuchadnezzar  
of Babylon and all his army  
came against Jerusalem and  
besieged it; <sup>2</sup> in the eleventh  
year of Zedekiah, in the fourth  
month, on the ninth day of the  
month, a breach was made in  
the city. <sup>3</sup> When Jerusalem was  
taken, all the officials of the  
king of Babylon came and sat

in the middle gate: Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim the Rabsaris, Nergal-sharezer the Rabmag, with all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon. <sup>4</sup> When King Zedekiah of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled, going out of the city at night by way of the king's garden through the gate between the two walls; and they went toward the Arabah.

<sup>5</sup> But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and when they had taken him, they brought him up to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence on him. <sup>6</sup> The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes; also the king of Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah. <sup>7</sup> He put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters to take him to Babylon. <sup>8</sup> The Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> Then Nebuzaradan the captain of

the guard exiled to Babylon the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to him, and the people who remained. <sup>10</sup> Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah some of the poor people who owned nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

*Jeremiah, Set Free,  
Remembers Ebed-melech*

<sup>11</sup> King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon gave command concerning Jeremiah through Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, saying, <sup>12</sup> "Take him, look after him well and do him no harm, but deal with him as he may ask you." <sup>13</sup> So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, Nebushazban the Rabsaris, Nergal-sharezer the Rabmag, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon sent <sup>14</sup> and took Jeremiah from the court of the guard. They entrusted him to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan to be brought home. So he stayed with his own people.

<sup>15</sup> The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah while he

was confined in the court of the guard: <sup>16</sup>Go and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian: Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to fulfill my words against this city for evil and not for good, and they shall be accomplished in your presence on that day. <sup>17</sup>But I will save you on that day, says the LORD, and you shall not be handed over to those whom you dread. <sup>18</sup>For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have trusted in me, says the LORD.

*Jeremiah with  
Gedaliah the Governor  
(2 Kings 25:22–26)*

**40** The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he took him bound in fetters along with all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were being exiled to Babylon. <sup>2</sup>The captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him, “The LORD your God threatened this place with

this disaster; <sup>3</sup>and now the LORD has brought it about, and has done as he said, because all of you sinned against the LORD and did not obey his voice. Therefore this thing has come upon you. <sup>4</sup>Now look, I have just released you today from the fetters on your hands. If you wish to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will take good care of you; but if you do not wish to come with me to Babylon, you need not come. See, the whole land is before you; go wherever you think it good and right to go. <sup>5</sup>If you remain, then return to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed governor of the towns of Judah, and stay with him among the people; or go wherever you think it right to go.” So the captain of the guard gave him an allowance of food and a present, and let him go. <sup>6</sup>Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah, and stayed with him among the people who were left in the land.



## 2 Timothy 1:1–8 (NRSV)

### *Salutation*

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

<sup>2</sup> To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

### *Thanksgiving and Encouragement*

<sup>3</sup> I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. <sup>4</sup> Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. <sup>5</sup> I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. <sup>6</sup> For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; <sup>7</sup> for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

<sup>8</sup> Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God,

## Psalm 89:46–52 (NRSV)

<sup>46</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?  
How long will your wrath burn like fire?

<sup>47</sup> Remember how short my time is—  
for what vanity you have created all mortals!

<sup>48</sup> Who can live and never see death?  
Who can escape the power of Sheol?

*Selah*  
<sup>49</sup> Lord, where is your steadfast love of old,  
which by your faithfulness you swore to David?

<sup>50</sup> Remember, O Lord, how your servant is taunted;  
how I bear in my bosom the insults of the peoples,

<sup>51</sup> with which your enemies taunt, O LORD,

with which they taunted  
the footsteps of your  
anointed.

<sup>52</sup> Blessed be the LORD  
forever.  
Amen and Amen.

### **Proverbs 21:5–7 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> The plans of the diligent  
lead surely to  
abundance,  
but everyone who is  
hasty comes only to  
want.

<sup>6</sup> The getting of treasures by  
a lying tongue  
is a fleeting vapor and a  
snare of death.

<sup>7</sup> The violence of the wicked  
will sweep them away,  
because they refuse to  
do what is just.

## **August 13**



### **Jeremiah 40:7–41:18 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> When all the leaders of  
the forces in the open country  
and their troops heard that  
the king of Babylon had

appointed Gedaliah son of  
Ahikam governor in the land,  
and had committed to him  
men, women, and children,  
those of the poorest of the  
land who had not been taken  
into exile to Babylon,<sup>8</sup> they  
went to Gedaliah at Mizpah—  
Ishmael son of Nethaniah,  
Johanan son of Kareah,  
Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the  
sons of Ephai the  
Netophathite, Jezaniah son of  
the Maacathite, they and their  
troops.<sup>9</sup> Gedaliah son of  
Ahikam son of Shaphan swore  
to them and their troops,  
saying, “Do not be afraid to  
serve the Chaldeans. Stay in  
the land and serve the king of  
Babylon, and it shall go well  
with you.<sup>10</sup> As for me, I am  
staying at Mizpah to represent  
you before the Chaldeans who  
come to us; but as for you,  
gather wine and summer fruits  
and oil, and store them in your  
vessels, and live in the towns  
that you have taken over.”

<sup>11</sup> Likewise, when all the  
Judeans who were in Moab  
and among the Ammonites  
and in Edom and in other  
lands heard that the king of  
Babylon had left a remnant in

Judah and had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan as governor over them,<sup>12</sup> then all the Judeans returned from all the places to which they had been scattered and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah; and they gathered wine and summer fruits in great abundance.

<sup>13</sup> Now Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah<sup>14</sup> and said to him, “Are you at all aware that Baalis king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to take your life?” But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them.<sup>15</sup> Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah at Mizpah, “Please let me go and kill Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and no one else will know. Why should he take your life, so that all the Judeans who are gathered around you would be scattered, and the remnant of Judah would perish?”<sup>16</sup> But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Do not do such a thing, for you

are telling a lie about Ishmael.”

### *Insurrection against Gedaliah*

**41** In the seventh month, Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, of the royal family, one of the chief officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. As they ate bread together there at Mizpah,<sup>2</sup> Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men with him got up and struck down Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan with the sword and killed him, because the king of Babylon had appointed him governor in the land.<sup>3</sup> Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldean soldiers who happened to be there.

<sup>4</sup> On the day after the murder of Gedaliah, before anyone knew of it,<sup>5</sup> eighty men arrived from Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria, with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, and their bodies gashed, bringing grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the

LORD. <sup>6</sup> And Ishmael son of Nethaniah came out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he came. As he met them, he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam." <sup>7</sup> When they reached the middle of the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men with him slaughtered them, and threw them into a cistern. <sup>8</sup> But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us, for we have stores of wheat, barley, oil, and honey hidden in the fields." So he refrained, and did not kill them along with their companions.


<sup>9</sup> Now the cistern into which Ishmael had thrown all the bodies of the men whom he had struck down was the large cistern that King Asa had made for defense against King Baasha of Israel; Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled that cistern with those whom he had killed. <sup>10</sup> Then Ishmael took captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the people who were left at Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had

committed to Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took them captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

<sup>11</sup> But when Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him heard of all the crimes that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had done, <sup>12</sup> they took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They came upon him at the great pool that is in Gibeon. <sup>13</sup> And when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him, they were glad. <sup>14</sup> So all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan son of Kareah. <sup>15</sup> But Ishmael son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites. <sup>16</sup> Then Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him took all the rest of the people whom Ishmael son of Nethaniah had carried away captive from Mizpah after he had slain

Gedaliah son of Ahikam—  
soldiers, women, children, and  
eunuchs, whom Johanan  
brought back from Gibeon.

<sup>17</sup> And they set out, and  
stopped at Geruth Chimham  
near Bethlehem, intending to  
go to Egypt <sup>18</sup> because of the  
Chaldeans; for they were  
afraid of them, because  
Ishmael son of Nethaniah had  
killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam,  
whom the king of Babylon had  
made governor over the land.



## 2 Timothy 1:9–18 (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> [It is God] who saved us and  
called us with a holy calling,  
not according to our works but  
according to his own purpose  
and grace. This grace was  
given to us in Christ Jesus  
before the ages began, <sup>10</sup> but it  
has now been revealed  
through the appearing of our  
Savior Christ Jesus, who  
abolished death and brought  
life and immortality to light  
through the gospel. <sup>11</sup> For this  
gospel I was appointed a  
herald and an apostle and a  
teacher, <sup>12</sup> and for this reason I  
suffer as I do. But I am not  
ashamed, for I know the one  
in whom I have put my trust,

and I am sure that he is able to  
guard until that day what I  
have entrusted to him. <sup>13</sup> Hold

to the standard of sound  
teaching that you have heard  
from me, in the faith and love  
that are in Christ Jesus.

<sup>14</sup> Guard the good treasure  
entrusted to you, with the  
help of the Holy Spirit living in  
us.

<sup>15</sup> You are aware that all  
who are in Asia have turned  
away from me, including  
Phygelus and Hermogenes.

<sup>16</sup> May the Lord grant mercy to  
the household of Onesiphorus,  
because he often refreshed  
me and was not ashamed of  
my chain; <sup>17</sup> when he arrived in  
Rome, he eagerly searched for  
me and found me <sup>18</sup> — may the  
Lord grant that he will find  
mercy from the Lord on that  
day! And you know very well  
how much service he rendered  
in Ephesus.

## Psalm 90:1-17 (NRSV)

*God's Eternity  
and Human Frailty*

A Prayer of Moses, the man of  
God.

<sup>1</sup> Lord, you have been our  
dwelling place

in all generations.  
2 Before the mountains  
were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed  
the earth and the  
world,  
from everlasting to  
everlasting you are  
God.  
3 You turn us back to dust,  
and say, "Turn back, you  
mortals."  
4 For a thousand years in  
your sight  
are like yesterday when  
it is past,  
or like a watch in the  
night.  
5 You sweep them away;  
they are like a dream,  
like grass that is renewed  
in the morning;  
6 in the morning it flourishes  
and is renewed;  
in the evening it fades  
and withers.  
7 For we are consumed by  
your anger;  
by your wrath we are  
overwhelmed.  
8 You have set our iniquities  
before you,  
our secret sins in the  
light of your  
countenance.

9 For all our days pass away  
under your wrath;  
our years come to an  
end like a sigh.  
10 The days of our life are  
seventy years,  
or perhaps eighty, if we  
are strong;  
even then their span is  
only toil and trouble;  
they are soon gone, and  
we fly away.  
11 Who considers the power  
of your anger?  
Your wrath is as great as  
the fear that is due  
you.  
12 So teach us to count our  
days  
that we may gain a wise  
heart.  
13 Turn, O LORD! How long?  
Have compassion on  
your servants!  
14 Satisfy us in the morning  
with your steadfast  
love,  
so that we may rejoice  
and be glad all our  
days.  
15 Make us glad as many days  
as you have afflicted  
us,  
and as many years as we  
have seen evil.

- 16 Let your work be manifest  
to your servants,  
and your glorious power  
to their children.
- 17 Let the favor of the Lord  
our God be upon us,  
and prosper for us the  
work of our hands—  
O prosper the work of  
our hands!

**Proverbs 21:8–10 (NRSV)**

- 8 The way of the guilty is  
crooked,  
but the conduct of the  
pure is right.
- 9 It is better to live in a  
corner of the housetop  
than in a house shared  
with a contentious  
wife.
- 10 The souls of the wicked  
desire evil;  
their neighbors find no  
mercy in their eyes.

**August 14**



**Jeremiah 42:1–43:13 (NRSV)**

*Jeremiah Advises Survivors  
Not to Migrate*

**42** Then all the commanders of the forces, and Johanan son of Kareah and Azariah son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least to the greatest, approached <sup>2</sup> the prophet Jeremiah and said, “Be good enough to listen to our plea, and pray to the LORD your God for us—for all this remnant. For there are only a few of us left out of many, as your eyes can see. <sup>3</sup> Let the LORD your God show us where we should go and what we should do.”

<sup>4</sup> The prophet Jeremiah said to them, “Very well: I am going to pray to the LORD your God as you request, and whatever the LORD answers you I will tell you; I will keep nothing back from you.” <sup>5</sup> They in their turn said to Jeremiah, “May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act according to everything that the LORD your God sends us through you. <sup>6</sup> Whether it is good or bad, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, in order that it may go well with

us when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.”

<sup>7</sup> At the end of ten days the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. <sup>8</sup> Then he summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest, <sup>9</sup> and said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your plea before him: <sup>10</sup> If you will only remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I am sorry for the disaster that I have brought upon you. <sup>11</sup> Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, as you have been; do not be afraid of him, says the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and to rescue you from his hand. <sup>12</sup> I will grant you mercy, and he will have mercy on you and restore you to your native soil. <sup>13</sup> But if you continue to say, ‘We will not stay in this land,’ thus disobeying the voice of the LORD your God <sup>14</sup> and saying, ‘No, we will go to the land of

Egypt, where we shall not see war, or hear the sound of the trumpet, or be hungry for bread, and there we will stay,’ <sup>15</sup> then hear the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: If you are determined to enter Egypt and go to settle there, <sup>16</sup> then the sword that you fear shall overtake you there, in the land of Egypt; and the famine that you dread shall follow close after you into Egypt; and there you shall die. <sup>17</sup> All the people who have determined to go to Egypt to settle there shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; they shall have no remnant or survivor from the disaster that I am bringing upon them.

<sup>18</sup> “For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Just as my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall become an object of execration and horror, of cursing and ridicule. You shall see this place no more. <sup>19</sup> The LORD has said to you, O



remnant of Judah, Do not go to Egypt. Be well aware that I have warned you today <sup>20</sup> that you have made a fatal mistake. For you yourselves sent me to the LORD your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD our God, and whatever the LORD our God says, tell us and we will do it.' <sup>21</sup> So I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God in anything that he sent me to tell you. <sup>22</sup> Be well aware, then, that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go and settle."

*Taken to Egypt, Jeremiah Warns of Judgment*

**43** When Jeremiah finished speaking to all the people all these words of the LORD their God, with which the LORD their God had sent him to them, <sup>2</sup> Azariah son of Hoshaiah and Johanan son of Kareah and all the other insolent men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie. The LORD our God did not send you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to settle there'; <sup>3</sup> but Baruch son of Neriah is inciting you

against us, to hand us over to the Chaldeans, in order that they may kill us or take us into exile in Babylon." <sup>4</sup> So Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces and all the people did not obey the voice of the LORD, to stay in the land of Judah. <sup>5</sup> But Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took all the remnant of Judah who had returned to settle in the land of Judah from all the nations to which they had been driven— <sup>6</sup> the men, the women, the children, the princesses, and everyone whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan; also the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah. <sup>7</sup> And they came into the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the LORD. And they arrived at Tahpanhes.

<sup>8</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: <sup>9</sup> Take some large stones in your hands, and bury them in the clay pavement that is at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace in

Tahpanhes. Let the Judeans see you do it,<sup>10</sup> and say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to send and take my servant King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he will set his throne above these stones that I have buried, and he will spread his royal canopy over them.<sup>11</sup> He shall come and ravage the land of Egypt, giving

those who are destined for pestilence, to pestilence,  
and those who are destined for captivity, to captivity,  
and those who are destined for the sword, to the sword.

<sup>12</sup> He shall kindle a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them and carry them away captive; and he shall pick clean the land of Egypt, as a shepherd picks his cloak clean of vermin; and he shall depart from there safely.

<sup>13</sup> He shall break the obelisks of Heliopolis, which is in the land of Egypt; and the temples of the gods of Egypt he shall burn with fire.

## **2 Timothy 2:1-7 (NRSV)**

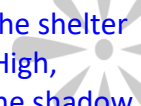
*A Good Soldier of Christ Jesus*

**2** You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;<sup>2</sup> and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.<sup>3</sup> Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.<sup>4</sup> No one serving in the army gets entangled in everyday affairs; the soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer.<sup>5</sup> And in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without competing according to the rules.<sup>6</sup> It is the farmer who does the work who ought to have the first share of the crops.<sup>7</sup> Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in all things.

## **Psalms 91:1-16 (NRSV)**

*Assurance of God's Protection*

**1** You who live in the shelter of the Most High,  
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,  
**2** will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress;  
my God, in whom I trust."



3 For he will deliver you  
from the snare of the  
fowler  
and from the deadly  
pestilence;  
4 he will cover you with his  
pinions,  
and under his wings you  
will find refuge;  
his faithfulness is a shield  
and buckler.  
5 You will not fear the terror  
of the night,  
or the arrow that flies by  
day,  
6 or the pestilence that  
stalks in darkness,  
or the destruction that  
wastes at noonday.  
7 A thousand may fall at  
your side,  
ten thousand at your  
right hand,  
but it will not come near  
you.  
8 You will only look with  
your eyes  
and see the punishment  
of the wicked.  
9 Because you have made  
the LORD your refuge,  
the Most High your  
dwelling place,  
10 no evil shall befall you,

no scourge come near  
your tent.  
11 For he will command his  
angels concerning you  
to guard you in all your  
ways.  
12 On their hands they will  
bear you up,  
so that you will not dash  
your foot against a  
stone.  
13 You will tread on the lion  
and the adder,  
the young lion and the  
serpent you will  
trample under foot.  
14 Those who love me, I will  
deliver;  
I will protect those who  
know my name.  
15 When they call to me, I will  
answer them;  
I will be with them in  
trouble,  
I will rescue them and  
honor them.  
16 With long life I will satisfy  
them,  
and show them my  
salvation.

**Proverbs 21:11–12 (NRSV)**

11 When a scoffer is  
punished, the simple  
become wiser;

when the wise are instructed, they increase in knowledge.

<sup>12</sup> The Righteous One observes the house of the wicked; he casts the wicked down to ruin.

## August 15



**Jeremiah 44:1–23** (NRSV)

*Denunciation of Persistent Idolatry*

**44** The word that came to Jeremiah for all the Judeans living in the land of Egypt, at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Memphis, and in the land of Pathros, <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: You yourselves have seen all the disaster that I have brought on Jerusalem and on all the towns of Judah. Look at them; today they are a desolation, without an inhabitant in them, <sup>3</sup> because of the wickedness that they committed, provoking me to anger, in that

they went to make offerings and serve other gods that they had not known, neither they, nor you, nor your ancestors.

<sup>4</sup> Yet I persistently sent to you all my servants the prophets, saying, “I beg you not to do this abominable thing that I hate!” <sup>5</sup> But they did not listen or incline their ear, to turn from their wickedness and make no offerings to other gods. <sup>6</sup> So my wrath and my anger were poured out and kindled in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they became a waste and a desolation, as they still are today. <sup>7</sup> And now thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel: Why are you doing such great harm to yourselves, to cut off man and woman, child and infant, from the midst of Judah, leaving yourselves without a remnant? <sup>8</sup> Why do you provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, making offerings to other gods in the land of Egypt where you have come to settle? Will you be cut off and become an object of cursing and ridicule among all the nations of the earth?

<sup>9</sup> Have you forgotten the crimes of your ancestors, of the kings of Judah, of their wives, your own crimes and those of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? <sup>10</sup> They have shown no contrition or fear to this day, nor have they walked in my law and my statutes that I set before you and before your ancestors.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am determined to bring disaster on you, to bring all Judah to an end. <sup>12</sup> I will take the remnant of Judah who are determined to come to the land of Egypt to settle, and they shall perish, everyone; in the land of Egypt they shall fall; by the sword and by famine they shall perish; from the least to the greatest, they shall die by the sword and by famine; and they shall become an object of execration and horror, of cursing and ridicule. <sup>13</sup> I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with

pestilence, <sup>14</sup> so that none of the remnant of Judah who have come to settle in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive or return to the land of Judah. Although they long to go back to live there, they shall not go back, except some fugitives.

<sup>15</sup> Then all the men who were aware that their wives had been making offerings to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, all the people who lived in Pathros in the land of Egypt, answered Jeremiah: <sup>16</sup> "As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not going to listen to you. <sup>17</sup> Instead, we will do everything that we have vowed, make offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out libations to her, just as we and our ancestors, our kings and our officials, used to do in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. We used to have plenty of food, and prospered, and saw no misfortune. <sup>18</sup> But from the time we stopped making offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out

libations to her, we have lacked everything and have perished by the sword and by famine.”<sup>19</sup> And the women said, “Indeed we will go on making offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out libations to her; do you think that we made cakes for her, marked with her image, and poured out libations to her without our husbands’ being involved?”

<sup>20</sup> Then Jeremiah said to all the people, men and women, all the people who were giving him this answer: <sup>21</sup> “As for the offerings that you made in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your ancestors, your kings and your officials, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them? Did it not come into his mind? <sup>22</sup> The LORD could no longer bear the sight of your evil doings, the abominations that you committed; therefore your land became a desolation and a waste and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is to this day.

<sup>23</sup> It is because you burned offerings, and because you sinned against the LORD and

did not obey the voice of the LORD or walk in his law and in his statutes and in his decrees, that this disaster has befallen you, as is still evident today.”

## **2 Timothy 2:8–21 (NRSV)**


<sup>8</sup> Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel,<sup>9</sup> for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup> The saying is sure:

- If we have died with him,  
we will also live with him;
- <sup>12</sup> if we endure, we will also reign with him;  
if we deny him, he will also deny us;
- <sup>13</sup> if we are faithless, he remains faithful—  
for he cannot deny himself.

### *A Worker Approved by God*

<sup>14</sup> Remind them of this, and warn them before God that

they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. <sup>15</sup> Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. <sup>16</sup> Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, <sup>17</sup> and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>18</sup> who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some.



<sup>19</sup> But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness."

<sup>20</sup> In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary. <sup>21</sup> All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the

owner of the house, ready for every good work.

**Psalm 92:1-15 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for Vindication*

A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath Day.

- 1 It is good to give thanks to the LORD,  
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
- 2 to declare your steadfast love in the morning,  
and your faithfulness by night,
- 3 to the music of the lute  
and the harp,  
to the melody of the lyre.
- 4 For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;  
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.
- 5 How great are your works, O LORD!  
Your thoughts are very deep!
- 6 The dullard cannot know,  
the stupid cannot understand this:
- 7 though the wicked sprout like grass  
and all evildoers flourish,

they are doomed to  
destruction forever,  
8 but you, O LORD, are on  
high forever.  
9 For your enemies, O LORD,  
for your enemies shall  
perish;  
all evildoers shall be  
scattered.  
10 But you have exalted my  
horn like that of the  
wild ox;  
you have poured over  
me fresh oil.  
11 My eyes have seen the  
downfall of my  
enemies;  
my ears have heard the  
doom of my evil  
assailants.  
12 The righteous flourish like  
the palm tree,  
and grow like a cedar in  
Lebanon.  
13 They are planted in the  
house of the LORD;  
they flourish in the  
courts of our God.  
14 In old age they still  
produce fruit;  
they are always green  
and full of sap,  
15 showing that the LORD is  
upright;

he is my rock, and there  
is no unrighteousness  
in him.

### **Proverbs 21:13** (NRSV)

13 If you close your ear to the  
cry of the poor,  
you will cry out and not  
be heard.

## **August 16**



### **Jeremiah 44:24–46:12** (NRSV)

24 Jeremiah said to all the  
people and all the women,  
“Hear the word of the LORD, all  
you Judeans who are in the  
land of Egypt, 25 Thus says the  
LORD of hosts, the God of  
Israel: You and your wives  
have accomplished in deeds  
what you declared in words,  
saying, ‘We are determined to  
perform the vows that we  
have made, to make offerings  
to the queen of heaven and to  
pour out libations to her.’ By  
all means, keep your vows and  
make your libations!

26 Therefore hear the word of



the LORD, all you Judeans who live in the land of Egypt: Lo, I swear by my great name, says the LORD, that my name shall no longer be pronounced on the lips of any of the people of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, 'As the Lord God lives.'

<sup>27</sup> I am going to watch over them for harm and not for good; all the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall perish by the sword and by famine, until not one is left.

<sup>28</sup> And those who escape the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, who have come to the land of Egypt to settle, shall know whose words will stand, mine or theirs! <sup>29</sup> This shall be the sign to you, says the LORD, that I am going to punish you in this place, in order that you may know that my words against you will surely be carried out: <sup>30</sup> Thus says the LORD, I am going to give Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, into the hands of his enemies, those who seek his life, just as I gave King Zedekiah of Judah into the

hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life."

*A Word of Comfort to Baruch*

**45** The word that the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah: <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: <sup>3</sup> You said, "Woe is me! The LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest." <sup>4</sup> Thus you shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: I am going to break down what I have built, and pluck up what I have planted—that is, the whole land. <sup>5</sup> And you, do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them; for I am going to bring disaster upon all flesh, says the LORD; but I will give you your life as a prize of war in every place to which you may go."

*Judgment on Egypt*

**46** The word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the nations.

<sup>2</sup> Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah:

<sup>3</sup> Prepare buckler and shield,  
and advance for battle!

<sup>4</sup> Harness the horses;  
mount the steeds!  
Take your stations with  
your helmets,  
whet your lances,  
put on your coats of  
mail!

<sup>5</sup> Why do I see them  
terrified?  
They have fallen back;  
their warriors are beaten  
down,  
and have fled in haste.  
They do not look back—  
terror is all around!

Says the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> The swift cannot flee away,  
nor can the warrior  
escape;

in the north by the river  
Euphrates  
they have stumbled and  
fallen.

<sup>7</sup> Who is this, rising like the  
Nile,  
like rivers whose waters  
surge?

<sup>8</sup> Egypt rises like the Nile,  
like rivers whose waters  
surge.

It said, Let me rise, let me  
cover the earth,  
let me destroy cities and  
their inhabitants.

<sup>9</sup> Advance, O horses,  
and dash madly, O  
chariots!

Let the warriors go forth:  
Ethiopia and Put who  
carry the shield,  
the Ludim, who draw the  
bow.

<sup>10</sup> That day is the day of the  
Lord GOD of hosts,  
a day of retribution,  
to gain vindication from  
his foes.

The sword shall devour  
and be sated,  
and drink its fill of their  
blood.

For the Lord GOD of hosts  
holds a sacrifice

in the land of the north  
by the river Euphrates.  
11 Go up to Gilead, and take  
balm,  
O virgin daughter Egypt!  
In vain you have used  
many medicines;  
there is no healing for  
you.  
12 The nations have heard of  
your shame,  
and the earth is full of  
your cry;  
for warrior has stumbled  
against warrior;  
both have fallen  
together.

**2 Timothy 2:22–26 (NRSV)**

22 Shun youthful passions and  
pursue righteousness, faith,  
love, and peace, along with  
those who call on the Lord  
from a pure heart. 23 Have  
nothing to do with stupid and  
senseless controversies; you  
know that they breed  
quarrels. 24 And the Lord's  
servant must not be  
quarrelsome but kindly to  
everyone, an apt teacher,  
patient, 25 correcting  
opponents with gentleness.  
God may perhaps grant that  
they will repent and come to

know the truth, 26 and that  
they may escape from the  
snare of the devil, having been  
held captive by him to do his  
will.

**Psalm 93:1-5 (NRSV)**

*The Majesty of God's Rule*

1 The LORD is king, he is  
robed in majesty;  
the LORD is robed, he is  
girded with strength.  
He has established the  
world; it shall never be  
moved;  
2 your throne is  
established from of  
old;  
you are from everlasting.  
3 The floods have lifted up,  
O LORD,  
the floods have lifted up  
their voice;  
the floods lift up their  
roaring.  
4 More majestic than the  
thunders of mighty  
waters,  
more majestic than the  
waves of the sea,  
majestic on high is the  
LORD!  
5 Your decrees are very sure;  
holiness befits your  
house,



O LORD, forevermore.

**Proverbs 21:14–16 (NRSV)**

- <sup>14</sup> A gift in secret averts  
anger;  
and a concealed bribe in  
the bosom, strong  
wrath.
- <sup>15</sup> When justice is done, it is a  
joy to the righteous,  
but dismay to evildoers.
- <sup>16</sup> Whoever wanders from  
the way of  
understanding  
will rest in the assembly  
of the dead.

**August 17**



**Jeremiah 46:13–47:7 (NRSV)**

*Babylonia Will Strike Egypt*

<sup>13</sup> The word that the LORD  
spoke to the prophet Jeremiah  
about the coming of King  
Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon to  
attack the land of Egypt:

- <sup>14</sup> Declare in Egypt, and  
proclaim in Migdol;  
proclaim in Memphis and  
Tahpanhes;

Say, “Take your stations  
and be ready,  
for the sword shall  
devour those around  
you.”

- <sup>15</sup> Why has Apis fled?  
Why did your bull not  
stand?  
—because the LORD  
thrust him down.
- <sup>16</sup> Your multitude stumbled  
and fell,  
and one said to another,  
“Come, let us go back to  
our own people  
and to the land of our  
birth,  
because of the  
destroying sword.”
- <sup>17</sup> Give Pharaoh, king of  
Egypt, the name  
“Braggart who missed his  
chance.”
- <sup>18</sup> As I live, says the King,  
whose name is the LORD  
of hosts,  
one is coming  
like Tabor among the  
mountains,  
and like Carmel by the  
sea.
- <sup>19</sup> Pack your bags for exile,  
sheltered daughter  
Egypt!

For Memphis shall become  
a waste,  
a ruin, without  
inhabitant.  
20 A beautiful heifer is  
Egypt—  
a gadfly from the north  
lights upon her.  
21 Even her mercenaries in  
her midst  
are like fatted calves;  
they too have turned and  
fled together,  
they did not stand;  
for the day of their  
calamity has come  
upon them,  
the time of their  
punishment.  
22 She makes a sound like a  
snake gliding away;  
for her enemies march in  
force,  
and come against her with  
axes,  
like those who fell trees.  
23 They shall cut down her  
forest,  
though it is  
impenetrable,  
because they are more  
numerous  
than locusts;  
they are without  
number.

24 Daughter Egypt shall be  
put to shame;  
she shall be handed over  
to a people from the  
north.

25 The LORD of hosts, the  
God of Israel, said: See, I am  
bringing punishment upon  
Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh,  
and Egypt and her gods and  
her kings, upon Pharaoh and  
those who trust in him. 26 I will  
hand them over to those who  
seek their life, to King  
Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon  
and his officers. Afterward  
Egypt shall be inhabited as in  
the days of old, says the LORD.

*God Will Save Israel*  
(Cp Jer 30:10–11)

27 But as for you, have no  
fear, my servant Jacob,  
and do not be dismayed,  
O Israel;  
for I am going to save you  
from far away,  
and your offspring from  
the land of their  
captivity.

Jacob shall return and have  
quiet and ease,  
and no one shall make  
him afraid.

28 As for you, have no fear,  
my servant Jacob,

says the LORD,  
for I am with you.  
I will make an end of all  
the nations  
among which I have  
banished you,  
but I will not make an  
end of you!  
I will chastise you in just  
measure,  
and I will by no means  
leave you unpunished.

*Judgment on the Philistines*

**47** The word of the LORD that  
came to the prophet Jeremiah  
concerning the Philistines,  
before Pharaoh attacked Gaza:

<sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD:  
See, waters are rising out  
of the north  
and shall become an  
overflowing torrent;  
they shall overflow the  
land and all that fills it,  
the city and those who  
live in it.  
People shall cry out,  
and all the inhabitants of  
the land shall wail.  
<sup>3</sup> At the noise of the  
stamping of the hoofs  
of his stallions,  
at the clatter of his  
chariots, at the

rumbling of their  
wheels,  
parents do not turn back  
for children,  
so feeble are their hands,  
<sup>4</sup> because of the day that is  
coming  
to destroy all the  
Philistines,  
to cut off from Tyre and  
Sidon  
every helper that  
remains.

For the LORD is destroying  
the Philistines,  
the remnant of the  
coastland of Caphtor.

<sup>5</sup> Baldness has come upon  
Gaza,  
Ashkelon is silenced.  
O remnant of their power!  
How long will you gash  
yourselves?

<sup>6</sup> Ah, sword of the LORD!  
How long until you are  
quiet?

Put yourself into your  
scabbard,  
rest and be still!

<sup>7</sup> How can it be quiet,  
when the LORD has given  
it an order?

Against Ashkelon and  
against the seashore—

there he has appointed it.

## 2 Timothy 3:1–17 (NRSV)

### *Godlessness in the Last Days*

**3** You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. <sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid them! <sup>6</sup> For among them are those who make their way into households and captivate silly women, overwhelmed by their sins and swayed by all kinds of desires, <sup>7</sup> who are always being instructed and can never arrive at a knowledge of the truth. <sup>8</sup> As Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these people, of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith, also oppose the truth. <sup>9</sup> But they will not make much progress, because, as in the

case of those two men, their folly will become plain to everyone.

### *Paul's Charge to Timothy*

<sup>10</sup> Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, <sup>11</sup> my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. <sup>12</sup> Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. <sup>13</sup> But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. <sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> **All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,** <sup>17</sup> so that

everyone who belongs to God  
may be proficient, equipped  
for every good work.

**Psalm 94:1-13 (NRSV)**

*God the Avenger of the  
Righteous*

1 O LORD, you God of  
vengeance,  
you God of vengeance,  
shine forth!  
2 Rise up, O judge of the  
earth;  
give to the proud what  
they deserve!  
3 O LORD, how long shall the  
wicked,  
how long shall the  
wicked exult?  
4 They pour out their  
arrogant words;  
all the evildoers boast.  
5 They crush your people, O  
LORD,  
and afflict your heritage.  
6 They kill the widow and  
the stranger,  
they murder the orphan,  
7 and they say, "The LORD  
does not see;  
the God of Jacob does  
not perceive."  
8 Understand, O dullest of  
the people;

fools, when will you be  
wise?

9 He who planted the ear,  
does he not hear?  
He who formed the eye,  
does he not see?  
10 He who disciplines the  
nations,  
he who teaches knowledge  
to humankind,  
does he not chastise?  
11 The LORD knows our  
thoughts,  
that they are but an  
empty breath.  
12 Happy are those whom  
you discipline, O LORD,  
and whom you teach out  
of your law,  
13 giving them respite from  
days of trouble,  
until a pit is dug for the  
wicked.

**Proverbs 21:17-18 (NRSV)**

17 Whoever loves pleasure  
will suffer want;  
whoever loves wine and  
oil will not be rich.  
18 The wicked is a ransom for  
the righteous, and the  
faithless for the  
upright.



# August 18



**Jeremiah 48:1–47** (NRSV)  
*Judgment on Moab*

## **48** Concerning Moab.

Thus says the LORD of hosts,  
the God of Israel:

Alas for Nebo, it is laid  
waste!

Kiriathaim is put to  
shame, it is taken;  
the fortress is put to  
shame and broken  
down;

<sup>2</sup> the renown of Moab is  
no more.

In Heshbon they planned  
evil against her:

“Come, let us cut her off  
from being a nation!”

You also, O Madmen, shall  
be brought to silence;  
the sword shall pursue  
you.

<sup>3</sup> Hark! a cry from  
Horonaim,  
“Desolation and great  
destruction!”

<sup>4</sup> “Moab is destroyed!”  
her little ones cry out.

<sup>5</sup> For at the ascent of Luhith  
they go up weeping  
bitterly;

for at the descent of  
Horonaim  
they have heard the  
distressing cry of  
anguish.

<sup>6</sup> Flee! Save yourselves!  
Be like a wild ass in the  
desert!

<sup>7</sup> Surely, because you  
trusted in your  
strongholds and your  
treasures,  
you also shall be taken;  
Chemosh shall go out into  
exile,  
with his priests and his  
attendants.

<sup>8</sup> The destroyer shall come  
upon every town,  
and no town shall  
escape;  
the valley shall perish,  
and the plain shall be  
destroyed,  
as the LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup> Set aside salt for Moab,  
for she will surely fall;  
her towns shall become a  
desolation,  
with no inhabitant in  
them.

<sup>10</sup> Accursed is the one who  
is slack in doing the work of  
the LORD; and accursed is the

one who keeps back the sword  
from bloodshed.

<sup>11</sup> Moab has been at ease  
from his youth,  
settled like wine on its  
dregs;  
he has not been emptied  
from vessel to vessel,  
nor has he gone into  
exile;  
therefore his flavor has  
remained  
and his aroma is  
unspoiled.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the time is  
surely coming, says the LORD,  
when I shall send to him  
decanters to decant him, and  
empty his vessels, and break  
his jars in pieces. <sup>13</sup> Then Moab  
shall be ashamed of Chemosh,  
as the house of Israel was  
ashamed of Bethel, their  
confidence.

<sup>14</sup> How can you say, “We are  
heroes  
and mighty warriors”?

<sup>15</sup> The destroyer of Moab and  
his towns has come up,  
and the choicest of his  
young men have gone  
down to slaughter,  
says the King, whose  
name is the LORD of  
hosts.

<sup>16</sup> The calamity of Moab is  
near at hand  
and his doom  
approaches swiftly.

<sup>17</sup> Mourn over him, all you  
his neighbors,  
and all who know his  
name;  
say, “How the mighty  
scepter is broken,  
the glorious staff!”

<sup>18</sup> Come down from glory,  
and sit on the parched  
ground,  
enthroned daughter  
Dibon!

For the destroyer of Moab  
has come up against  
you;  
he has destroyed your  
strongholds.

<sup>19</sup> Stand by the road and  
watch,  
you inhabitant of Aroer!  
Ask the man fleeing and  
the woman escaping;  
say, “What has  
happened?”

<sup>20</sup> Moab is put to shame, for  
it is broken down;  
wail and cry!  
Tell it by the Arnon,  
that Moab is laid waste.

<sup>21</sup> Judgment has come  
upon the tableland, upon

Holon, and Jahzah, and Mephaath,<sup>22</sup> and Dibon, and Nebo, and Beth-diblathaim,<sup>23</sup> and Kiriathaim, and Beth-gamul, and Beth-meon,<sup>24</sup> and Kerioth, and Bozrah, and all the towns of the land of Moab, far and near.<sup>25</sup> The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, says the LORD.

<sup>26</sup> Make him drunk, because he magnified himself against the LORD; let Moab wallow in his vomit; he too shall become a laughingstock.

<sup>27</sup> Israel was a laughingstock for you, though he was not caught among thieves; but whenever you spoke of him you shook your head!

<sup>28</sup> Leave the towns, and live on the rock,  
O inhabitants of Moab!  
Be like the dove that nests on the sides of the mouth of a gorge.

<sup>29</sup> We have heard of the pride of Moab—  
he is very proud—  
of his loftiness, his pride,  
and his arrogance,  
and the haughtiness of his heart.

<sup>30</sup> I myself know his insolence, says the LORD;  
his boasts are false,  
his deeds are false.

<sup>31</sup> Therefore I wail for Moab;  
I cry out for all Moab;  
for the people of Kirheres I mourn.

<sup>32</sup> More than for Jazer I weep for you,  
O vine of Sibmah!  
Your branches crossed over the sea,  
reached as far as Jazer;  
upon your summer fruits  
and your vintage  
the destroyer has fallen.

<sup>33</sup> Gladness and joy have been taken away  
from the fruitful land of Moab;  
I have stopped the wine  
from the wine presses;  
no one treads them with shouts of joy;  
the shouting is not the shout of joy.

<sup>34</sup> Heshbon and Elealeh cry out; as far as Jahaz they utter their voice, from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-shelishiyah. For even the waters of Nimrim have become desolate.<sup>35</sup> And I will

bring to an end in Moab, says the LORD, those who offer sacrifice at a high place and make offerings to their gods.

<sup>36</sup> Therefore my heart moans for Moab like a flute, and my heart moans like a flute for the people of Kir-heres; for the riches they gained have perished.

<sup>37</sup> For every head is shaved and every beard cut off; on all the hands there are gashes, and on the loins sackcloth.

<sup>38</sup> On all the housetops of Moab and in the squares there is nothing but lamentation; for I have broken Moab like a vessel that no one wants, says the LORD. <sup>39</sup> How it is broken! How they wail! How Moab has turned his back in shame! So Moab has become a derision and a horror to all his neighbors.

<sup>40</sup> For thus says the LORD: Look, he shall swoop down like an eagle, and spread his wings against Moab;

<sup>41</sup> the towns shall be taken and the strongholds seized.

The hearts of the warriors of Moab, on that day,

shall be like the heart of a woman in labor.

<sup>42</sup> Moab shall be destroyed as a people, because he magnified himself against the LORD.

<sup>43</sup> Terror, pit, and trap are before you, O inhabitants of Moab!

<sup>44</sup> Everyone who flees from the terror shall fall into the pit, and everyone who climbs out of the pit shall be caught in the trap.

For I will bring these things upon Moab in the year of their punishment, declares the Lord.

<sup>45</sup> In the shadow of Heshbon the fugitives stop exhausted; for a fire has gone out from Heshbon, a flame from the house of Sihon; it has destroyed the forehead of Moab, the scalp of the people of tumult.

<sup>46</sup> Woe to you, O Moab!

The people of Chemosh  
have perished,  
for your sons have been  
taken captive,  
and your daughters into  
captivity.


47 Yet I will restore the  
fortunes of Moab  
in the latter days, says  
the LORD.  
Thus far is the judgment  
on Moab.

## 2 Timothy 4:1–5 (NRSV)

In the presence of God and  
of Christ Jesus, who is to judge  
the living and the dead, and in  
view of his appearing and his  
kingdom, I solemnly urge you:  
2 proclaim the message; be  
persistent whether the time is  
favorable or unfavorable;  
convince, rebuke, and  
encourage, with the utmost  
patience in teaching. 3 For the  
time is coming when people  
will not put up with sound  
doctrine, but having itching  
ears, they will accumulate for  
themselves teachers to suit  
their own desires, 4 and will  
turn away from listening to  
the truth and wander away to  
myths. 5 As for you, always be  
sober, endure suffering, do

the work of an evangelist,  
carry out your ministry fully.

## Psalm 94:14–23 (NRSV)



14 For the LORD will not  
forsake his people;  
he will not abandon his  
heritage;  
15 for justice will return to  
the righteous,  
and all the upright in  
heart will follow it.  
16 Who rises up for me  
against the wicked?  
Who stands up for me  
against evildoers?  
17 If the LORD had not been  
my help,  
my soul would soon have  
lived in the land of  
silence.  
18 When I thought, “My foot  
is slipping,”  
your steadfast love, O  
LORD, held me up.  
19 When the cares of my  
heart are many,  
your consolations cheer  
my soul.  
20 Can wicked rulers be allied  
with you,  
those who contrive  
mischief by statute?

21 They band together  
 against the life of the  
 righteous,  
 and condemn the  
 innocent to death.

22 But the LORD has become  
 my stronghold,  
 and my God the rock of  
 my refuge.

23 He will repay them for  
 their iniquity  
 and wipe them out for  
 their wickedness;  
 the LORD our God will  
 wipe them out.

**Proverbs 21:19–20 (NRSV)**

19 It is better to live in a  
 desert land  
 than with a contentious  
 and fretful wife.

20 Precious treasure remains  
 in the house of the  
 wise,  
 but the fool devours it.

**August 19**



**Jeremiah 49:1–22 (NRSV)**

*the Ammonites*

**49** Concerning the  
 Ammonites.

Thus says the LORD:

Has Israel no sons?  
 Has he no heir?  
 Why then has Milcom  
 dispossessed Gad,  
 and his people settled in  
 its towns?

2 Therefore, the time is  
 surely coming,  
 says the LORD,  
 when I will sound the  
 battle alarm  
 against Rabbah of the  
 Ammonites;  
 it shall become a desolate  
 mound,  
 and its villages shall be  
 burned with fire;  
 then Israel shall dispossess  
 those who  
 dispossessed him,  
 says the LORD.

3 Wail, O Heshbon, for Ai is  
 laid waste!  
 Cry out, O daughters of  
 Rabbah!  
 Put on sackcloth,  
 lament, and slash  
 yourselves with whips!  
 For Milcom shall go into  
 exile,

with his priests and his attendants.  
4 Why do you boast in your strength?  
Your strength is ebbing,  
O faithless daughter.  
You trusted in your treasures, saying,  
“Who will attack me?”  
5 I am going to bring terror upon you,  
says the Lord GOD of hosts,  
from all your neighbors,  
and you will be scattered,  
each headlong,  
with no one to gather the fugitives.  
6 But afterward I will restore the fortunes of the Ammonites, says the LORD.

*Judgment on Edom*

7 Concerning Edom.  
Thus says the LORD of hosts:  
Is there no longer wisdom in Teman?  
Has counsel perished from the prudent?  
Has their wisdom vanished?  
8 Flee, turn back, get down low,  
inhabitants of Dedan!

For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,  
the time when I punish him.  
9 If grape-gatherers came to you,  
would they not leave gleanings?  
If thieves came by night,  
even they would pillage only what they wanted.  
10 But as for me, I have stripped Esau bare,  
I have uncovered his hiding places,  
and he is not able to conceal himself.  
His offspring are destroyed, his kinsfolk and his neighbors; and he is no more.  
11 Leave your orphans, I will keep them alive;  
and let your widows trust in me.  
12 For thus says the LORD: If those who do not deserve to drink the cup still have to drink it, shall you be the one to go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished; you must drink it.  
13 For by myself I have sworn, says the LORD, that Bozrah shall become an object of

horror and ridicule, a waste,  
and an object of cursing; and  
all her towns shall be  
perpetual wastes.

<sup>14</sup> I have heard tidings from  
the LORD,  
and a messenger has  
been sent among the  
nations:

“Gather yourselves  
together and come  
against her,  
and rise up for battle!”

<sup>15</sup> For I will make you least  
among the nations,  
despised by humankind.

<sup>16</sup> The terror you inspire  
and the pride of your  
heart have deceived  
you,  
you who live in the clefts  
of the rock,  
who hold the height of  
the hill.

Although you make your  
nest as high as the  
eagle’s,  
from there I will bring  
you down,

<sup>17</sup> Edom shall become an  
object of horror; everyone  
who passes by it will be  
horrified and will hiss because  
of all its disasters. <sup>18</sup> As when  
Sodom and Gomorrah and

their neighbors were  
overthrown, says the LORD, no  
one shall live there, nor shall  
anyone settle in it. <sup>19</sup> Like a  
lion coming up from the  
thickets of the Jordan against  
a perennial pasture, I will  
suddenly chase Edom away  
from it; and I will appoint over  
it whomever I choose. For who  
is like me? Who can summon  
me? Who is the shepherd who  
can stand before me?

<sup>20</sup> Therefore hear the plan that  
the LORD has made against  
Edom and the purposes that  
he has formed against the  
inhabitants of Teman: Surely  
the little ones of the flock shall  
be dragged away; surely their  
fold shall be appalled at their  
fate. <sup>21</sup> At the sound of their  
fall the earth shall tremble;  
the sound of their cry shall be  
heard at the Red Sea. <sup>22</sup> Look,  
he shall mount up and swoop  
down like an eagle, and spread  
his wings against Bozrah, and  
the heart of the warriors of  
Edom in that day shall be like  
the heart of a woman in labor.

## **2 Timothy 4:6–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> As for me, I am already  
being poured out as a libation,



and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

<sup>8</sup> From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

#### *Personal Instructions*

<sup>9</sup> Do your best to come to me soon, <sup>10</sup> for Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. <sup>11</sup> Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry. <sup>12</sup> I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. <sup>13</sup> When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. <sup>14</sup> Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds. <sup>15</sup> You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.

<sup>16</sup> At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! <sup>17</sup> But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. <sup>18</sup> The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

#### *Final Greetings and Benediction*

<sup>19</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. <sup>20</sup> Erastus remained in Corinth; Trophimus I left ill in Miletus. <sup>21</sup> Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers and sisters. <sup>22</sup> The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

**Psalm 95:1-11 (NRSV)**

*A Call to Worship and  
Obedience*

1 O come, let us sing to the  
LORD;  
let us make a joyful noise  
to the rock of our  
salvation!  
2 Let us come into his  
presence with  
thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise  
to him with songs of  
praise!  
3 For the LORD is a great God,  
and a great King above  
all gods.  
4 In his hand are the depths  
of the earth;  
the heights of the  
mountains are his also.  
5 The sea is his, for he made  
it,  
and the dry land, which  
his hands have formed.  
6 O come, let us worship and  
bow down,  
let us kneel before the  
LORD, our Maker!  
7 For he is our God,  
and we are the people of  
his pasture,  
and the sheep of his  
hand.

O that today you would  
listen to his voice!  
8 Do not harden your  
hearts, as at Meribah,  
as on the day at Massah  
in the wilderness,  
9 when your ancestors  
tested me,  
and put me to the proof,  
though they had seen  
my work.  
10 For forty years I loathed  
that generation  
and said, "They are a  
people whose hearts  
go astray,  
and they do not regard  
my ways."  
11 Therefore in my anger I  
swore,  
"They shall not enter my  
rest."

**Proverbs 21:21–22 (NRSV)**

21 Whoever pursues  
righteousness and  
kindness  
will find life and honor.  
22 One wise person went up  
against a city of  
warriors  
and brought down the  
stronghold in which  
they trusted.

August 20



**Jeremiah 49:23–50:1-20**  
(NRSV)

*Judgment on Damascus*

<sup>23</sup> Concerning Damascus.

Hamath and Arpad are  
confounded,  
for they have heard bad  
news;

they melt in fear, they are  
troubled like the sea  
that cannot be quiet.

<sup>24</sup> Damascus has become  
feeble, she turned to  
flee,

and panic seized her;  
anguish and sorrows have  
taken hold of her,  
as of a woman in labor.

<sup>25</sup> How the famous city is  
forsaken,  
the joyful town!

<sup>26</sup> Therefore her young men  
shall fall in her squares,  
and all her soldiers shall  
be destroyed in that  
day,

<sup>27</sup> And I will kindle a fire  
at the wall of Damascus,  
and it shall devour the  
strongholds of Ben-  
hadad.

*Judgment on Kedar and Hazor*

<sup>28</sup> Concerning Kedar and  
the kingdoms of Hazor that  
King Nebuchadrezzar of  
Babylon defeated.

Thus says the LORD:

Rise up, advance against  
Kedar!

Destroy the people of  
the east!

<sup>29</sup> Take their tents and their  
flocks,  
their curtains and all  
their goods;

carry off their camels for  
yourselves,  
and a cry shall go up:

“Terror is all around!”

<sup>30</sup> Flee, wander far away,  
hide in deep places,  
O inhabitants of Hazor!

says the LORD.

For King Nebuchadrezzar  
of Babylon

has made a plan against  
you  
and formed a purpose  
against you.

<sup>31</sup> Rise up, advance against a  
nation at ease,  
that lives secure,

says the LORD,  
that has no gates or bars,  
that lives alone.

<sup>32</sup> Their camels shall become  
booty,  
their herds of cattle a  
spoil.

I will scatter to every wind  
those who have shaven  
temples,  
and I will bring calamity  
against them from every  
side, says the LORD.

<sup>33</sup> Hazor shall become a lair  
of jackals,  
an everlasting waste;  
no one shall live there,  
nor shall anyone settle in  
it.

#### *Judgment on Elam*

<sup>34</sup> The word of the LORD  
that came to the prophet  
Jeremiah concerning Elam, at  
the beginning of the reign of  
King Zedekiah of Judah.

<sup>35</sup> Thus says the LORD of  
hosts: I am going to break the  
bow of Elam, the mainstay of  
their might; <sup>36</sup> and I will bring  
upon Elam the four winds  
from the four quarters of  
heaven; and I will scatter them  
to all these winds, and there  
shall be no nation to which the  
exiles from Elam shall not  
come. <sup>37</sup> I will terrify Elam  
before their enemies, and

before those who seek their  
life; I will bring disaster upon  
them, my fierce anger, says  
the LORD. I will send the sword  
after them, until I have  
consumed them; <sup>38</sup> and I will  
set my throne in Elam, and  
destroy their king and officials,  
says the LORD.

<sup>39</sup> But in the latter days I  
will restore the fortunes of  
Elam, says the LORD.

#### *Judgment on Babylon*

**50** The word that the LORD  
spoke concerning Babylon,  
concerning the land of the  
Chaldeans, by the prophet  
Jeremiah:

<sup>2</sup> Declare among the nations  
and proclaim,  
set up a banner and  
proclaim,  
do not conceal it, say:  
Babylon is taken,  
Bel is put to shame,  
Merodach is dismayed.  
Her images are put to  
shame,  
her idols are dismayed.

<sup>3</sup> For out of the north a  
nation has come up against  
her; it shall make her land a  
desolation, and no one shall

live in it; both human beings and animals shall flee away.

<sup>4</sup> In those days and in that time, says the LORD, the people of Israel shall come, they and the people of Judah together; they shall come weeping as they seek the LORD their God.

<sup>5</sup> They shall ask the way to Zion, with faces turned toward it, and they shall come and join themselves to the LORD by an everlasting covenant that will never be forgotten.

<sup>6</sup> My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray, turning them away on the mountains; from mountain to hill they have gone, they have forgotten their fold. <sup>7</sup> All who found them have devoured them, and their enemies have said, "We are not guilty, because they have sinned against the LORD, the true pasture, the LORD, the hope of their ancestors."

<sup>8</sup> Flee from Babylon, and go out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be like male goats leading the flock. <sup>9</sup> For I am going to stir up and bring against Babylon a company of great nations from the land of

the north; and they shall array themselves against her; from there she shall be taken. Their arrows are like the arrows of a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed.

<sup>10</sup> Chaldea shall be plundered; all who plunder her shall be sated, says the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Though you rejoice,  
though you exult,  
O plunderers of my heritage,  
though you frisk about like a heifer on the grass,  
and neigh like stallions,  
<sup>12</sup> your mother shall be utterly shamed,  
and she who bore you shall be disgraced.  
Lo, she shall be the last of the nations,  
a wilderness, dry land,  
and a desert.

<sup>13</sup> Because of the wrath of the LORD she shall not be inhabited,  
but shall be an utter desolation;  
everyone who passes by  
Babylon shall be appalled  
and hiss because of all her wounds.

14 Take up your positions  
around Babylon,  
all you that bend the  
bow;  
shoot at her, spare no  
arrows,  
for she has sinned  
against the LORD.

15 Raise a shout against her  
from all sides,  
“She has surrendered;  
her bulwarks have fallen,  
her walls are thrown  
down.”  
For this is the vengeance  
of the LORD:  
take vengeance on her,  
do to her as she has  
done.

16 Cut off from Babylon the  
sower,  
and the wielder of the  
sickle in time of  
harvest;  
because of the destroying  
sword  
all of them shall return  
to their own people,  
and all of them shall flee  
to their own land.

17 Israel is a hunted sheep  
driven away by lions. First the  
king of Assyria devoured it,  
and now at the end King  
Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon

has gnawed its bones.  
<sup>18</sup> Therefore, thus says the  
LORD of hosts, the God of  
Israel: I am going to punish the  
king of Babylon and his land,  
as I punished the king of  
Assyria. <sup>19</sup> I will restore Israel  
to its pasture, and it shall feed  
on Carmel and in Bashan, and  
on the hills of Ephraim and in  
Gilead its hunger shall be  
satisfied. <sup>20</sup> In those days and  
at that time, says the LORD, the  
iniquity of Israel shall be  
sought, and there shall be  
none; and the sins of Judah,  
and none shall be found; for I  
will pardon the remnant that I  
have spared.

### **Titus 1:1–3 (NRSV)**

#### *Salutation*

**1** Paul, a servant of God and  
an apostle of Jesus Christ, for  
the sake of the faith of God’s  
elect and the knowledge of  
the truth that is in accordance  
with godliness, <sup>2</sup> in the hope of  
eternal life that God, who  
never lies, promised before  
the ages began— <sup>3</sup> in due time  
he revealed his word through  
the proclamation with which I  
have been entrusted by the  
command of God our Savior,

**Psalm 96:1-13 (NRSV)**

*Praise to God Who  
Comes in Judgment  
(1 Chr 16:23–33)*

- 1 O sing to the LORD a new  
song;  
sing to the LORD, all the  
earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD, bless his  
name;  
tell of his salvation from  
day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among  
the nations,  
his marvelous works  
among all the peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD, and  
greatly to be praised;  
he is to be revered above  
all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the  
peoples are idols,  
but the LORD made the  
heavens.
- 6 Honor and majesty are  
before him;  
strength and beauty are  
in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, O  
families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the LORD glory  
and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the  
glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and  
come into his courts.

- 9 Worship the LORD in holy  
splendor;  
tremble before him, all  
the earth.
- 10 Say among the nations,  
“The LORD is king!  
The world is firmly  
established; it shall  
never be moved.  
He will judge the peoples  
with equity.”
- 11 Let the heavens be glad,  
and let the earth  
rejoice;  
let the sea roar, and all  
that fills it;
- 12 let the field exult, and  
everything in it.  
Then shall all the trees of  
the forest sing for joy
- 13 before the LORD; **for he is  
coming,  
for he is coming to judge  
the earth.  
He will judge the world  
with righteousness,  
and the peoples with his  
truth.**

**Proverbs 21:23–24 (NRSV)**

- 23 To watch over mouth and  
tongue  
is to keep out of trouble.

<sup>24</sup> The proud, haughty  
person, named  
“Scoffer,”  
acts with arrogant pride.

## August 21



### Jeremiah 50:21–46 (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> Go up to the land of  
Merathaim;  
go up against her,  
and attack the inhabitants  
of Pekod  
and utterly destroy the  
last of them,  
says the LORD;  
do all that I have  
commanded you.

<sup>22</sup> The noise of battle is in the  
land,  
and great destruction!  
<sup>23</sup> How the hammer of the  
whole earth  
is cut down and broken!  
How Babylon has become  
a horror among the  
nations!

<sup>24</sup> You set a snare for yourself  
and you were caught,  
O Babylon,

but you did not know it;  
you were discovered and  
seized,  
because you challenged  
the LORD.

<sup>25</sup> The LORD has opened his  
armory,  
and brought out the  
weapons of his wrath,  
for the Lord GOD of hosts  
has a task to do  
in the land of the  
Chaldeans.

<sup>26</sup> Come against her from  
every quarter;  
open her granaries;  
pile her up like heaps of  
grain, and destroy her  
utterly;  
let nothing be left of her.

<sup>27</sup> Kill all her bulls,  
let them go down to the  
slaughter.  
Alas for them, their day  
has come,  
the time of their  
punishment!

<sup>28</sup> Listen! Fugitives and  
refugees from the land of  
Babylon are coming to declare  
in Zion the vengeance of the  
LORD our God, vengeance for  
his temple.

<sup>29</sup> Summon archers against  
Babylon, all who bend the



bow. Encamp all around her; let no one escape. Repay her according to her deeds; just as she has done, do to her—for she has arrogantly defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>30</sup>Therefore her young men shall fall in her squares, and all her soldiers shall be destroyed on that day, says the LORD.

<sup>31</sup> I am against you, O arrogant one, says the Lord GOD of hosts; for your day has come, the time when I will punish you.

<sup>32</sup> The arrogant one shall stumble and fall, with no one to raise him up, and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it will devour everything around him.

<sup>33</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: The people of Israel are oppressed, and so too are the people of Judah; all their captors have held them fast and refuse to let them go.

<sup>34</sup> Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name. He will surely plead their cause, that he may give rest to

the earth, but unrest to the inhabitants of Babylon.

<sup>35</sup> A sword against the Chaldeans, says the LORD, and against the inhabitants of Babylon, and against her officials and her sages!

<sup>36</sup> A sword against the diviners, so that they may become fools! A sword against her warriors, so that they may be destroyed!

<sup>37</sup> A sword against her horses and against her chariots, and against all the foreign troops in her midst, so that they may become women!

A sword against all her treasures, that they may be plundered!

<sup>38</sup> A drought against her waters, that they may be dried up!

For it is a land of images,

and they go mad over  
idols.

<sup>39</sup> Therefore wild animals  
shall live with hyenas in  
Babylon, and ostriches shall  
inhabit her; she shall never  
again be peopled, or inhabited  
for all generations. <sup>40</sup> As when  
God overthrew Sodom and  
Gomorrah and their  
neighbors, says the LORD, so no  
one shall live there, nor shall  
anyone settle in her.

<sup>41</sup> Look, a people is coming  
from the north;  
a mighty nation and  
many kings  
are stirring from the  
farthest parts of the  
earth.

<sup>42</sup> They wield bow and spear,  
they are cruel and have  
no mercy.  
The sound of them is like  
the roaring sea;  
they ride upon horses,  
set in array as a warrior for  
battle,  
against you, O daughter  
Babylon!

<sup>43</sup> The king of Babylon heard  
news of them,  
and his hands fell  
helpless;  
anguish seized him,

pain like that of a woman  
in labor.

<sup>44</sup> Like a lion coming up  
from the thickets of the Jordan  
against a perennial pasture, I  
will suddenly chase them away  
from her; and I will appoint  
over her whomever I choose.  
For who is like me? Who can  
summon me? Who is the  
shepherd who can stand  
before me? <sup>45</sup> Therefore hear  
the plan that the LORD has  
made against Babylon, and the  
purposes that he has formed  
against the land of the  
Chaldeans: Surely the little  
ones of the flock shall be  
dragged away; surely their fold  
shall be appalled at their fate.

<sup>46</sup> At the sound of the capture  
of Babylon the earth shall  
tremble, and her cry shall be  
heard among the nations.

#### **Titus 1:4–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> To Titus, my loyal child in  
the faith we share:

Grace and peace from God  
the Father and Christ Jesus our  
Savior.

*Titus in Crete*

<sup>5</sup> I left you behind in Crete  
for this reason, so that you

should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you:

<sup>6</sup> someone who is blameless, married only once, whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious. <sup>7</sup> For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; <sup>8</sup> but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled.

<sup>9</sup> He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

<sup>10</sup> There are also many rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; <sup>11</sup> they must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for sordid gain what it is not right to teach.

<sup>12</sup> It was one of them, their very own prophet, who said,

“Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons.”

<sup>13</sup> That testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, so that they may become sound in the faith, <sup>14</sup> not paying attention to Jewish myths or to commandments of those who reject the truth. <sup>15</sup> To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure. Their very minds and consciences are corrupted. <sup>16</sup> They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

### **Psalm 97:1–12 (NRSV)**

#### *The Glory of God's Reign*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice;  
let the many coastlands be glad!
- <sup>2</sup> Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;  
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
- <sup>3</sup> Fire goes before him,

and consumes his  
adversaries on every  
side.

4 His lightnings light up the  
world;  
the earth sees and  
trembles.

5 The mountains melt like  
wax before the LORD,  
before the Lord of all the  
earth.

6 The heavens proclaim his  
righteousness;  
and all the peoples  
behold his glory.

7 All worshipers of images  
are put to shame,  
those who make their  
boast in worthless  
idols;  
all gods bow down  
before him.

8 Zion hears and is glad,  
and the towns of Judah  
rejoice,  
because of your  
judgments, O God.

9 For you, O LORD, are most  
high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above  
all gods.

10 The LORD loves those who  
hate evil;  
he guards the lives of his  
faithful;

he rescues them from  
the hand of the  
wicked.

11 Light dawns for the  
righteous,  
and joy for the upright in  
heart.

12 Rejoice in the LORD, O you  
righteous,  
and give thanks to his  
holy name!

### **Proverbs 21:25–26 (NRSV)**

25 The craving of the lazy  
person is fatal,  
for lazy hands refuse to  
labor.

26 All day long the wicked  
covet,  
but the righteous give  
and do not hold back.



## **August 22**



### **Jeremiah 51:1–26 (NRSV)**

**51** Thus says the LORD:  
I am going to stir up a  
destructive wind  
against Babylon

and against the  
inhabitants of Leb-  
qamai;  
2 and I will send winnowers  
to Babylon,  
and they shall winnow  
her.  
They shall empty her land  
when they come against  
her from every side  
on the day of trouble.  
3 Let not the archer bend his  
bow,  
and let him not array  
himself in his coat of  
mail.  
Do not spare her young  
men;  
utterly destroy her entire  
army.  
4 They shall fall down slain in  
the land of the  
Chaldeans,  
and wounded in her  
streets.  
5 Israel and Judah have not  
been forsaken  
by their God, the LORD of  
hosts,  
though their land is full of  
guilt  
before the Holy One of  
Israel.  
6 Flee from the midst of  
Babylon,

save your lives, each of  
you!  
Do not perish because of  
her guilt,  
for this is the time of the  
LORD's vengeance;  
he is repaying her what is  
due.  
7 Babylon was a golden cup  
in the LORD's hand,  
making all the earth  
drunken;  
the nations drank of her  
wine,  
and so the nations went  
mad.  
8 Suddenly Babylon has  
fallen and is shattered;  
wail for her!  
Bring balm for her wound;  
perhaps she may be  
healed.  
9 We tried to heal Babylon,  
but she could not be  
healed.  
Forsake her, and let each  
of us go  
to our own country;  
for her judgment has  
reached up to heaven  
and has been lifted up  
even to the skies.  
10 The LORD has brought forth  
our vindication;

come, let us declare in  
Zion  
the work of the LORD our  
God.

11 Sharpen the arrows!  
Fill the quivers!

The LORD has stirred up the  
spirit of the kings of the  
Medes, because his purpose  
concerning Babylon is to  
destroy it, for that is the  
vengeance of the LORD,  
vengeance for his temple.

12 Raise a standard against  
the walls of Babylon;  
make the watch strong;  
post sentinels;  
prepare the ambushes;  
for the LORD has both  
planned and done  
what he spoke  
concerning the  
inhabitants of Babylon.

13 You who live by mighty  
waters,  
rich in treasures,  
your end has come,  
the thread of your life is  
cut.

14 The LORD of hosts has  
sworn by himself:  
Surely I will fill you with  
troops like a swarm of  
locusts,

and they shall raise a  
shout of victory over  
you.

15 It is he who made the  
earth by his power,  
who established the  
world by his wisdom,  
and by his understanding  
stretched out the  
heavens.

16 When he utters his voice  
there is a tumult of  
waters in the heavens,  
and he makes the mist  
rise from the ends of  
the earth.

He makes lightnings for  
the rain,  
and he brings out the  
wind from his  
storehouses.

17 Everyone is stupid and  
without knowledge;  
goldsmiths are all put to  
shame by their idols;  
for their images are false,  
and there is no breath in  
them.

18 They are worthless, a work  
of delusion;  
at the time of their  
punishment they shall  
perish.

19 Not like these is the LORD,  
the portion of Jacob,

for he is the one who  
formed all things,  
and Israel is the tribe of his  
inheritance;  
the LORD of hosts is his  
name.

*Israel the Creator's Instrument*

<sup>20</sup> You are my war club, my  
weapon of battle:  
with you I smash nations;  
with you I destroy  
kingdoms;  
<sup>21</sup> with you I smash the horse  
and its rider;  
with you I smash the  
chariot and the  
charioteer;  
<sup>22</sup> with you I smash man and  
woman;  
with you I smash the old  
man and the boy;  
with you I smash the  
young man and the  
girl;  
<sup>23</sup> with you I smash  
shepherds and their  
flocks;  
with you I smash farmers  
and their teams;  
with you I smash  
governors and  
deputies.

*The Doom of Babylon*

<sup>24</sup> I will repay Babylon and  
all the inhabitants of Chaldea  
before your very eyes for all  
the wrong that they have done  
in Zion, says the LORD.

<sup>25</sup> I am against you, O  
destroying mountain,  
says the LORD,  
that destroys the whole  
earth;  
I will stretch out my hand  
against you,  
and roll you down from  
the crags,  
and make you a burned-  
out mountain.

<sup>26</sup> No stone shall be taken  
from you for a corner  
and no stone for a  
foundation,  
but you shall be a  
perpetual waste,  
says the LORD.

**Titus 2:1–8 (NRSV)**

*Teach Sound Doctrine*

**2** But as for you, teach what is  
consistent with sound  
doctrine. <sup>2</sup>Tell the older men  
to be temperate, serious,  
prudent, and sound in faith, in  
love, and in endurance.

<sup>3</sup>Likewise, tell the older  
women to be reverent in

behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, <sup>4</sup> so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, <sup>5</sup> to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited.

<sup>6</sup> Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. <sup>7</sup> Show yourself in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, <sup>8</sup> and sound speech that cannot be censured; then any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us.

**Psalms 98:1-9 (NRSV)**

*Praise the Judge of the World*

A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> O sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have gotten him victory.  
<sup>2</sup> The LORD has made known his victory;

he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.

<sup>3</sup> He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

<sup>4</sup> **Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.**

<sup>5</sup> Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

<sup>6</sup> With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.

<sup>8</sup> Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy

<sup>9</sup> at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth.



He will judge the world  
with righteousness,  
and the peoples with  
equity.

**Proverbs 21:27 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> The sacrifice of the wicked  
is an abomination;  
how much more when  
brought with evil  
intent.

**August 23**



**Jeremiah 51:27–53 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> Raise a standard in the  
land,  
blow the trumpet among  
the nations;  
prepare the nations for  
war against her,  
summon against her the  
kingdoms,  
Ararat, Minni, and  
Ashkenaz;  
appoint a marshal against  
her,  
bring up horses like  
bristling locusts.

<sup>28</sup> Prepare the nations for  
war against her,  
the kings of the Medes,  
with their governors  
and deputies,  
and every land under  
their dominion.

<sup>29</sup> The land trembles and  
writhes,  
for the LORD's purposes  
against Babylon stand,  
to make the land of  
Babylon a desolation,  
without inhabitant.

<sup>30</sup> The warriors of Babylon  
have given up fighting,  
they remain in their  
strongholds;  
their strength has failed,  
they have become  
women;  
her buildings are set on  
fire,  
her bars are broken.

<sup>31</sup> One runner runs to meet  
another,  
and one messenger to  
meet another,  
to tell the king of Babylon  
that his city is taken from  
end to end:

<sup>32</sup> the fords have been  
seized,  
the marshes have been  
burned with fire,

and the soldiers are in  
panic.  
33 For thus says the LORD of  
hosts, the God of  
Israel:  
Daughter Babylon is like a  
threshing floor  
at the time when it is  
trodden;  
yet a little while  
and the time of her  
harvest will come.  
34 “King Nebuchadrezzar of  
Babylon has devoured  
me,  
he has crushed me;  
he has made me an empty  
vessel,  
he has swallowed me like  
a monster;  
he has filled his belly with  
my delicacies,  
he has spewed me out.  
35 May my torn flesh be  
avenged on Babylon,”  
the inhabitants of Zion  
shall say.  
“May my blood be  
avenged on the  
inhabitants of  
Chaldea,”  
Jerusalem shall say.  
36 Therefore thus says the  
LORD:

I am going to defend your  
cause  
and take vengeance for  
you.  
I will dry up her sea  
and make her fountain  
dry;  
37 and Babylon shall become  
a heap of ruins,  
a den of jackals,  
an object of horror and of  
hissing,  
without inhabitant.  
38 Like lions they shall roar  
together;  
they shall growl like  
lions' whelps.  
39 When they are inflamed, I  
will set out their drink  
and make them drunk,  
until they become  
merry  
and then sleep a perpetual  
sleep  
and never wake, says the  
LORD.  
40 I will bring them down like  
lambs to the slaughter,  
like rams and goats.  
41 How Sheshach is taken,  
the pride of the whole  
earth seized!  
How Babylon has become  
an object of horror  
among the nations!

42 The sea has risen over  
Babylon;  
she has been covered by  
its tumultuous waves.  
43 Her cities have become an  
object of horror,  
a land of drought and a  
desert,  
a land in which no one  
lives,  
and through which no  
mortal passes.  
44 I will punish Bel in Babylon,  
and make him disgorge  
what he has  
swallowed.  
The nations shall no longer  
stream to him;  
the wall of Babylon has  
fallen.  
45 Come out of her, my  
people!  
Save your lives, each of  
you,  
from the fierce anger of  
the LORD!  
46 Do not be fainthearted or  
fearful  
at the rumors heard in  
the land—  
one year one rumor  
comes,  
the next year another,  
rumors of violence in the  
land

and of ruler against ruler.  
47 Assuredly, the days are  
coming  
when I will punish the  
images of Babylon;  
her whole land shall be put  
to shame,  
and all her slain shall fall  
in her midst.  
48 Then the heavens and the  
earth,  
and all that is in them,  
shall shout for joy over  
Babylon;  
for the destroyers shall  
come against them out  
of the north,  
49 Babylon must fall for  
the slain of Israel,  
as the slain of all the  
earth have fallen  
because of Babylon.  
50 You survivors of the sword,  
go, do not linger!  
Remember the LORD in a  
distant land,  
and let Jerusalem come  
into your mind:  
51 We are put to shame, for  
we have heard insults;  
dishonor has covered our  
face,  
for aliens have come  
into the holy places of  
the LORD's house.

52 Therefore the time is surely coming, says the LORD, when I will punish her idols, and through all her land the wounded shall groan.

53 Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify her strong height, from me destroyers would come upon her, says the LORD.

**Titus 2:9–15 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup>Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back, <sup>10</sup>not to pilfer, but to show complete and perfect fidelity, so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Savior.

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the

manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

<sup>15</sup>Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one look down on you.

**Psalm 99:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Praise to God for His Holiness*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble!  
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples.

<sup>3</sup> Let them praise your great and awesome name.  
Holy is he!

<sup>4</sup> Mighty King, lover of justice,  
you have established equity;  
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.



**Proverbs 21:28–29 (NRSV)**

<sup>28</sup> A false witness will perish,  
but a good listener will  
testify successfully.  
<sup>29</sup> The wicked put on a bold  
face,  
but the upright give  
thought to their ways.

**August 24**



**Jeremiah 51:54–52:11 (NRSV)**

<sup>54</sup> Listen!—a cry from  
Babylon!  
A great crashing from the  
land of the Chaldeans!  
<sup>55</sup> For the LORD is laying  
Babylon waste,  
and stilling her loud  
clamor.  
Their waves roar like  
mighty waters,  
the sound of their clamor  
resounds;  
<sup>56</sup> for a destroyer has come  
against her,  
against Babylon;  
her warriors are taken,  
their bows are broken;

for the LORD is a God of  
recompense,  
he will repay in full.

<sup>57</sup> I will make her officials and  
her sages drunk,  
also her governors, her  
deputies, and her  
warriors;  
they shall sleep a  
perpetual sleep and  
never wake,  
says the King, whose  
name is the LORD of  
hosts.

<sup>58</sup> Thus says the LORD of  
hosts:  
The broad wall of Babylon  
shall be leveled to the  
ground,  
and her high gates  
shall be burned with fire.  
The peoples exhaust  
themselves for  
nothing,  
and the nations weary  
themselves only for  
fire.

*Jeremiah's Command  
to Seraiah*

<sup>59</sup> The word that the  
prophet Jeremiah commanded  
Seraiah son of Neriah son of  
Mahseiah, when he went with  
King Zedekiah of Judah to

Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign. Seraiah was the quartermaster. <sup>60</sup> Jeremiah wrote in a scroll all the disasters that would come on Babylon, all these words that are written concerning Babylon. <sup>61</sup> And Jeremiah said to Seraiah: “When you come to Babylon, see that you read all these words, <sup>62</sup> and say, ‘O LORD, you yourself threatened to destroy this place so that neither human beings nor animals shall live in it, and it shall be desolate forever.’ <sup>63</sup> When you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it, and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates, <sup>64</sup> and say, ‘Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the disasters that I am bringing on her.’ ”

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

*The Destruction of  
Jerusalem Reviewed*

*(2 Kings 24:18–25:26;  
2 Chr 36:11–20; Jer 39:1–10)*

**52** Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hamutal daughter

of Jeremiah of Libnah. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. <sup>3</sup> Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah so angered the LORD that he expelled them from his presence.

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. <sup>4</sup> And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and they laid siege to it; they built siegeworks against it all around. <sup>5</sup> So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. <sup>6</sup> On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine became so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. <sup>7</sup> Then a breach was made in the city wall; and all the soldiers fled and went out from the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king’s garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah. <sup>8</sup> But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and

overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered, deserting him. <sup>9</sup> Then they captured the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him.

<sup>10</sup> The king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and also killed all the officers of Judah at Riblah.

<sup>11</sup> He put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and the king of Babylon took him to Babylon, and put him in prison until the day of his death.

### **Titus 3:1–8 (NRSV)**

#### *Maintain Good Deeds*

**3** Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup> to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show every courtesy to everyone. <sup>3</sup> For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, despicable, hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But

when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup> **This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.** <sup>8</sup> The saying is sure.

I desire that you insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone.

### **Psalms 99:5-9 (NRSV)**

- <sup>5</sup> Extol the LORD our God; worship at his footstool. Holy is he!
- <sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron were among his priests, Samuel also was among those who called on his name.

They cried to the LORD,  
and he answered  
them.

<sup>7</sup> He spoke to them in the  
pillar of cloud;  
they kept his decrees,  
and the statutes that he  
gave them.

<sup>8</sup> O LORD our God, you  
answered them;  
you were a forgiving God  
to them,  
but an avenger of their  
wrongdoings.

<sup>9</sup> Extol the LORD our God,  
and worship at his holy  
mountain;  
for the LORD our God is  
holy.

**Proverbs 21:30–31 (NRSV)**

<sup>30</sup> No wisdom, no  
understanding, no  
counsel,  
can avail against the  
LORD.

<sup>31</sup> The horse is made ready  
for the day of battle,  
but the victory belongs  
to the LORD.

## August 25



**Jeremiah 52:12–34 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> In the fifth month, on  
the tenth day of the month—  
which was the nineteenth year  
of King Nebuchadnezzar, king  
of Babylon—Nebuzaradan the  
captain of the bodyguard who  
served the king of Babylon,  
entered Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> He  
burned the house of the LORD,  
the king's house, and all the  
houses of Jerusalem; every  
great house he burned down.

<sup>14</sup> All the army of the  
Chaldeans, who were with the  
captain of the guard, broke  
down all the walls around  
Jerusalem. <sup>15</sup> Nebuzaradan the  
captain of the guard carried  
into exile some of the poorest  
of the people and the rest of  
the people who were left in  
the city and the deserters who  
had defected to the king of  
Babylon, together with the  
rest of the artisans. <sup>16</sup> But  
Nebuzaradan the captain of  
the guard left some of the  
poorest people of the land to  
be vinedressers and tillers of  
the soil.



<sup>17</sup> The pillars of bronze that were in the house of the LORD, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried all the bronze to Babylon. <sup>18</sup> They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the basins, the ladles, and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service. <sup>19</sup> The captain of the guard took away the small bowls also, the firepans, the basins, the pots, the lampstands, the ladles, and the bowls for libation, both those of gold and those of silver. <sup>20</sup> As for the two pillars, the one sea, the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, and the stands, which King Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weighing. <sup>21</sup> As for the pillars, the height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, its circumference was twelve cubits; it was hollow and its thickness was four fingers. <sup>22</sup> Upon it was a capital of bronze; the height of the capital was five cubits; latticework and

pomegranates, all of bronze, encircled the top of the capital. And the second pillar had the same, with pomegranates. <sup>23</sup> There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates encircling the latticework numbered one hundred.

<sup>24</sup> The captain of the guard took the chief priest Seraiah, the second priest Zephaniah, and the three guardians of the threshold; <sup>25</sup> and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the soldiers, and seven men of the king's council who were found in the city; the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found inside the city. <sup>26</sup> Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. <sup>27</sup> And the king of Babylon struck them down, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah went into exile out of its land.

<sup>28</sup> This is the number of the people whom Nebuchadrezzar took into exile: in the seventh year, three thousand twenty-three Judeans; <sup>29</sup> in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he took into exile from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty-two persons; <sup>30</sup> in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took into exile of the Judeans seven hundred forty-five persons; all the persons were four thousand six hundred.

*Jehoiachin Favored in Captivity*  
(2 Kings 25:27–30)

<sup>31</sup> In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, in the year he began to reign, showed favor to King Jehoiachin of Judah and brought him out of prison; <sup>32</sup> he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the seats of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. <sup>33</sup> So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes, and every day of his life he dined regularly at

the king's table. <sup>34</sup> For his allowance, a regular daily allowance was given him by the king of Babylon, as long as he lived, up to the day of his death.

**Titus 3:9–15 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. <sup>10</sup> After a first and second admonition, have nothing more to do with anyone who causes divisions, <sup>11</sup> since you know that such a person is perverted and sinful, being self-condemned.

*Final Messages and  
Benediction*

<sup>12</sup> When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. <sup>13</sup> Make every effort to send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way, and see that they lack nothing. <sup>14</sup> And let people learn to devote themselves to good works in order to meet

urgent needs, so that they may not be unproductive.

<sup>15</sup> All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith.

Grace be with all of you.

**Psalms 100:1-2 (NRSV)**

*All Lands Summoned  
to Praise God*

A Psalm of thanksgiving.

<sup>1</sup> Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Worship the LORD with gladness;  
come into his presence with singing.

**Proverbs 22:1 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,  
and favor is better than silver or gold.

**August 26**



**Lamentations 1:1-22 (NRSV)**

*The Deserted City*

**1** How lonely sits the city

that once was full of people!

How like a widow she has become,

she that was great among the nations!

She that was a princess among the provinces has become a vassal.

<sup>2</sup> She weeps bitterly in the night,  
with tears on her cheeks;  
among all her lovers she has no one to comfort her;  
all her friends have dealt treacherously with her,  
they have become her enemies.

<sup>3</sup> Judah has gone into exile with suffering and hard servitude;  
she lives now among the nations,  
and finds no resting place;  
her pursuers have all overtaken her  
in the midst of her distress.

<sup>4</sup> The roads to Zion mourn,  
for no one comes to the festivals;  
all her gates are desolate,  
her priests groan;

her young girls grieve,  
and her lot is bitter.  
5 Her foes have become the  
masters,  
her enemies prosper,  
because the LORD has  
made her suffer  
for the multitude of her  
transgressions;  
her children have gone  
away,  
captives before the foe.  
6 From daughter Zion has  
departed  
all her majesty.  
Her princes have become  
like stags  
that find no pasture;  
they fled without strength  
before the pursuer.  
7 Jerusalem remembers,  
in the days of her  
affliction and  
wandering,  
all the precious things  
that were hers in days of  
old.  
When her people fell into  
the hand of the foe,  
and there was no one to  
help her,  
the foe looked on mocking  
over her downfall.  
8 Jerusalem sinned  
grievously,

so she has become a  
mockery;  
all who honored her  
despise her,  
for they have seen her  
nakedness;  
she herself groans,  
and turns her face away.  
9 Her uncleanness was in her  
skirts;  
she took no thought of  
her future;  
her downfall was  
appalling,  
with none to comfort  
her.  
“O LORD, look at my  
affliction,  
for the enemy has  
triumphed!”  
10 Enemies have stretched  
out their hands  
over all her precious  
things;  
she has even seen the  
nations  
invade her sanctuary,  
those whom you forbade  
to enter your  
congregation.  
11 All her people groan  
as they search for bread;  
they trade their treasures  
for food  
to revive their strength.

- Look, O LORD, and see  
how worthless I have  
become.
- 12 Is it nothing to you, all you  
who pass by?  
Look and see  
if there is any sorrow like  
my sorrow,  
which was brought upon  
me,  
which the LORD inflicted  
on the day of his fierce  
anger.
- 13 From on high he sent fire;  
it went deep into my  
bones;  
he spread a net for my  
feet;  
he turned me back;  
he has left me stunned,  
faint all day long.
- 14 My transgressions were  
bound into a yoke;  
by his hand they were  
fastened together;  
they weigh on my neck,  
sapping my strength;  
the Lord handed me over  
to those whom I cannot  
withstand.
- 15 The LORD has rejected  
all my warriors in the  
midst of me;  
he proclaimed a time  
against me
- to crush my young men;  
the Lord has trodden as in  
a wine press  
the virgin daughter  
Judah.
- 16 For these things I weep;  
my eyes flow with tears;  
for a comforter is far from  
me,  
one to revive my  
courage;  
my children are desolate,  
for the enemy has  
prevailed.
- 17 Zion stretches out her  
hands,  
but there is no one to  
comfort her;  
the LORD has commanded  
against Jacob  
that his neighbors should  
become his foes;  
Jerusalem has become  
a filthy thing among  
them.
- 18 The LORD is in the right,  
for I have rebelled  
against his word;  
but hear, all you peoples,  
and behold my suffering;  
my young women and  
young men  
have gone into captivity.
- 19 I called to my lovers  
but they deceived me;

my priests and elders  
perished in the city  
while seeking food  
to revive their strength.

<sup>20</sup> See, O LORD, how  
distressed I am;  
my stomach churns,  
my heart is wrung within  
me,  
because I have been very  
rebellious.

In the street the sword  
bereaves;  
in the house it is like  
death.

<sup>21</sup> They heard how I was  
groaning,  
with no one to comfort  
me.

All my enemies heard of  
my trouble;  
they are glad that you  
have done it.  
Bring on the day you have  
announced,  
and let them be as I am.

<sup>22</sup> Let all their evil doing  
come before you;  
and deal with them  
as you have dealt with me  
because of all my  
transgressions;  
for my groans are many  
and my heart is faint.

### **Philemon 1:1-3 (NRSV)**

#### *Salutation*

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a prisoner of Christ  
Jesus, and Timothy our  
brother,

To Philemon our dear  
friend and co-worker, <sup>2</sup> to  
Apphia our sister, to Archippus  
our fellow soldier, and to the  
church in your house:

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace  
from God our Father and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Psalm 100:3-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Know that the LORD is God.  
It is he that made us, and  
we are his;  
we are his people, and  
the sheep of his  
pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with  
thanksgiving,  
and his courts with  
praise.

Give thanks to him, bless  
his name.

<sup>5</sup> For the LORD is good;  
his steadfast love  
endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all  
generations.



**Proverbs 22:2-4 (NRSV)**

- <sup>2</sup> The rich and the poor have  
this in common:  
the LORD is the maker of  
them all.
- <sup>3</sup> The clever see danger and  
hide;  
but the simple go on,  
and suffer for it.
- <sup>4</sup> The reward for humility  
and fear of the LORD  
is riches and honor and  
life.

**August 27**



**Lamentations 2:1-19 (NRSV)**  
*God's Warnings Fulfilled*

- 2** How the Lord in his anger  
has humiliated daughter  
Zion!  
He has thrown down from  
heaven to earth  
the splendor of Israel;  
he has not remembered  
his footstool  
in the day of his anger.
- <sup>2</sup> The Lord has destroyed  
without mercy

- all the dwellings of  
Jacob;  
in his wrath he has broken  
down  
the strongholds of  
daughter Judah;  
he has brought down to  
the ground in dishonor  
the kingdom and its  
rulers.
- <sup>3</sup> He has cut down in fierce  
anger  
all the might of Israel;  
he has withdrawn his right  
hand from them  
in the face of the enemy;  
he has burned like a  
flaming fire in Jacob,  
consuming all around.
- <sup>4</sup> He has bent his bow like an  
enemy,  
with his right hand set  
like a foe;  
he has killed all in whom  
we took pride  
in the tent of daughter  
Zion;  
he has poured out his fury  
like fire.
- <sup>5</sup> The Lord has become like  
an enemy;  
he has destroyed Israel.  
He has destroyed all its  
palaces,

laid in ruins its  
strongholds,  
and multiplied in daughter  
Judah  
mourning and  
lamentation.  
6 He has broken down his  
booth like a garden,  
he has destroyed his  
tabernacle;  
the LORD has abolished in  
Zion  
festival and sabbath,  
and in his fierce  
indignation has  
spurned  
king and priest.  
7 The Lord has scorned his  
altar,  
disowned his sanctuary;  
he has delivered into the  
hand of the enemy  
the walls of her palaces;  
a clamor was raised in the  
house of the LORD  
as on a day of festival.  
8 The LORD determined to lay  
in ruins  
the wall of daughter  
Zion;  
he stretched the line;  
he did not withhold his  
hand from destroying;  
he caused rampart and  
wall to lament;

they languish together.  
9 Her gates have sunk into  
the ground;  
he has ruined and  
broken her bars;  
her king and princes are  
among the nations;  
guidance is no more,  
and her prophets obtain  
no vision from the LORD.  
10 The elders of daughter  
Zion  
sit on the ground in  
silence;  
they have thrown dust on  
their heads  
and put on sackcloth;  
the young girls of  
Jerusalem  
have bowed their heads  
to the ground.  
11 My eyes are spent with  
weeping;  
my stomach churns;  
my bile is poured out on  
the ground  
because of the  
destruction of my  
people,  
because infants and babes  
faint  
in the streets of the city.  
12 They cry to their mothers,  
“Where is bread and  
wine?”



as they faint like the  
wounded  
in the streets of the city,  
as their life is poured out  
on their mothers'  
bosom.

13 What can I say for you, to  
what compare you,  
O daughter Jerusalem?  
To what can I liken you,  
that I may comfort you,  
O virgin daughter Zion?  
For vast as the sea is your  
ruin;  
who can heal you?

14 Your prophets have seen  
for you  
false and deceptive  
visions;  
they have not exposed  
your iniquity  
to restore your fortunes,  
but have seen oracles for  
you  
that are false and  
misleading.

15 All who pass along the way  
clap their hands at you;  
they hiss and wag their  
heads  
at daughter Jerusalem;  
"Is this the city that was  
called  
the perfection of beauty,  
the joy of all the earth?"

16 All your enemies  
open their mouths  
against you;  
they hiss, they gnash their  
teeth,  
they cry: "We have  
devoured her!  
Ah, this is the day we  
longed for;  
at last we have seen it!"

17 The LORD has done what he  
purposed,  
he has carried out his  
threat;  
as he ordained long ago,  
he has demolished  
without pity;  
he has made the enemy  
rejoice over you,  
and exalted the might of  
your foes.

18 Cry aloud to the Lord!  
O wall of daughter Zion!  
Let tears stream down like  
a torrent  
day and night!  
Give yourself no rest,  
your eyes no respite!

19 Arise, cry out in the night,  
at the beginning of the  
watches!  
Pour out your heart like  
water  
before the presence of  
the Lord!

Lift your hands to him  
for the lives of your  
children,  
who faint for hunger  
at the head of every  
street.

**Philemon 1:4–25 (NRSV)**

*Philemon's Love and Faith*

<sup>4</sup> When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God <sup>5</sup> because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. <sup>7</sup> I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

*Paul's Plea for Onesimus*

<sup>8</sup> For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, <sup>9</sup> yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. <sup>10</sup> I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus,

whose father I have become during my imprisonment.

<sup>11</sup> Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me.

<sup>12</sup> I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. <sup>13</sup> I

wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel;

<sup>14</sup> but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps this is the

reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever,

<sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup> So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup> If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. <sup>19</sup> I,

Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. <sup>20</sup> Yes, brother, let me have this

benefit from you in the Lord!  
Refresh my heart in Christ.

<sup>21</sup> Confident of your  
obedience, I am writing to  
you, knowing that you will do  
even more than I say.

<sup>22</sup> One thing more—  
prepare a guest room for me,  
for I am hoping through your  
prayers to be restored to you.

*Final Greetings and  
Benediction*

<sup>23</sup> Epaphras, my fellow  
prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends  
greetings to you, <sup>24</sup> and so do  
Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and  
Luke, my fellow workers.

<sup>25</sup> The grace of the Lord  
Jesus Christ be with your  
spirit.

**Psalms 101:1-3 (NRSV)**

*A Sovereign's Pledge of  
Integrity and Justice*

Of David. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> I will sing of loyalty and of  
justice;  
to you, O LORD, I will sing.

<sup>2</sup> I will study the way that is  
blameless.  
When shall I attain it?  
I will walk with integrity of  
heart  
within my house;

<sup>3</sup> I will not set before my  
eyes  
anything that is base.  
I hate the work of those  
who fall away;  
it shall not cling to me.

**Proverbs 22:5-6 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Thorns and snares are in  
the way of the  
perverse;  
the cautious will keep far  
from them.

<sup>6</sup> Train children in the right  
way,  
and when old, they will  
not stray.



**August 28**



**Lamentations 2:20-3:24  
(NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> Look, O LORD, and  
consider!  
To whom have you done  
this?  
Should women eat their  
offspring,  
the children they have  
borne?

Should priest and prophet  
be killed  
in the sanctuary of the  
Lord?  
21 The young and the old are  
lying  
on the ground in the  
streets;  
my young women and my  
young men  
have fallen by the sword;  
in the day of your anger  
you have killed them,  
slaughtering without  
mercy.  
22 You invited my enemies  
from all around  
as if for a day of festival;  
and on the day of the  
anger of the LORD  
no one escaped or  
survived;  
those whom I bore and  
reared  
my enemy has  
destroyed.

*God's Steadfast Love Endures*

**3** I am one who has seen  
affliction  
under the rod of God's  
wrath;  
2 he has driven and brought  
me

into darkness without  
any light;  
3 against me alone he turns  
his hand,  
again and again, all day  
long.  
4 He has made my flesh and  
my skin waste away,  
and broken my bones;  
5 he has besieged and  
enveloped me  
with bitterness and  
tribulation;  
6 he has made me sit in  
darkness  
like the dead of long ago.  
7 He has walled me about so  
that I cannot escape;  
he has put heavy chains  
on me;  
8 though I call and cry for  
help,  
he shuts out my prayer;  
9 he has blocked my ways  
with hewn stones,  
he has made my paths  
crooked.  
10 He is a bear lying in wait  
for me,  
a lion in hiding;  
11 he led me off my way and  
tore me to pieces;  
he has made me  
desolate;

12 he bent his bow and set  
me  
as a mark for his arrow.  
13 He shot into my vitals  
the arrows of his quiver;  
14 I have become the  
laughingstock of all my  
people,  
the object of their taunt-  
songs all day long.  
15 He has filled me with  
bitterness,  
he has sated me with  
wormwood.  
16 He has made my teeth  
grind on gravel,  
and made me cower in  
ashes;  
17 my soul is bereft of peace;  
I have forgotten what  
happiness is;  
18 so I say, "Gone is my glory,  
and all that I had hoped  
for from the LORD."  
19 The thought of my  
affliction and my  
homelessness  
is wormwood and gall!  
20 My soul continually thinks  
of it  
and is bowed down  
within me.  
21 But this I call to mind,  
and therefore I have  
hope:

22 The steadfast love of the  
LORD never ceases,  
his mercies never come  
to an end;  
23 they are new every  
morning;  
great is your faithfulness.  
24 "The LORD is my portion,"  
says my soul,  
"therefore I will hope in  
him."

### **Hebrews 1:1–8 (NRSV)**

*God Has Spoken by His Son  
(Cp Jn 1:1–4)*

**1** Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.<sup>3</sup> He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,<sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

*The Son Is Superior to Angels*

<sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels  
did God ever say,  
“You are my Son;  
today I have begotten  
you”?

Or again,  
“I will be his Father,  
and he will be my Son”?

<sup>6</sup> And again, when he brings  
the firstborn into the  
world, he says,  
“Let all God’s angels  
worship him.”

<sup>7</sup> Of the angels he says,  
“He makes his angels  
winds,  
and his servants flames  
of fire.”

<sup>8</sup> But of the Son he says,  
“Your throne, O God, is  
forever and ever,  
and the righteous  
scepter is the scepter  
of your kingdom.

**Psalm 101:4-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Perverseness of heart shall  
be far from me;  
I will know nothing of  
evil.

<sup>5</sup> One who secretly slanders  
a neighbor  
I will destroy.

A haughty look and an  
arrogant heart  
I will not tolerate.

<sup>6</sup> I will look with favor on the  
faithful in the land,  
so that they may live  
with me;

whoever walks in the way  
that is blameless  
shall minister to me.

<sup>7</sup> No one who practices  
deceit  
shall remain in my  
house;

no one who utters lies  
shall continue in my  
presence.

<sup>8</sup> Morning by morning I will  
destroy  
all the wicked in the  
land,  
cutting off all evildoers  
from the city of the LORD.

**Proverbs 22:7 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> The rich rules over the  
poor,  
and the borrower is the  
slave of the lender.

August 29



Lamentations 3:25-66 (NRSV)

25 The LORD is good to those  
who wait for him,  
to the soul that seeks  
him.

26 It is good that one should  
wait quietly  
for the salvation of the  
LORD.

27 It is good for one to bear  
the yoke in youth,  
28 to sit alone in silence  
when the Lord has  
imposed it,  
29 to put one's mouth to the  
dust  
(there may yet be hope),  
30 to give one's cheek to the  
smiter,  
and be filled with insults.

31 For the Lord will not  
reject forever.

32 Although he causes grief,  
he will have  
compassion  
according to the  
abundance of his  
steadfast love;

33 for he does not willingly  
afflict  
or grieve anyone.

34 When all the prisoners of  
the land  
are crushed under foot,  
35 when human rights are  
perverted

in the presence of the  
Most High,  
36 when one's case is  
subverted  
—does the Lord not see  
it?

37 Who can command and  
have it done,  
if the Lord has not  
ordained it?

38 Is it not from the mouth of  
the Most High  
that good and bad  
come?

39 Why should any who draw  
breath complain  
about the punishment of  
their sins?

40 Let us test and examine  
our ways,  
and return to the LORD.

41 Let us lift up our hearts as  
well as our hands  
to God in heaven.

42 We have transgressed and  
rebelled,  
and you have not  
forgiven.

<p>43 You have wrapped yourself with anger and pursued us, killing without pity;</p> <p>44 you have wrapped yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can pass through.</p> <p>45 You have made us filth and rubbish among the peoples.</p> <p>46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us;</p> <p>47 panic and pitfall have come upon us, devastation and destruction.</p> <p>48 My eyes flow with rivers of tears because of the destruction of my people.</p> <p>49 My eyes will flow without ceasing, without respite, until the LORD from heaven looks down and sees.</p> <p>50 My eyes cause me grief at the fate of all the young women in my city.</p> <p>51 Those who were my enemies without cause</p>	<p>have hunted me like a bird;</p> <p>53 they flung me alive into a pit and hurled stones on me;</p> <p>54 water closed over my head; I said, "I am lost."</p> <p>55 I called on your name, O LORD, from the depths of the pit;</p> <p>56 you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear to my cry for help, but give me relief!"</p> <p>57 You came near when I called on you; you said, "Do not fear!"</p> <p>58 You have taken up my cause, O Lord, you have redeemed my life.</p> <p>59 You have seen the wrong done to me, O LORD; judge my cause.</p> <p>60 You have seen all their malice, all their plots against me.</p> <p>61 You have heard their taunts, O LORD, all their plots against me.</p> <p>62 The whispers and murmurs of my assailants</p>
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are against me all day  
long.  
63 Whether they sit or rise—  
see,  
I am the object of their  
taunt-songs.  
64 Pay them back for their  
deeds, O LORD,  
according to the work of  
their hands!  
65 Give them anguish of  
heart;  
your curse be on them!  
66 Pursue them in anger and  
destroy them  
from under the LORD's  
heavens.

**Hebrews 1:9–14 (NRSV)**

9 You [God's son] have loved  
righteousness and  
hated wickedness;  
therefore God, your God,  
has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness  
beyond your  
companions."  
10 And,  
"In the beginning, Lord,  
you founded the earth,  
and the heavens are the  
work of your hands;  
11 they will perish, but you  
remain;

they will all wear out like  
clothing;  
12 like a cloak you will roll  
them up,  
and like clothing they will  
be changed.  
But you are the same,  
and your years will never  
end."  
13 But to which of the angels  
has he ever said,  
"Sit at my right hand  
until I make your  
enemies a footstool for  
your feet"?  
14 Are not all angels spirits in  
the divine service, sent to  
serve for the sake of those  
who are to inherit salvation?

**Psalms 102:1-17 (NRSV)**

*A prayer of one afflicted,  
when faint and pleading  
before the LORD.*

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD;  
let my cry come to you.  
2 Do not hide your face from  
me  
in the day of my distress.  
Incline your ear to me;  
answer me speedily in  
the day when I call.  
3 For my days pass away like  
smoke,

and my bones burn like a  
furnace.  
4 My heart is stricken and  
withered like grass;  
I am too wasted to eat  
my bread.  
5 Because of my loud  
groaning  
my bones cling to my  
skin.  
6 I am like an owl of the  
wilderness,  
like a little owl of the  
waste places.  
7 I lie awake;  
I am like a lonely bird on  
the housetop.  
8 All day long my enemies  
taunt me;  
those who deride me use  
my name for a curse.  
9 For I eat ashes like bread,  
and mingle tears with my  
drink,  
10 because of your  
indignation and anger;  
for you have lifted me up  
and thrown me aside.  
11 My days are like an  
evening shadow;  
I wither away like grass.  
12 But you, O LORD, are  
enthroned forever;  
your name endures to all  
generations.

13 You will rise up and have  
compassion on Zion,  
for it is time to favor it;  
the appointed time has  
come.  
14 For your servants hold its  
stones dear,  
and have pity on its dust.  
15 The nations will fear the  
name of the LORD,  
and all the kings of the  
earth your glory.  
16 For the LORD will build up  
Zion;  
he will appear in his  
glory.  
17 He will regard the prayer  
of the destitute,  
and will not despise their  
prayer.

**Proverbs 22:8–9 (NRSV)**

8 Whoever sows injustice  
will reap calamity,  
and the rod of anger will  
fail.  
9 Those who are generous  
are blessed,  
for they share their bread with  
the poor.

August 30



**Lamentations 4:1-22 (NRSV)**  
*The Punishment of Zion*

**4** How the gold has grown dim,  
how the pure gold is changed!  
The sacred stones lie scattered  
at the head of every street.  
<sup>2</sup> The precious children of Zion,  
worth their weight in fine gold—  
how they are reckoned as earthen pots,  
the work of a potter's hands!  
<sup>3</sup> Even the jackals offer the breast  
and nurse their young,  
but my people has become cruel,  
like the ostriches in the wilderness.  
<sup>4</sup> The tongue of the infant sticks  
to the roof of its mouth for thirst;  
the children beg for food,  
but no one gives them anything.

<sup>5</sup> Those who feasted on delicacies  
perish in the streets;  
those who were brought up in purple  
cling to ash heaps.  
<sup>6</sup> For the chastisement of my people has been greater  
than the punishment of Sodom,  
which was overthrown in a moment,  
though no hand was laid on it.  
<sup>7</sup> Her princes were purer than snow,  
whiter than milk;  
their bodies were more ruddy than coral,  
their hair like sapphire.  
<sup>8</sup> Now their visage is blacker than soot;  
they are not recognized in the streets.  
Their skin has shriveled on their bones;  
it has become as dry as wood.  
<sup>9</sup> Happier were those pierced by the sword  
than those pierced by hunger,  
whose life drains away, deprived

of the produce of the  
field.  
10 The hands of  
compassionate women  
have boiled their own  
children;  
they became their food  
in the destruction of my  
people.  
11 The LORD gave full vent to  
his wrath;  
he poured out his hot  
anger,  
and kindled a fire in Zion  
that consumed its  
foundations.  
12 The kings of the earth did  
not believe,  
nor did any of the  
inhabitants of the  
world,  
that foe or enemy could  
enter  
the gates of Jerusalem.  
13 It was for the sins of her  
prophets  
and the iniquities of her  
priests,  
who shed the blood of the  
righteous  
in the midst of her.  
14 Blindly they wandered  
through the streets,  
so defiled with blood  
that no one was able

to touch their garments.  
15 "Away! Unclean!" people  
shouted at them;  
"Away! Away! Do not  
touch!"  
So they became fugitives  
and wanderers;  
it was said among the  
nations,  
"They shall stay here no  
longer."  
16 The LORD himself has  
scattered them,  
he will regard them no  
more;  
no honor was shown to  
the priests,  
no favor to the elders.  
17 Our eyes failed, ever  
watching  
vainly for help;  
we were watching eagerly  
for a nation that could  
not save.  
18 They dogged our steps  
so that we could not  
walk in our streets;  
our end drew near; our  
days were numbered;  
for our end had come.  
19 Our pursuers were swifter  
than the eagles in the  
heavens;  
they chased us on the  
mountains,

they lay in wait for us in  
the wilderness.

20 The LORD's anointed, the  
breath of our life,  
was taken in their pits—  
the one of whom we said,  
"Under his shadow  
we shall live among the  
nations."

21 Rejoice and be glad, O  
daughter Edom,  
you that live in the land  
of Uz;  
but to you also the cup  
shall pass;  
you shall become drunk  
and strip yourself bare.

22 The punishment of your  
iniquity, O daughter  
Zion, is accomplished,  
he will keep you in exile  
no longer;  
but your iniquity, O  
daughter Edom, he will  
punish,  
he will uncover your sins.

### Hebrews 2:1–13 (NRSV)

#### *Warning to Pay Attention*

2 Therefore we must pay  
greater attention to what we  
have heard, so that we do not  
drift away from it. <sup>2</sup> For if the  
message declared through  
angels was valid, and every

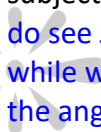
transgression or disobedience  
received a just penalty, <sup>3</sup> how  
can we escape if we neglect so  
great a salvation? It was  
declared at first through the  
Lord, and it was attested to us  
by those who heard him,  
<sup>4</sup> while God added his  
testimony by signs and  
wonders and various miracles,  
and by gifts of the Holy Spirit,  
distributed according to his  
will.

#### *Exaltation through Abasement* (Cp Ps 8:1–9)

<sup>5</sup> Now God did not subject  
the coming world, about  
which we are speaking, to  
angels. <sup>6</sup> But someone has  
testified somewhere,  
"What are human beings  
that you are mindful of  
them,  
or mortals, that you care  
for them?"

<sup>7</sup> You have made them for a  
little while lower than  
the angels;  
you have crowned them  
with glory and honor,  
<sup>8</sup> subjecting all things  
under their feet."

Now in subjecting all things to  
them, God left nothing outside  
their control. As it is, we do not



yet see everything in subjection to them, <sup>9</sup> but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

<sup>10</sup> It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, <sup>12</sup> saying,

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

<sup>13</sup> And again, “I will put my trust in him.”

And again, “Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”

### **Psalm 102:18-22 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet unborn may praise the LORD:  
<sup>19</sup> that he looked down from his holy height, from heaven the LORD looked at the earth,  
<sup>20</sup> to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die;  
<sup>21</sup> so that the name of the LORD may be declared in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem,  
<sup>22</sup> when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the LORD.

### **Proverbs 22:10–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> Drive out a scoffer, and strife goes out; quarreling and abuse will cease.  
<sup>11</sup> Those who love a pure heart and are gracious in speech will have the king as a friend.

12 The eyes of the LORD keep  
watch over knowledge,  
but he overthrows the  
words of the faithless.

## August 31



### Lamentations 5:1-22 (NRSV)

#### *A Plea for Mercy*

**5** Remember, O LORD, what  
has befallen us;  
look, and see our  
disgrace!  
2 Our inheritance has been  
turned over to  
strangers,  
our homes to aliens.  
3 We have become orphans,  
fatherless;  
our mothers are like  
widows.  
4 We must pay for the water  
we drink;  
the wood we get must  
be bought.  
5 With a yoke on our necks  
we are hard driven;  
we are weary, we are  
given no rest.

6 We have made a pact with  
Egypt and Assyria,  
to get enough bread.  
7 Our ancestors sinned; they  
are no more,  
and we bear their  
iniquities.  
8 Slaves rule over us;  
there is no one to deliver  
us from their hand.  
9 We get our bread at the  
peril of our lives,  
because of the sword in  
the wilderness.  
10 Our skin is black as an  
oven  
from the scorching heat  
of famine.  
11 Women are raped in Zion,  
virgins in the towns of  
Judah.  
12 Princes are hung up by  
their hands;  
no respect is shown to  
the elders.  
13 Young men are compelled  
to grind,  
and boys stagger under  
loads of wood.  
14 The old men have left the  
city gate,  
the young men their  
music.  
15 The joy of our hearts has  
ceased;

our dancing has been  
turned to mourning.  
<sup>16</sup> The crown has fallen from  
our head;  
woe to us, for we have  
sinned!  
<sup>17</sup> Because of this our hearts  
are sick,  
because of these things  
our eyes have grown  
dim:  
<sup>18</sup> because of Mount Zion,  
which lies desolate;  
jackals prowl over it.  
<sup>19</sup> But you, O LORD, reign  
forever;  
your throne endures to  
all generations.  
<sup>20</sup> Why have you forgotten us  
completely?  
Why have you forsaken  
us these many days?  
<sup>21</sup> Restore us to yourself, O  
LORD, that we may be  
restored;  
renew our days as of  
old—  
<sup>22</sup> unless you have utterly  
rejected us,  
and are angry with us  
beyond measure.

**Hebrews 2:14–18 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Since, therefore, the  
children share flesh and blood,

he himself likewise shared the  
same things, so that through  
death he might destroy the  
one who has the power of  
death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and  
free those who all their lives  
were held in slavery by the  
fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For it is clear  
that he did not come to help  
angels, but the descendants of  
Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Therefore he had  
to become like his brothers  
and sisters in every respect, so  
that he might be a merciful  
and faithful high priest in the  
service of God, to make a  
sacrifice of atonement for the  
sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> **Because  
he himself was tested by what  
he suffered, he is able to help  
those who are being tested.**

**Psalm 102:23–28 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> He has broken my strength  
in midcourse;  
he has shortened my  
days.  
<sup>24</sup> “O my God,” I say, “do not  
take me away  
at the midpoint of my  
life,  
you whose years endure  
throughout all  
generations.”



<sup>25</sup> Long ago you laid the  
foundation of the  
earth,  
and the heavens are the  
work of your hands.  
<sup>26</sup> They will perish, but you  
endure;  
they will all wear out like  
a garment.  
You change them like  
clothing, and they pass  
away;  
<sup>27</sup> but you are the same,  
and your years have no  
end.  
<sup>28</sup> The children of your  
servants shall live  
secure;  
their offspring shall be  
established in your  
presence.

**Proverbs 22:13 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> The lazy person says,  
“There is a lion  
outside!  
I shall be killed in the streets!”

# September 1



**Ezekiel 1:1-28 (NRSV)**

*The Vision of the Chariot*

**1** In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. <sup>2</sup> On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin), <sup>3</sup> the word of the LORD came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was on him there.

<sup>4</sup> As I looked, a stormy wind came out of the north: a great cloud with brightness around it and fire flashing forth continually, and in the middle of the fire, something like gleaming amber. <sup>5</sup> In the middle of it was something like four living creatures. This was their appearance: they were of human form. <sup>6</sup> Each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. <sup>7</sup> Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like

the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like burnished bronze. <sup>8</sup> Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: <sup>9</sup> their wings touched one another; each of them moved straight ahead, without turning as they moved. <sup>10</sup> As for the appearance of their faces: the four had the face of a human being, the face of a lion on the right side, the face of an ox on the left side, and the face of an eagle; <sup>11</sup> such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. <sup>12</sup> Each moved straight ahead; wherever the spirit would go, they went, without turning as they went. <sup>13</sup> In the middle of the living creatures there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches moving to and fro among the living creatures; the fire was bright, and lightning issued from the fire. <sup>14</sup> The living creatures darted

to and fro, like a flash of lightning.

<sup>15</sup> As I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them. <sup>16</sup> As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl; and the four had the same form, their construction being something like a wheel within a wheel. <sup>17</sup> When they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without veering as they moved. <sup>18</sup> Their rims were tall and awesome, for the rims of all four were full of eyes all around. <sup>19</sup> When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. <sup>20</sup> Wherever the spirit would go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. <sup>21</sup> When they moved, the others moved; when they stopped, the others stopped; and when they rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them;

for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

<sup>22</sup>Over the heads of the living creatures there was something like a dome, shining like crystal, spread out above their heads. <sup>23</sup>Under the dome their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another; and each of the creatures had two wings covering its body.

<sup>24</sup>When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the thunder of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army; when they stopped, they let down their wings. <sup>25</sup>And there came a voice from above the dome over their heads; when they stopped, they let down their wings.

<sup>26</sup>And above the dome over their heads there was something like a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was something that seemed like a human form.

<sup>27</sup>Upward from what appeared like the loins I saw something like gleaming amber, something that looked like fire enclosed all around;

and downward from what looked like the loins I saw something that looked like fire, and there was a splendor all around. <sup>28</sup>Like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the splendor all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

When I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

### **Hebrews 3:1–12** (NRSV)

*Moses a Servant, Christ a Son*

**3** Therefore, brothers and sisters, holy partners in a heavenly calling, consider that Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, <sup>2</sup> was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses also “was faithful in all God’s house.” <sup>3</sup> Yet Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. <sup>4</sup> (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) <sup>5</sup> Now Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken later. <sup>6</sup> Christ,

however, was faithful over God's house as a son, and we are his house if we hold firm the confidence and the pride that belong to hope.

*Warning against Unbelief*  
(Ps 95:7b—11)

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,

“Today, if you hear his voice,  
<sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, as on the day of testing in the wilderness,  
<sup>9</sup> where your ancestors put me to the test, though they had seen my works <sup>10</sup> for forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and I said, ‘They always go astray in their hearts, and they have not known my ways.’  
<sup>11</sup> As in my anger I swore, ‘They will not enter my rest.’ ”

<sup>12</sup> Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you may

have an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

**Psalm 103:1-12** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for God's Goodness*  
Of David.

<sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.  
<sup>2</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—  
<sup>3</sup> who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,  
<sup>4</sup> who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
<sup>5</sup> who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.  
<sup>6</sup> The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.  
<sup>7</sup> He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and  
abounding in steadfast  
love.

<sup>9</sup> He will not always accuse,  
nor will he keep his  
anger forever.

<sup>10</sup> He does not deal with us  
according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to  
our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup> For as the heavens are  
high above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast  
love toward those who  
fear him;

<sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from  
the west,  
so far he removes our  
transgressions from us.

**Proverbs 22:14** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> The mouth of a loose  
woman is a deep pit;  
he with whom the LORD  
is angry falls into it.

## September 2



**Ezekiel 2:1-3:15** (NRSV)

*The Vision of the Scroll*

**2** He said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. <sup>2</sup> And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. <sup>4</sup> The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD.” <sup>5</sup> Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them. <sup>6</sup> And you, O mortal, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words,

and do not be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. <sup>7</sup>You shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house.

<sup>8</sup>But you, mortal, hear what I say to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you. <sup>9</sup>I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and a written scroll was in it. <sup>10</sup>He spread it before me; it had writing on the front and on the back, and written on it were words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

**3** He said to me, O mortal, eat what is offered to you; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel. <sup>2</sup>So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat. <sup>3</sup>He said to me, Mortal, eat this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it. Then I ate it; and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey.

<sup>4</sup>He said to me: Mortal, go to the house of Israel and speak my very words to them.

<sup>5</sup>For you are not sent to a people of obscure speech and

difficult language, but to the house of Israel— <sup>6</sup>not to many peoples of obscure speech and difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to them, they would listen to you. <sup>7</sup>But the house of Israel will not listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me; because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. <sup>8</sup>See, I have made your face hard against their faces, and your forehead hard against their foreheads. <sup>9</sup>Like the hardest stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; do not fear them or be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house.

<sup>10</sup>He said to me: Mortal, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart and hear with your ears; <sup>11</sup>then go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them. Say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD”; whether they hear or refuse to hear.

*Ezekiel at the River Chebar*

<sup>12</sup>Then the spirit lifted me up, and as the glory of the LORD rose from its place, I

heard behind me the sound of loud rumbling; <sup>13</sup> it was the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, that sounded like a loud rumbling. <sup>14</sup> The spirit lifted me up and bore me away; I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the LORD being strong upon me. <sup>15</sup> I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who lived by the river Chebar. And I sat there among them, stunned, for seven days.

**Hebrews 3:13–19 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. <sup>14</sup> For we have become partners of Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end.

<sup>15</sup> As it is said,  
“Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts  
as in the rebellion.”

<sup>16</sup> Now who were they who heard and yet were rebellious? Was it not all those who left Egypt under the

leadership of Moses? <sup>17</sup> But with whom was he angry forty years? Was it not those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if not to those who were disobedient? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

**Psalm 103:13–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> As a father has compassion for his children,  
so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

<sup>14</sup> For he knows how we were made;  
he remembers that we are dust.

<sup>15</sup> As for mortals, their days are like grass;  
they flourish like a flower of the field;

<sup>16</sup> for the wind passes over it,  
and it is gone,  
and its place knows it no more.

<sup>17</sup> But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting  
on those who fear him,



and his righteousness to  
children's children,  
18 to those who keep his  
covenant  
and remember to do his  
commandments.  
19 The LORD has established  
his throne in the  
heavens,  
and his kingdom rules  
over all.  
20 Bless the LORD, O you his  
angels,  
you mighty ones who do  
his bidding,  
obedient to his spoken  
word.  
21 Bless the LORD, all his  
hosts,  
his ministers that do his  
will.  
22 Bless the LORD, all his  
works,  
in all places of his  
dominion.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul.

**Proverbs 22:15** (NRSV)

15 Folly is bound up in the  
heart of a boy,  
but the rod of discipline  
drives it far away.

## September 3



**Ezekiel 3:16-4:17** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup>At the end of seven days,  
the word of the LORD came to  
me: <sup>17</sup>Mortal, I have made you  
a sentinel for the house of  
Israel; whenever you hear a  
word from my mouth, you  
shall give them warning from  
me. <sup>18</sup>If I say to the wicked,  
“You shall surely die,” and you  
give them no warning, or  
speak to warn the wicked from  
their wicked way, in order to  
save their life, those wicked  
persons shall die for their  
iniquity; but their blood I will  
require at your hand. <sup>19</sup>But if  
you warn the wicked, and they  
do not turn from their  
wickedness, or from their  
wicked way, they shall die for  
their iniquity; but you will  
have saved your life. <sup>20</sup>Again,  
if the righteous turn from their  
righteousness and commit  
iniquity, and I lay a stumbling  
block before them, they shall  
die; because you have not  
warned them, they shall die  
for their sin, and their  
righteous deeds that they  
have done shall not be



remembered; but their blood I will require at your hand. <sup>21</sup> If, however, you warn the righteous not to sin, and they do not sin, they shall surely live, because they took warning; and you will have saved your life.

*Ezekiel Isolated and Silenced*

<sup>22</sup> Then the hand of the LORD was upon me there; and he said to me, Rise up, go out into the valley, and there I will speak with you. <sup>23</sup> So I rose up and went out into the valley; and the glory of the LORD stood there, like the glory that I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. <sup>24</sup> The spirit entered into me, and set me on my feet; and he spoke with me and said to me: Go, shut yourself inside your house. <sup>25</sup> As for you, mortal, cords shall be placed on you, and you shall be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people; <sup>26</sup> and I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be speechless and unable to reprove them; for they are a rebellious house. <sup>27</sup> But when I speak

with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD”; let those who will hear, hear; and let those who refuse to hear, refuse; for they are a rebellious house.

*The Siege of Jerusalem  
Portrayed*

**4** And you, O mortal, take a brick and set it before you. On it portray a city, Jerusalem; <sup>2</sup> and put siegeworks against it, and build a siege wall against it, and cast up a ramp against it; set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it all around. <sup>3</sup> Then take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between you and the city; set your face toward it, and let it be in a state of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it; you shall bear their punishment for the number of the days that you lie there.

<sup>5</sup> For I assign to you a number of days, three hundred ninety days, equal to the number of

the years of their punishment; and so you shall bear the punishment of the house of Israel. <sup>6</sup> When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah; forty days I assign you, one day for each year. <sup>7</sup> You shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and with your arm bared you shall prophesy against it. <sup>8</sup> See, I am putting cords on you so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have completed the days of your siege.

<sup>9</sup> And you, take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread for yourself. During the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred ninety days, you shall eat it.

<sup>10</sup> The food that you eat shall be twenty shekels a day by weight; at fixed times you shall eat it. <sup>11</sup> And you shall drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin; at fixed times you shall drink. <sup>12</sup> You shall eat it as a barley-cake, baking it in their

sight on human dung. <sup>13</sup> The LORD said, "Thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread, unclean, among the nations to which I will drive them." <sup>14</sup> Then I said, "Ah Lord GOD! I have never defiled myself; from my youth up until now I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by animals, nor has carrion flesh come into my mouth." <sup>15</sup> Then he said to me, "See, I will let you have cow's dung instead of human dung, on which you may prepare your bread."

<sup>16</sup> Then he said to me, Mortal, I am going to break the staff of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with fearfulness; and they shall drink water by measure and in dismay. <sup>17</sup> Lacking bread and water, they will look at one another in dismay, and waste away under their punishment.

#### **Hebrews 4:1–11** (NRSV)

##### *The Rest That God Promised*

**4** Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest is still open, let us take care that none of you should seem to have failed to reach it. <sup>2</sup> For

indeed the good news came to us just as to them; but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. <sup>3</sup> For we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said,

“As in my anger I swore,  
‘They shall not enter my rest,’ ”

though his works were finished at the foundation of the world. <sup>4</sup> For in one place it speaks about the seventh day as follows, “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” <sup>5</sup> And again in this place it says, “They shall not enter my rest.” <sup>6</sup> Since therefore it remains open for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, <sup>7</sup> again he sets a certain day—“today”—saying through David much later, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts.”

<sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not speak

later about another day. <sup>9</sup> So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; <sup>10</sup> for those who enter God’s rest also cease from their labors as God did from his.

<sup>11</sup> Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through such disobedience as theirs.

### **Psalm 104:1-7 (NRSV)**

*God the Creator and Provider*  
(Cp Gen 1:1–31)

- <sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul.  
O LORD my God, you are very great.  
You are clothed with honor and majesty,  
<sup>2</sup> wrapped in light as with a garment.  
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,  
<sup>3</sup> you set the beams of your chambers on the waters,  
you make the clouds your chariot,  
you ride on the wings of the wind,  
<sup>4</sup> you make the winds your messengers,  
fire and flame your ministers.  
<sup>5</sup> You set the earth on its foundations,

so that it shall never be shaken.

<sup>6</sup> You cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

<sup>7</sup> At your rebuke they flee; at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.

**Proverbs 22:16** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> Oppressing the poor in order to enrich oneself, and giving to the rich, will lead only to loss.

## September 4



**Ezekiel 5:1-6:14** (NRSV)

*A Sword against Jerusalem*

**5** And you, O mortal, take a sharp sword; use it as a barber's razor and run it over your head and your beard; then take balances for weighing, and divide the hair.

<sup>2</sup> One third of the hair you shall burn in the fire inside the

city, when the days of the siege are completed; one third you shall take and strike with the sword all around the city; and one third you shall scatter to the wind, and I will unsheathe the sword after them. <sup>3</sup> Then you shall take from these a small number, and bind them in the skirts of your robe. <sup>4</sup> From these, again, you shall take some, throw them into the fire and burn them up; from there a fire will come out against all the house of Israel.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord God: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her. <sup>6</sup> But she has rebelled against my ordinances and my statutes, becoming more wicked than the nations and the countries all around her, rejecting my ordinances and not following my statutes. <sup>7</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you are more turbulent than the nations that are all around you, and have not followed my statutes or kept my ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of

the nations that are all around you; <sup>8</sup> therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I, I myself, am coming against you; I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations.

<sup>9</sup> And because of all your abominations, I will do to you what I have never yet done, and the like of which I will never do again. <sup>10</sup> Surely, parents shall eat their children in your midst, and children shall eat their parents; I will execute judgments on you, and any of you who survive I will scatter to every wind.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations—therefore I will cut you down; my eye will not spare, and I will have no pity.

<sup>12</sup> One third of you shall die of pestilence or be consumed by famine among you; one third shall fall by the sword around you; and one third I will scatter to every wind and will unsheathe the sword after them.

<sup>13</sup> My anger shall spend itself, and I will vent my fury

on them and satisfy myself; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken in my jealousy, when I spend my fury on them. <sup>14</sup> Moreover I will make you a desolation and an object of mocking among the nations around you, in the sight of all that pass by. <sup>15</sup> You shall be a mockery and a taunt, a warning and a horror, to the nations around you, when I execute judgments on you in anger and fury, and with furious punishments—I, the LORD, have spoken—

<sup>16</sup> when I loose against you my deadly arrows of famine, arrows for destruction, which I will let loose to destroy you, and when I bring more and more famine upon you, and break your staff of bread. <sup>17</sup> I will send famine and wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children; pestilence and bloodshed shall pass through you; and I will bring the sword upon you. I, the LORD, have spoken.

### *Judgment on Idolatrous Israel*

**6** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> O mortal, set your face toward the mountains of

Israel, and prophesy against them,<sup>3</sup> and say, You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: I, I myself will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.<sup>4</sup> Your altars shall become desolate, and your incense stands shall be broken; and I will throw down your slain in front of your idols.<sup>5</sup> I will lay the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols; and I will scatter your bones around your altars.<sup>6</sup> Wherever you live, your towns shall be waste and your high places ruined, so that your altars will be waste and ruined, your idols broken and destroyed, your incense stands cut down, and your works wiped out.<sup>7</sup> The slain shall fall in your midst; then you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> But I will spare some. Some of you shall escape the sword among the nations and be scattered through the countries.<sup>9</sup> Those of you who escape shall remember me

among the nations where they are carried captive, how I was crushed by their wanton heart that turned away from me, and their wanton eyes that turned after their idols. Then they will be loathsome in their own sight for the evils that they have committed, for all their abominations.<sup>10</sup> And they shall know that I am the LORD; I did not threaten in vain to bring this disaster upon them.

<sup>11</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Clap your hands and stamp your foot, and say, Alas for all the vile abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.<sup>12</sup> Those far off shall die of pestilence; those nearby shall fall by the sword; and any who are left and are spared shall die of famine. Thus I will spend my fury upon them.<sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the LORD, when their slain lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountain tops, under every green tree, and under every leafy oak, wherever they offered pleasing odor to all

their idols. <sup>14</sup> I will stretch out my hand against them, and make the land desolate and waste, throughout all their settlements, from the wilderness to Riblah. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

**Hebrews 4:12–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

*Jesus the Great High Priest*

<sup>14</sup> Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.

<sup>15</sup> **For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without**

**sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

**Psalm 104:8-23 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys to the place that you appointed for them.  
<sup>9</sup> You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.  
<sup>10</sup> You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills,  
<sup>11</sup> giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst.  
<sup>12</sup> By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.  
<sup>13</sup> From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.  
<sup>14</sup> You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,

and plants for people to  
use,  
to bring forth food from  
the earth,  
15 and wine to gladden the  
human heart,  
oil to make the face shine,  
and bread to strengthen  
the human heart.  
16 The trees of the LORD are  
watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon  
that he planted.  
17 In them the birds build  
their nests;  
the stork has its home in  
the fir trees.  
18 The high mountains are for  
the wild goats;  
the rocks are a refuge for  
the coney.  
19 You have made the moon  
to mark the seasons;  
the sun knows its time  
for setting.  
20 You make darkness, and it  
is night,  
when all the animals of  
the forest come  
creeping out.  
21 The young lions roar for  
their prey,  
seeking their food from  
God.

22 When the sun rises, they  
withdraw  
and lie down in their  
dens.  
23 People go out to their  
work  
and to their labor until  
the evening.

**Proverbs 22:17–19 (NRSV)**  
*Sayings of the Wise*

17 The words of the wise:  
Incline your ear and hear  
my words,  
and apply your mind to  
my teaching;  
18 for it will be pleasant if you  
keep them within you,  
if all of them are ready  
on your lips.  
19 So that your trust may be  
in the LORD,  
I have made them known  
to you today—yes, to  
you.



# September

## 5



**Ezekiel 7:1-27** (NRSV)

*Impending Disaster*

**7** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>You, O mortal, thus says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel:

An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land.

<sup>3</sup> Now the end is upon you, I will let loose my anger upon you;

I will judge you according to your ways, I will punish you for all your abominations.

<sup>4</sup> My eye will not spare you, I will have no pity. I will punish you for your ways, while your abominations are among you.

Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Disaster after disaster! See, it comes.

<sup>6</sup> An end has come, the end has come. It has awakened against you; see, it comes!

<sup>7</sup> Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come, the day is near— of tumult, not of reveling on the mountains.

<sup>8</sup> Soon now I will pour out my wrath upon you; I will spend my anger against you.

I will judge you according to your ways, and punish you for all your abominations.

<sup>9</sup> My eye will not spare; I will have no pity. I will punish you according to your ways, while your abominations are among you.

Then you shall know that it is I the LORD who strike.

<sup>10</sup> See, the day! See, it comes!

Your doom has gone out. The rod has blossomed, pride has budded.

<sup>11</sup> Violence has grown into a rod of wickedness. None of them shall remain, not their abundance, not their wealth;

no pre-eminence among  
them.  
12 The time has come, the  
day draws near;  
let not the buyer rejoice,  
nor the seller mourn,  
for wrath is upon all their  
multitude.

13 For the sellers shall not  
return to what has been sold  
as long as they remain alive.  
For the vision concerns all  
their multitude; it shall not be  
revoked. Because of their  
iniquity, they cannot maintain  
their lives.

14 They have blown the horn  
and made everything  
ready;  
but no one goes to  
battle,  
for my wrath is upon all  
their multitude.

15 The sword is outside,  
pestilence and famine  
are inside;  
those in the field die by  
the sword;  
those in the city—famine  
and pestilence devour  
them.

16 If any survivors escape,  
they shall be found on  
the mountains  
like doves of the valleys,

all of them moaning over  
their iniquity.

17 All hands shall grow  
feeble,  
all knees turn to water.

18 They shall put on  
sackcloth,  
horror shall cover them.  
Shame shall be on all  
faces,  
baldness on all their  
heads.

19 They shall fling their silver  
into the streets,  
their gold shall be  
treated as unclean.

Their silver and gold cannot  
save them on the day of the  
wrath of the LORD. They shall  
not satisfy their hunger or fill  
their stomachs with it. For it  
was the stumbling block of  
their iniquity. <sup>20</sup> From their  
beautiful ornament, in which  
they took pride, they made  
their abominable images, their  
detestable things; therefore I  
will make of it an unclean  
thing to them.

21 I will hand it over to  
strangers as booty,  
to the wicked of the  
earth as plunder;  
they shall profane it.

22 I will avert my face from  
them,  
so that they may profane  
my treasured place;  
the violent shall enter it,  
they shall profane it.

23 Make a chain!  
For the land is full of  
bloody crimes;  
the city is full of violence.

24 I will bring the worst of the  
nations  
to take possession of  
their houses.  
I will put an end to the  
arrogance of the  
strong,  
and their holy places  
shall be profaned.

25 When anguish comes, they  
will seek peace,  
but there shall be none.

26 Disaster comes upon  
disaster,  
rumor follows rumor;  
they shall keep seeking a  
vision from the  
prophet;  
instruction shall perish  
from the priest,  
and counsel from the  
elders.

27 The king shall mourn,  
the prince shall be  
wrapped in despair,

and the hands of the  
people of the land shall  
tremble.

According to their way I  
will deal with them;  
according to their own  
judgments I will judge  
them.

And they shall know that I am  
the LORD.

**Hebrews 5:1–11** (NRSV)

Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup> He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; <sup>3</sup> and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. <sup>4</sup> And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

<sup>5</sup> So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”;

6 as he says also in another place,  
“You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of  
Melchizedek.”

7 In the days of his flesh,  
Jesus offered up prayers and  
supplications, with loud cries  
and tears, to the one who was  
able to save him from death,  
and he was heard because of  
his reverent submission.

8 Although he was a Son, he  
learned obedience through  
what he suffered; 9 and having  
been made perfect, he  
became the source of eternal  
salvation for all who obey him,  
10 having been designated by  
God a high priest according to  
the order of Melchizedek.

*Warning against Falling Away*

11 About this we have  
much to say that is hard to  
explain, since you have  
become dull in understanding.

**Psalm 104:24-30** (NRSV)

24 O LORD, how manifold are  
your works!  
In wisdom you have  
made them all;  
the earth is full of your  
creatures.

25 Yonder is the sea, great  
and wide,  
creeping things  
innumerable are there,  
living things both small  
and great.

26 There go the ships,  
and Leviathan that you  
formed to sport in it.

27 These all look to you  
to give them their food  
in due season;

28 when you give to them,  
they gather it up;  
when you open your  
hand, they are filled  
with good things.

29 When you hide your face,  
they are dismayed;  
when you take away  
their breath, they die  
and return to their dust.

30 **When you send forth your  
spirit, they are created;  
and you renew the face  
of the ground.**

**Proverbs 22:20–21** (NRSV)

20 Have I not written for you  
thirty sayings  
of admonition and  
knowledge,

21 to show you what is right  
and true,

so that you may give a true answer to those who sent you?

## September

### 6



**Ezekiel 8:1-9:11** (NRSV)

*Abominations in the Temple*

**8** In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, with the elders of Judah sitting before me, the hand of the Lord God fell upon me there.

<sup>2</sup> I looked, and there was a figure that looked like a human being; below what appeared to be its loins it was fire, and above the loins it was like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming amber. <sup>3</sup> It stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the gateway of the inner

court that faces north, to the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy. <sup>4</sup> And the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I had seen in the valley.

<sup>5</sup> Then God said to me, "O mortal, lift up your eyes now in the direction of the north." So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, in the entrance, was this image of jealousy.

<sup>6</sup> He said to me, "Mortal, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel are committing here, to drive me far from my sanctuary? Yet you will see still greater abominations."

<sup>7</sup> And he brought me to the entrance of the court; I looked, and there was a hole in the wall. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to me, "Mortal, dig through the wall"; and when I dug through the wall, there was an entrance. <sup>9</sup> He said to me, "Go in, and see the vile abominations that they are committing here." <sup>10</sup> So I went in and looked; there, portrayed on the wall all around, were all kinds of

creeping things, and loathsome animals, and all the idols of the house of Israel.

<sup>11</sup> Before them stood seventy of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing among them. Each had his censer in his hand, and the fragrant cloud of incense was ascending. <sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, "Mortal, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of images? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.' " <sup>13</sup> He said also to me, "You will see still greater abominations that they are committing."

<sup>14</sup> Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the LORD; women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz. <sup>15</sup> Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O mortal? You will see still greater abominations than these."

<sup>16</sup> And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the LORD; there, at the entrance of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and

the altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs to the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east, prostrating themselves to the sun toward the east. <sup>17</sup> Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O mortal? Is it not bad enough that the house of Judah commits the abominations done here? Must they fill the land with violence, and provoke my anger still further? See, they are putting the branch to their nose! <sup>18</sup> Therefore I will act in wrath; my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; and though they cry in my hearing with a loud voice, I will not listen to them."

### *The Slaughter of the Idolaters*

**9** Then he cried in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Draw near, you executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand." <sup>2</sup> And six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand; among them was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his

side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

<sup>3</sup> Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. The LORD called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his side; <sup>4</sup> and said to him, “Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of those who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.” <sup>5</sup> To the others he said in my hearing, “Pass through the city after him, and kill; your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity. <sup>6</sup> Cut down old men, young men and young women, little children and women, but touch no one who has the mark. And begin at my sanctuary.” So they began with the elders who were in front of the house. <sup>7</sup> Then he said to them, “Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Go!” So they went out and killed in the city. <sup>8</sup> While they were killing, and I was left alone, I fell prostrate on my face and cried out, “Ah Lord God! will you destroy all

who remain of Israel as you pour out your wrath upon Jerusalem?” <sup>9</sup> He said to me, “The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great; the land is full of bloodshed and the city full of perversity; for they say, ‘The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see.’ <sup>10</sup> As for me, my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity, but I will bring down their deeds upon their heads.”

<sup>11</sup> Then the man clothed in linen, with the writing case at his side, brought back word, saying, “I have done as you commanded me.”

#### **Hebrews 5:12–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food; <sup>13</sup> for everyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is unskilled in the word of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil.

**Psalm 104:31-35** (NRSV)

<sup>31</sup> May the glory of the LORD  
endure forever;

may the LORD rejoice in  
his works—

<sup>32</sup> who looks on the earth  
and it trembles,  
who touches the  
mountains and they  
smoke.

<sup>33</sup> I will sing to the LORD as  
long as I live;  
I will sing praise to my  
God while I have being.

<sup>34</sup> May my meditation be  
pleasing to him,  
for I rejoice in the LORD.

<sup>35</sup> Let sinners be consumed  
from the earth,  
and let the wicked be no  
more.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 22:22–23** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Do not rob the poor  
because they are poor,  
or crush the afflicted at  
the gate;

<sup>23</sup> for the LORD pleads their  
cause  
and despoils of life those  
who despoil them.

**September**  
**7**



**Ezekiel 10:1-22** (NRSV)

*God's Glory Leaves Jerusalem*

**10** Then I looked, and above the dome that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire, in form resembling a throne. <sup>2</sup> He said to the man clothed in linen, "Go within the wheelwork underneath the cherubim; fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city." He went in as I looked on. <sup>3</sup> Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house when the man went in; and a cloud filled the inner court. <sup>4</sup> Then the glory of the LORD rose up from the cherub to the threshold of the house; the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> The sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.



<sup>6</sup> When he commanded the man clothed in linen, “Take fire from within the wheelwork, from among the cherubim,” he went in and stood beside a wheel. <sup>7</sup> And a cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was among the cherubim, took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out. <sup>8</sup> The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

<sup>9</sup> I looked, and there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was like gleaming beryl. <sup>10</sup> And as for their appearance, the four looked alike, something like a wheel within a wheel. <sup>11</sup> When they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without veering as they moved; but in whatever direction the front wheel faced, the others followed without veering as they moved. <sup>12</sup> Their entire body, their rims, their spokes, their wings, and the wheels—the wheels of the four of

them—were full of eyes all around. <sup>13</sup> As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing “the wheelwork.” <sup>14</sup> Each one had four faces: the first face was that of the cherub, the second face was that of a human being, the third that of a lion, and the fourth that of an eagle.

<sup>15</sup> The cherubim rose up. These were the living creatures that I saw by the river Chebar. <sup>16</sup> When the cherubim moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise up from the earth, the wheels at their side did not veer. <sup>17</sup> When they stopped, the others stopped, and when they rose up, the others rose up with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

<sup>18</sup> Then the glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the house and stopped above the cherubim. <sup>19</sup> The cherubim lifted up their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight as they went out with the wheels beside them. They stopped at the entrance of the east gate of

the house of the LORD; and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

<sup>20</sup> These were the living creatures that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were cherubim. <sup>21</sup> Each had four faces, each four wings, and underneath their wings something like human hands. <sup>22</sup> As for what their faces were like, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the river Chebar. Each one moved straight ahead.

### Hebrews 6:1–10 (NRSV)

#### *The Peril of Falling Away*

**6** Therefore let us go on toward perfection, leaving behind the basic teaching about Christ, and not laying again the foundation: repentance from dead works and faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. <sup>3</sup> And we will do this, if God permits. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been

enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, <sup>6</sup> and then have fallen away, since on their own they are crucifying again the Son of God and are holding him up to contempt. <sup>7</sup> Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it repeatedly, and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. <sup>8</sup> But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and on the verge of being cursed; its end is to be burned over.

<sup>9</sup> Even though we speak in this way, beloved, we are confident of better things in your case, things that belong to salvation. <sup>10</sup> For God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do.

### Psalm 105:1-7 (NRSV)

#### *God's Faithfulness to Israel* (Ex 7:8–11:10; 1 Chr 16:8–22)

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
call on his name,

make known his deeds  
among the peoples.

<sup>2</sup> Sing to him, sing praises to  
him;  
tell of all his wonderful  
works.

<sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name;  
let the hearts of those  
who seek the LORD  
rejoice.

<sup>4</sup> Seek the LORD and his  
strength;  
seek his presence  
continually.

<sup>5</sup> Remember the wonderful  
works he has done,  
his miracles, and the  
judgments he has  
uttered,

<sup>6</sup> O offspring of his servant  
Abraham,  
children of Jacob, his  
chosen ones.

<sup>7</sup> He is the LORD our God;  
his judgments are in all  
the earth.

**Proverbs 22:24–25** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> Make no friends with  
those given to anger,  
and do not associate  
with hotheads,

<sup>25</sup> or you may learn their  
ways

and entangle yourself in  
a snare.

## September 8



**Ezekiel 11:1-25** (NRSV)

*Judgment on  
Wicked Counselors*

**11** The spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the house of the LORD, which faces east. There, at the entrance of the gateway, were twenty-five men; among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur, and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, officials of the people. <sup>2</sup> He said to me, “Mortal, these are the men who devise iniquity and who give wicked counsel in this city; <sup>3</sup> they say, ‘The time is not near to build houses; this city is the pot, and we are the meat.’ <sup>4</sup> Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, O mortal.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and he said to me, “Say, Thus says the

LORD: This is what you think, O house of Israel; I know the things that come into your mind. <sup>6</sup>You have killed many in this city, and have filled its streets with the slain.

<sup>7</sup>Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: The slain whom you have placed within it are the meat, and this city is the pot; but you shall be taken out of it. <sup>8</sup>You have feared the sword; and I will bring the sword upon you, says the Lord GOD. <sup>9</sup>I will take you out of it and give you over to the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you.

<sup>10</sup>You shall fall by the sword; I will judge you at the border of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD. <sup>11</sup>This city shall not be your pot, and you shall not be the meat inside it; I will judge you at the border of Israel. <sup>12</sup>Then you shall know that I am the LORD, whose statutes you have not followed, and whose ordinances you have not kept, but you have acted according to the ordinances of the nations that are around you.”

<sup>13</sup>Now, while I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell down

on my face, cried with a loud voice, and said, “Ah Lord GOD! will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?”

*God Will Restore Israel*

<sup>14</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>15</sup>Mortal, your kinsfolk, your own kin, your fellow exiles, the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, “They have gone far from the LORD; to us this land is given for a possession.”

<sup>16</sup>Therefore say: Thus says the Lord GOD: Though I removed them far away among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a little while in the countries where they have gone. <sup>17</sup>Therefore say: Thus says the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

<sup>18</sup>When they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its

abominations. <sup>19</sup>q I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, <sup>20</sup> so that they may follow my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

<sup>21</sup> But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, says the Lord GOD.

<sup>22</sup> Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. <sup>23</sup> And the glory of the LORD ascended from the middle of the city, and stopped on the mountain east of the city. <sup>24</sup> The spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen left me. <sup>25</sup> And I told the exiles all the things that the LORD had shown me.

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<sup>q</sup> See Jeremiah 31:31-34, 2 Cor. 3:2-3, Hebrews 8:10-12

## Hebrews 6:11–20 (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> And we want each one of you to show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope to the very end, <sup>12</sup> so that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

### *The Certainty of God's Promise* (Cp Gen 12:1–3)

<sup>13</sup> When God made a promise to Abraham, because he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, <sup>14</sup> saying, “I will surely bless you and multiply you.”

<sup>15</sup> And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup> Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. <sup>17</sup> In

the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, <sup>18</sup> so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have

taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us.<sup>19</sup> We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain,<sup>20</sup> where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

**Psalms 105:8-15 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> He is mindful of his covenant forever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,  
<sup>9</sup> the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac,  
<sup>10</sup> which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,  
<sup>11</sup> saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."  
<sup>12</sup> When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in it,

<sup>13</sup> wandering from nation to nation,  
from one kingdom to another people,  
<sup>14</sup> he allowed no one to oppress them;  
he rebuked kings on their account,  
<sup>15</sup> saying, "Do not touch my anointed ones;  
do my prophets no harm."

**Proverbs 22:26-27 (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> Do not be one of those who give pledges, who become surety for debts.  
<sup>27</sup> If you have nothing with which to pay, why should your bed be taken from under you?

**September  
9**



**Ezekiel 12:1-28 (NRSV)**

*Judah's Captivity Portrayed*

**12** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal, you are

living in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, who have ears to hear but do not hear; <sup>3</sup> for they are a rebellious house. Therefore, mortal, prepare for yourself an exile's baggage, and go into exile by day in their sight; you shall go like an exile from your place to another place in their sight. Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious house. <sup>4</sup> You shall bring out your baggage by day in their sight, as baggage for exile; and you shall go out yourself at evening in their sight, as those do who go into exile. <sup>5</sup> Dig through the wall in their sight, and carry the baggage through it. <sup>6</sup> In their sight you shall lift the baggage on your shoulder, and carry it out in the dark; you shall cover your face, so that you may not see the land; for I have made you a sign for the house of Israel.

<sup>7</sup> I did just as I was commanded. I brought out my baggage by day, as baggage for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my own hands; I brought it out in

the dark, carrying it on my shoulder in their sight.

<sup>8</sup> In the morning the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>9</sup> Mortal, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, "What are you doing?" <sup>10</sup> Say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel in it." <sup>11</sup> Say, "I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them; they shall go into exile, into captivity." <sup>12</sup> And the prince who is among them shall lift his baggage on his shoulder in the dark, and shall go out; he shall dig through the wall and carry it through; he shall cover his face, so that he may not see the land with his eyes. <sup>13</sup> I will spread my net over him, and he shall be caught in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it; and he shall die there. <sup>14</sup> I will scatter to every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his troops; and I will unsheathe the sword behind them. <sup>15</sup> And they shall know that I am the LORD, when

I disperse them among the nations and scatter them through the countries. <sup>16</sup> But I will let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and pestilence, so that they may tell of all their abominations among the nations where they go; then they shall know that I am the LORD.

*Judgment Not Postponed*

<sup>17</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>18</sup> Mortal, eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and with fearfulness; <sup>19</sup> and say to the people of the land, Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with fearfulness, and drink their water in dismay, because their land shall be stripped of all it contains, on account of the violence of all those who live in it. <sup>20</sup> The inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>22</sup> Mortal, what is this proverb of yours about the land of Israel, which says, "The days are prolonged, and every vision comes to nothing"? <sup>23</sup> Tell them therefore, "Thus says the Lord GOD: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall use it no more as a proverb in Israel." But say to them, The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision.

<sup>24</sup> For there shall no longer be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. <sup>25</sup> But I the LORD will speak the word that I speak, and it will be fulfilled. It will no longer be delayed; but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and fulfill it, says the Lord GOD.

<sup>26</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>27</sup> Mortal, the house of Israel is saying, "The vision that he sees is for many years ahead; he prophesies for distant times." <sup>28</sup> Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be fulfilled, says the Lord GOD.



**Hebrews 7:1–10** (NRSV)  
*The Priestly Order  
of Melchizedek*  
(Gen 14:17–20)

**7** This “King Melchizedek of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him”;<sup>2</sup> and to him Abraham apportioned “one-tenth of everything.” His name, in the first place, means “king of righteousness”; next he is also king of Salem, that is, “king of peace.”<sup>3</sup> Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

<sup>4</sup> See how great he is! Even Abraham the patriarch gave him a tenth of the spoils.<sup>5</sup> And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to collect tithes from the people, that is, from their kindred, though these also are descended from Abraham.

<sup>6</sup> But this man, who does not belong to their ancestry, collected tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had

received the promises.<sup>7</sup> It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.<sup>8</sup> In the one case, tithes are received by those who are mortal; in the other, by one of whom it is testified that he lives.<sup>9</sup> One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham,<sup>10</sup> for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

**Psalms 105:16–26** (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> When he summoned  
famine against the  
land,  
and broke every staff of  
bread,  
<sup>17</sup> he had sent a man ahead  
of them,  
Joseph, who was sold as  
a slave.  
<sup>18</sup> His feet were hurt with  
feters,  
his neck was put in a  
collar of iron;  
<sup>19</sup> until what he had said  
came to pass,  
the word of the LORD  
kept testing him.  
<sup>20</sup> The king sent and released  
him;

the ruler of the peoples  
set him free.

<sup>21</sup> He made him lord of his  
house,  
and ruler of all his  
possessions,  
<sup>22</sup> to instruct his officials at  
his pleasure,  
and to teach his elders  
wisdom.

<sup>23</sup> Then Israel came to Egypt;  
Jacob lived as an alien in  
the land of Ham.

<sup>24</sup> And the LORD made his  
people very fruitful,  
and made them stronger  
than their foes,

<sup>25</sup> whose hearts he then  
turned to hate his  
people,  
to deal craftily with his  
servants.

<sup>26</sup> He sent his servant Moses,  
and Aaron whom he had  
chosen.

**Proverbs 22:28–29** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> Do not remove the ancient  
landmark  
that your ancestors set  
up.

<sup>29</sup> Do you see those who are  
skillful in their work?  
They will serve kings;

they will not serve common  
people.

## September 10



**Ezekiel 13:1-14:11** (NRSV)

*False Prophets Condemned*

**13** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal,  
prophesy against the prophets  
of Israel who are prophesying;  
say to those who prophesy out  
of their own imagination:

“Hear the word of the LORD!”

<sup>3</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD, Alas  
for the senseless prophets  
who follow their own spirit,  
and have seen nothing! <sup>4</sup> Your  
prophets have been like  
jackals among ruins, O Israel.

<sup>5</sup> You have not gone up into  
the breaches, or repaired a  
wall for the house of Israel, so  
that it might stand in battle on  
the day of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> They  
have envisioned falsehood and  
lying divination; they say,  
“Says the LORD,” when the  
LORD has not sent them, and

yet they wait for the fulfillment of their word!

<sup>7</sup> Have you not seen a false vision or uttered a lying divination, when you have said, “Says the LORD,” even though I did not speak?

<sup>8</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have uttered falsehood and envisioned lies, I am against you, says the Lord GOD. <sup>9</sup> My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations; they shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel; and you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

<sup>10</sup> Because, in truth, because they have misled my people, saying, “Peace,” when there is no peace; and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear whitewash on it. <sup>11</sup> Say to those who smear whitewash on it that it shall fall.<sup>r</sup> There will be a deluge of rain, great hailstones will fall, and a stormy wind will break

out. <sup>12</sup> When the wall falls, will it not be said to you, “Where is the whitewash you smeared on it?” <sup>13</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: In my wrath I will make a stormy wind break out, and in my anger there shall be a deluge of rain, and hailstones in wrath to destroy it. <sup>14</sup> I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare; when it falls, you shall perish within it; and you shall know that I am the LORD. <sup>15</sup> Thus I will spend my wrath upon the wall, and upon those who have smeared it with whitewash; and I will say to you, The wall is no more, nor those who smeared it—

<sup>16</sup> the prophets of Israel who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for it, when there was no peace, says the Lord GOD. <sup>17</sup> As for you, mortal, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own imagination; prophesy against them <sup>18</sup> and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the women who sew bands on all wrists,

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<sup>r</sup> Also see Ezekiel 22:28-29 and Matthew 23:27-28

and make veils for the heads of persons of every height, in the hunt for human lives! Will you hunt down lives among my people, and maintain your own lives? <sup>19</sup> You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death persons who should not die and keeping alive persons who should not live, by your lies to my people, who listen to lies.

<sup>20</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I am against your bands with which you hunt lives; I will tear them from your arms, and let the lives go free, the lives that you hunt down like birds. <sup>21</sup> I will tear off your veils, and save my people from your hands; they shall no longer be prey in your hands; and you shall know that I am the LORD. <sup>22</sup> Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not disheartened them, and you have encouraged the wicked not to turn from their wicked way and save their lives; <sup>23</sup> therefore you shall no longer see false visions or practice divination; I will save

my people from your hand. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

#### *God's Judgments Justified*

**14** Certain elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me. <sup>2</sup> And the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>3</sup> Mortal, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and placed their iniquity as a stumbling block before them; shall I let myself be consulted by them? <sup>4</sup> Therefore speak to them, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Any of those of the house of Israel who take their idols into their hearts and place their iniquity as a stumbling block before them, and yet come to the prophet—I the LORD will answer those who come with the multitude of their idols, <sup>5</sup> in order that I may take hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, all of whom are estranged from me through their idols.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Repent and turn away from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your

abominations. <sup>7</sup> For any of those of the house of Israel, or of the aliens who reside in Israel, who separate themselves from me, taking their idols into their hearts and placing their iniquity as a stumbling block before them, and yet come to a prophet to inquire of me by him, I the LORD will answer them myself.

<sup>8</sup> I will set my face against them; I will make them a sign and a byword and cut them off from the midst of my people; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> If a prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I, the LORD, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. <sup>10</sup> And they shall bear their punishment—the punishment of the inquirer and the punishment of the prophet shall be the same—

<sup>11</sup> so that the house of Israel may no longer go astray from me, nor defile themselves any more with all their transgressions. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God, says the Lord God.

**Hebrews 7:11–17** (NRSV)

*Another Priest,  
Like Melchizedek  
(Ps 110:4)*

<sup>11</sup> Now if perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood—for the people received the law under this priesthood—what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron? <sup>12</sup> For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. <sup>13</sup> Now the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. <sup>14</sup> For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

<sup>15</sup> It is even more obvious when another priest arises, resembling Melchizedek, <sup>16</sup> one who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent, but through

the power of an indestructible life.<sup>17</sup> For it is attested of him,  
“You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of  
Melchizedek.”

**Psalms 105:27-36** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> They performed his signs  
among them,  
and miracles in the land  
of Ham.  
<sup>28</sup> He sent darkness, and  
made the land dark;  
they rebelled against his  
words.  
<sup>29</sup> He turned their waters  
into blood,  
and caused their fish to  
die.  
<sup>30</sup> Their land swarmed with  
frogs,  
even in the chambers of  
their kings.  
<sup>31</sup> He spoke, and there came  
swarms of flies,  
and gnats throughout  
their country.  
<sup>32</sup> He gave them hail for rain,  
and lightning that  
flashed through their  
land.  
<sup>33</sup> He struck their vines and  
fig trees,  
and shattered the trees  
of their country.

<sup>34</sup> He spoke, and the locusts  
came,  
and young locusts  
without number;  
<sup>35</sup> they devoured all the  
vegetation in their  
land,  
and ate up the fruit of  
their ground.  
<sup>36</sup> He struck down all the  
firstborn in their land,  
the first issue of all their  
strength.

**Proverbs 23:1-3** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> When you sit down to eat  
with a ruler,  
observe carefully what is  
before you,  
<sup>2</sup> and put a knife to your  
throat  
if you have a big  
appetite.  
<sup>3</sup> Do not desire the ruler's  
delicacies,  
for they are deceptive  
food.

# September 11



## Ezekiel 14:12-15:8 (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>13</sup> Mortal, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it, and break its staff of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it human beings and animals, <sup>14</sup> even if Noah, Daniel, and Job, these three, were in it, they would save only their own lives by their righteousness, says the Lord GOD. <sup>15</sup> If I send wild animals through the land to ravage it, so that it is made desolate, and no one may pass through because of the animals; <sup>16</sup> even if these three men were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither sons nor daughters; they alone would be saved, but the land would be desolate. <sup>17</sup> Or if I bring a sword upon that land and say, "Let a sword pass through the land," and I cut off human beings and animals from it; <sup>18</sup> though these three men

were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither sons nor daughters, but they alone would be saved. <sup>19</sup> Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my wrath upon it with blood, to cut off humans and animals from it; <sup>20</sup> even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither son nor daughter; they would save only their own lives by their righteousness.

<sup>21</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD: How much more when I send upon Jerusalem my four deadly acts of judgment, sword, famine, wild animals, and pestilence, to cut off humans and animals from it! <sup>22</sup> Yet, survivors shall be left in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out; they will come out to you. When you see their ways and their deeds, you will be consoled for the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, for all that I have brought upon it. <sup>23</sup> They shall console you, when you see their ways and their deeds; and you shall know that it was not without cause that I did all

that I have done in it, says the Lord GOD.

*The Useless Vine*

**15** The word of the LORD came to me:

<sup>2</sup> O mortal, how does the wood of the vine surpass all other wood— the vine branch that is among the trees of the forest?

<sup>3</sup> Is wood taken from it to make anything? Does one take a peg from it on which to hang any object?

<sup>4</sup> It is put in the fire for fuel; when the fire has consumed both ends of it and the middle of it is charred,

is it useful for anything?  
<sup>5</sup> When it was whole it was used for nothing; how much less—when the fire has consumed it, and it is charred— can it ever be used for anything!

<sup>6</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Like the wood of the

vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>7</sup> I will set my face against them; although they escape from the fire, the fire shall still consume them; and you shall know that I am the LORD, when I set my face against them. <sup>8</sup> And I will make the land desolate, because they have acted faithlessly, says the Lord GOD.

**Hebrews 7:18–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> There is, on the one hand, the abrogation of an earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual <sup>19</sup> (for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God.

<sup>20</sup> This was confirmed with an oath; for others who became priests took their office without an oath, <sup>21</sup> but this one became a priest with an oath, because of the one who said to him,  
“The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind,



‘You are a priest forever’  
” —

<sup>22</sup> accordingly Jesus has also become the guarantee of a better covenant.

<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; <sup>24</sup> but he [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.

<sup>25</sup> Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

#### **Psalms 105:37-45 (NRSV)**

<sup>37</sup> Then he brought Israel out with silver and gold, and there was no one among their tribes who stumbled.

<sup>38</sup> Egypt was glad when they departed, for dread of them had fallen upon it.

<sup>39</sup> He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light by night.

<sup>40</sup> They asked, and he brought quails,

and gave them food from heaven in abundance.

<sup>41</sup> He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed through the desert like a river.

<sup>42</sup> For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham, his servant.

<sup>43</sup> So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing.

<sup>44</sup> He gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the wealth of the peoples,

<sup>45</sup> that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws. Praise the LORD!

#### **Proverbs 23:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Do not wear yourself out to get rich; be wise enough to desist.

<sup>5</sup> When your eyes light upon it, it is gone; for suddenly it takes wings to itself, flying like an eagle toward heaven.

# September 12



**Ezekiel 16:1-41 (NRSV)**

*God's Faithless Bride*

**16** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>Mortal, make known to Jerusalem her abominations, <sup>3</sup>and say, Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth were in the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite. <sup>4</sup>As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped in cloths. <sup>5</sup>No eye pitied you, to do any of these things for you out of compassion for you; but you were thrown out in the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born.

<sup>6</sup>I passed by you, and saw you flailing about in your blood. As you lay in your blood, I said to you, "Live! <sup>7</sup>and grow up like a plant of the field." You grew up and became tall and arrived at full

womanhood; your breasts were formed, and your hair had grown; yet you were naked and bare.

<sup>8</sup>I passed by you again and looked on you; you were at the age for love. I spread the edge of my cloak over you, and covered your nakedness: I pledged myself to you and entered into a covenant with you, says the Lord GOD, and you became mine. <sup>9</sup>Then I bathed you with water and washed off the blood from you, and anointed you with oil. <sup>10</sup>I clothed you with embroidered cloth and with sandals of fine leather; I bound you in fine linen and covered you with rich fabric. <sup>11</sup>I adorned you with ornaments: I put bracelets on your arms, a chain on your neck, <sup>12</sup>a ring on your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown upon your head. <sup>13</sup>You were adorned with gold and silver, while your clothing was of fine linen, rich fabric, and embroidered cloth. You had choice flour and honey and oil for food. You grew exceedingly beautiful, fit to be a queen. <sup>14</sup>Your fame

spread among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of my splendor that I had bestowed on you, says the Lord GOD.

<sup>15</sup> But you trusted in your beauty, and played the whore because of your fame, and lavished your whorings on any passer-by. <sup>16</sup> You took some of your garments, and made for yourself colorful shrines, and on them played the whore; nothing like this has ever been or ever shall be. <sup>17</sup> You also took your beautiful jewels of my gold and my silver that I had given you, and made for yourself male images, and with them played the whore; <sup>18</sup> and you took your embroidered garments to cover them, and set my oil and my incense before them.

<sup>19</sup> Also my bread that I gave you—I fed you with choice flour and oil and honey—you set it before them as a pleasing odor; and so it was, says the Lord GOD. <sup>20</sup> You took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. As if your whorings were not

enough! <sup>21</sup> You slaughtered my children and delivered them up as an offering to them.

<sup>22</sup> And in all your abominations and your whorings you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, flailing about in your blood.

<sup>23</sup> After all your wickedness (woe, woe to you! says the Lord GOD), <sup>24</sup> you built yourself a platform and made yourself a lofty place in every square; <sup>25</sup> at the head of every street you built your lofty place and prostituted your beauty, offering yourself to every passer-by, and multiplying your whoring. <sup>26</sup> You played the whore with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, multiplying your whoring, to provoke me to anger.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore I stretched out my hand against you, reduced your rations, and gave you up to the will of your enemies, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. <sup>28</sup> You played the whore with the Assyrians, because you were insatiable; you played the whore with them, and still you

were not satisfied. <sup>29</sup> You multiplied your whoring with Chaldea, the land of merchants; and even with this you were not satisfied.

<sup>30</sup> How sick is your heart, says the Lord GOD, that you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen whore; <sup>31</sup> building your platform at the head of every street, and making your lofty place in every square! Yet you were not like a whore, because you scorned payment. <sup>32</sup> Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! <sup>33</sup> Gifts are given to all whores; but you gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from all around for your whorings. <sup>34</sup> So you were different from other women in your whorings: no one solicited you to play the whore; and you gave payment, while no payment was given to you; you were different.

<sup>35</sup> Therefore, O whore, hear the word of the LORD: <sup>36</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD, Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whoring with your lovers, and because

of all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, <sup>37</sup> therefore, I will gather all your lovers, with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated; I will gather them against you from all around, and will uncover your nakedness to them, so that they may see all your nakedness. <sup>38</sup> I will judge you as women who commit adultery and shed blood are judged, and bring blood upon you in wrath and jealousy. <sup>39</sup> I will deliver you into their hands, and they shall throw down your platform and break down your lofty places; they shall strip you of your clothes and take your beautiful objects and leave you naked and bare. <sup>40</sup> They shall bring up a mob against you, and they shall stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. <sup>41</sup> They shall burn your houses and execute judgments on you in the sight of many women; I will stop you from playing the whore, and you shall also make no more payments.

**Hebrews 7:26–28** (NRSV)

<sup>26</sup> For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

<sup>27</sup> Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

**Psalms 106:1-2** (NRSV)

*A Confession of Israel's Sins*

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.
- <sup>2</sup> Who can utter the mighty doings of the LORD, or declare all his praise?

**Proverbs 23:6–8** (NRSV)

- <sup>6</sup> Do not eat the bread of the stingy;

do not desire their delicacies;

- <sup>7</sup> for like a hair in the throat, so are they.  
“Eat and drink!” they say to you; but they do not mean it.

## September 13



**Ezekiel 16:42-63** (NRSV)

<sup>42</sup> So I will satisfy my fury on you, and my jealousy shall turn away from you; I will be calm, and will be angry no longer.

<sup>43</sup> Because you have not remembered the days of your youth, but have enraged me with all these things; therefore, I have returned your deeds upon your head, says the Lord GOD.

Have you not committed lewdness beyond all your abominations? <sup>44</sup> See, everyone who uses proverbs will use this proverb about you, “Like mother, like daughter.” <sup>45</sup> You are the daughter of your mother, who

loathed her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. <sup>46</sup> Your elder sister is Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you, is Sodom with her daughters.

<sup>47</sup> You not only followed their ways, and acted according to their abominations; within a very little time you were more corrupt than they in all your ways. <sup>48</sup> As I live, says the Lord GOD, your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. <sup>49</sup> This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy.

<sup>50</sup> They were haughty, and did abominable things before me; therefore I removed them when I saw it. <sup>51</sup> Samaria has not committed half your sins; you have committed more abominations than they, and have made your sisters appear

righteous by all the abominations that you have committed. <sup>52</sup> Bear your disgrace, you also, for you have brought about for your sisters a more favorable judgment; because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you. So be ashamed, you also, and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.

<sup>53</sup> I will restore their fortunes, the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your own fortunes along with theirs, <sup>54</sup> in order that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have done, becoming a consolation to them. <sup>55</sup> As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former state, Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former state, and you and your daughters shall return to your former state. <sup>56</sup> Was not your sister Sodom a byword in your mouth in the day of your pride, <sup>57</sup> before your

wickedness was uncovered? Now you are a mockery to the daughters of Aram and all her neighbors, and to the daughters of the Philistines, those all around who despise you.<sup>58</sup> You must bear the penalty of your lewdness and your abominations, says the LORD.

*An Everlasting Covenant*

<sup>59</sup>Yes, thus says the Lord GOD: I will deal with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath, breaking the covenant;<sup>60</sup> yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant.<sup>61</sup> Then you will remember your ways, and be ashamed when I take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and give them to you as daughters, but not on account of my covenant with you.<sup>62</sup> I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the LORD,<sup>63</sup> in order that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I forgive

you all that you have done, says the Lord GOD.

**Hebrews 8:1–6** (NRSV)

*Mediator of a Better Covenant*

(Jer 31:31–34)

**8** Now the main point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,<sup>2</sup> a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent that the Lord, and not any mortal, has set up.<sup>3</sup> For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.<sup>4</sup> Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law.<sup>5</sup> They offer worship in a sanctuary that is a sketch and shadow of the heavenly one; for Moses, when he was about to erect the tent, was warned, “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”<sup>6</sup> **But Jesus has now obtained a more excellent ministry, and to that degree he is the mediator of a**

better covenant, which has been enacted through better promises.

he will plead their cause against you.

**Psalms 106:3-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times.  
<sup>4</sup> Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you deliver them;  
<sup>5</sup> that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory in your heritage.

**Proverbs 23:9-11 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, who will only despise the wisdom of your words.  
<sup>10</sup> Do not remove an ancient landmark or encroach on the fields of orphans,  
<sup>11</sup> for their redeemer is strong;

**September 14**



**Ezekiel 17:1-24 (NRSV)**

*The Two Eagles and the Vine*

**17** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>O mortal, propound a riddle, and speak an allegory to the house of Israel. <sup>3</sup>Say: Thus says the Lord GOD:

A great eagle, with great wings and long pinions, rich in plumage of many colors, came to the Lebanon.

He took the top of the cedar,

<sup>4</sup> broke off its topmost shoot;

he carried it to a land of trade, set it in a city of merchants.

<sup>5</sup> Then he took a seed from the land, placed it in fertile soil;



a plant by abundant  
waters,  
he set it like a willow  
twig.  
6 It sprouted and became a  
vine  
spreading out, but low;  
its branches turned toward  
him,  
its roots remained where  
it stood.  
So it became a vine;  
it brought forth  
branches,  
put forth foliage.  
7 There was another great  
eagle,  
with great wings and  
much plumage.  
And see! This vine  
stretched out  
its roots toward him;  
it shot out its branches  
toward him,  
so that he might water it.  
From the bed where it was  
planted  
8 it was transplanted  
to good soil by abundant  
waters,  
so that it might produce  
branches  
and bear fruit  
and become a noble  
vine.

9 Say: Thus says the Lord  
GOD:  
Will it prosper?  
Will he not pull up its  
roots,  
cause its fruit to rot and  
wither,  
its fresh sprouting leaves  
to fade?  
No strong arm or mighty  
army will be needed  
to pull it from its roots.  
10 When it is transplanted,  
will it thrive?  
When the east wind strikes  
it,  
will it not utterly wither,  
wither on the bed where  
it grew?  
11 Then the word of the  
LORD came to me: 12 Say now  
to the rebellious house: Do  
you not know what these  
things mean? Tell them: The  
king of Babylon came to  
Jerusalem, took its king and its  
officials, and brought them  
back with him to Babylon.  
13 He took one of the royal  
offspring and made a  
covenant with him, putting  
him under oath (he had taken  
away the chief men of the  
land), 14 so that the kingdom  
might be humble and not lift

itself up, and that by keeping his covenant it might stand.

<sup>15</sup> But he rebelled against him by sending ambassadors to Egypt, in order that they might give him horses and a large army. Will he succeed? Can one escape who does such things? Can he break the covenant and yet escape? <sup>16</sup> As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king resides who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant with him he broke—in Babylon he shall die.

<sup>17</sup> Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company will not help him in war, when ramps are cast up and siege walls built to cut off many lives. <sup>18</sup> Because he despised the oath and broke the covenant, because he gave his hand and yet did all these things, he shall not escape.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, I will surely return upon his head my oath that he despised, and my covenant that he broke. <sup>20</sup> I will spread my net over him, and he shall be caught in my snare; I will bring him to Babylon and enter into

judgment with him there for the treason he has committed against me. <sup>21</sup> All the pick of his troops shall fall by the sword, and the survivors shall be scattered to every wind; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken.

*Israel Exalted at Last*  
(Cp Ezek 31:1–9)

<sup>22</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:

I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar;

I will set it out.

I will break off a tender one

from the topmost of its young twigs;

I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.

<sup>23</sup> On the mountain height of Israel

I will plant it,

in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar.

Under it every kind of bird will live;

in the shade of its branches will nest

winged creatures of every kind.

- 24 All the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD. I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the LORD have spoken; I will accomplish it.

**Hebrews 8:7–13 (NRSV)**

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need to look for a second one.

8 God finds fault with them when he says:

“The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;

- 9 not like the covenant that I made with their ancestors, on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt;

for they did not continue in my covenant, and so I had no concern for them, says the Lord.

- 10 This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord:

I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

- 11 And they shall not teach one another or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

- 12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

- 13 In speaking of “a new covenant,” he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear.



**Psalm 106:6-12** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Both we and our ancestors  
have sinned;  
we have committed  
iniquity, have done  
wickedly.

<sup>7</sup> Our ancestors, when they  
were in Egypt,  
did not consider your  
wonderful works;  
they did not remember the  
abundance of your  
steadfast love,  
but rebelled against the  
Most High at the Red  
Sea.

<sup>8</sup> Yet he saved them for his  
name's sake,  
so that he might make  
known his mighty  
power.

<sup>9</sup> He rebuked the Red Sea,  
and it became dry;  
he led them through the  
deep as through a  
desert.

<sup>10</sup> So he saved them from the  
hand of the foe,  
and delivered them from  
the hand of the enemy.

<sup>11</sup> The waters covered their  
adversaries;  
not one of them was left.

<sup>12</sup> Then they believed his  
words;

they sang his praise.

**Proverbs 23:12** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Apply your mind to  
instruction  
and your ear to words of  
knowledge.

**September  
15**



**Ezekiel 18:1-32** (NRSV)

*Individual Retribution*

**18** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup>What do you  
mean by repeating this  
proverb concerning the land of  
Israel, "The parents have  
eaten sour grapes, and the  
children's teeth are set on  
edge"? <sup>3</sup>As I live, says the Lord  
GOD, this proverb shall no  
more be used by you in Israel.  
<sup>4</sup>Know that all lives are mine;  
the life of the parent as well as  
the life of the child is mine: it  
is only the person who sins  
that shall die.

<sup>5</sup>If a man is righteous and  
does what is lawful and right—

<sup>6</sup> if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman during her menstrual period, <sup>7</sup> does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, <sup>8</sup> does not take advance or accrued interest, withholds his hand from iniquity, executes true justice between contending parties, <sup>9</sup> follows my statutes, and is careful to observe my ordinances, acting faithfully—such a one is righteous; he shall surely live, says the Lord GOD.

<sup>10</sup> If he has a son who is violent, a shedder of blood, <sup>11</sup> who does any of these things (though his father does none of them), who eats upon the mountains, defiles his neighbor's wife, <sup>12</sup> oppresses the poor and needy, commits robbery, does not restore the pledge, lifts up his eyes to the idols, commits abomination, <sup>13</sup> takes advance or accrued interest; shall he then live? He


shall not. He has done all these abominable things; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon himself.

<sup>14</sup> But if this man has a son who sees all the sins that his father has done, considers, and does not do likewise, <sup>15</sup> who does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife, <sup>16</sup> does not wrong anyone, exacts no pledge, commits no robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, <sup>17</sup> withholds his hand from iniquity, takes no advance or accrued interest, observes my ordinances, and follows my statutes; he shall not die for his father's iniquity; he shall surely live. <sup>18</sup> As for his father, because he practiced extortion, robbed his brother, and did what is not good among his people, he dies for his iniquity.

<sup>19</sup> Yet you say, "Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?" When the son has done what is lawful and right, and has been careful to observe all my

statutes, he shall surely live.

<sup>20</sup> The person who sins shall die. A child shall not suffer for the iniquity of a parent, nor a parent suffer for the iniquity of a child; the righteousness of the righteous shall be his own, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be his own.



<sup>21</sup> But if the wicked turn away from all their sins that they have committed and keep all my statutes and do what is lawful and right, they shall surely live; they shall not die.

<sup>22</sup> None of the transgressions that they have committed shall be remembered against them; for the righteousness that they have done they shall live.

<sup>23</sup> Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, says the Lord GOD, and not rather that they should turn from their ways and live? <sup>24</sup> But when the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity and do the same abominable things that the wicked do, shall they live? None of the righteous deeds that they have done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which they are

guilty and the sin they have committed, they shall die.

<sup>25</sup> Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? <sup>26</sup> When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die.

<sup>27</sup> Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. <sup>28</sup> Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. <sup>29</sup> Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

<sup>30</sup> Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin.

<sup>31</sup> Cast away from you all the

transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>32</sup> For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

**Hebrews 9:1–5 (NRSV)**

*The Earthly and the  
Heavenly Sanctuaries*  
(Cp Ex 25:10–40)

**9** Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. <sup>2</sup> For a tent was constructed, the first one, in which were the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the Presence; this is called the Holy Place. <sup>3</sup> Behind the second curtain was a tent called the Holy of Holies. <sup>4</sup> In it stood the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which there were a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; <sup>5</sup> above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot speak now in detail.

**Psalms 106:13–23 (NRSV)**

- <sup>13</sup> But they soon forgot his works;  
they did not wait for his counsel.
- <sup>14</sup> But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness,  
and put God to the test in the desert;
- <sup>15</sup> he gave them what they asked,  
but sent a wasting disease among them.
- <sup>16</sup> They were jealous of Moses in the camp,  
and of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD.
- <sup>17</sup> The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,  
and covered the faction of Abiram.
- <sup>18</sup> Fire also broke out in their company;  
the flame burned up the wicked.
- <sup>19</sup> They made a calf at Horeb  
and worshiped a cast image.
- <sup>20</sup> They exchanged the glory of God  
for the image of an ox  
that eats grass.
- <sup>21</sup> They forgot God, their Savior,

who had done great  
things in Egypt,  
22 wondrous works in the  
land of Ham,  
and awesome deeds by  
the Red Sea.  
23 Therefore he said he  
would destroy them—  
had not Moses, his  
chosen one,  
stood in the breach before  
him,  
to turn away his wrath  
from destroying them.

**Proverbs 23:13–14 (NRSV)**

13 Do not withhold discipline  
from your children;  
if you beat them with a  
rod, they will not die.  
14 If you beat them with the  
rod,  
you will save their lives  
from Sheol.

**September  
16**



**Ezekiel 19:1-14 (NRSV)**  
*Israel Degraded*

**19** As for you, raise up a  
lamentation for the princes of  
Israel, <sup>2</sup> and say:

What a lioness was your  
mother  
among lions!  
She lay down among  
young lions,  
rearing her cubs.  
3 She raised up one of her  
cubs;  
he became a young lion,  
and he learned to catch  
prey;  
he devoured humans.  
4 The nations sounded an  
alarm against him;  
he was caught in their  
pit;  
and they brought him with  
hooks  
to the land of Egypt.  
5 When she saw that she  
was thwarted,  
that her hope was lost,  
she took another of her  
cubs  
and made him a young  
lion.  
6 He prowled among the  
lions;  
he became a young lion,  
and he learned to catch  
prey;  
he devoured people.



7 And he ravaged their strongholds,  
 and laid waste their towns;  
 the land was appalled, and all in it,  
 at the sound of his roaring.

8 The nations set upon him from the provinces all around;  
 they spread their net over him;  
 he was caught in their pit.

9 With hooks they put him in a cage,  
 and brought him to the king of Babylon;  
 they brought him into custody,  
 so that his voice should be heard no more  
 on the mountains of Israel.

10 Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard  
 transplanted by the water,  
 fruitful and full of branches from abundant water.

11 Its strongest stem became a ruler's scepter;  
 it towered aloft among the thick boughs;

it stood out in its height with its mass of branches.

12 But it was plucked up in fury,  
 cast down to the ground; the east wind dried it up;  
 its fruit was stripped off, its strong stem was withered;  
 the fire consumed it.

13 Now it is transplanted into the wilderness,  
 into a dry and thirsty land.

14 And fire has gone out from its stem,  
 has consumed its branches and fruit,  
 so that there remains in it no strong stem,  
 no scepter for ruling.  
 This is a lamentation, and it is used as a lamentation.

**Hebrews 9:6–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup>Such preparations having been made, the priests go continually into the first tent to carry out their ritual duties;  
<sup>7</sup>but only the high priest goes into the second, and he but once a year, and not without taking the blood that he offers for himself and for the sins

committed unintentionally by the people.<sup>8</sup> By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary has not yet been disclosed as long as the first tent is still standing.<sup>9</sup> This is a symbol of the present time, during which gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,<sup>10</sup> but deal only with food and drink and various baptisms, regulations for the body imposed until the time comes to set things right.

**Psalm 106:24-31 (NRSV)**


<sup>24</sup> Then they despised the pleasant land,  
having no faith in his promise.  
<sup>25</sup> They grumbled in their tents,  
and did not obey the voice of the LORD.  
<sup>26</sup> Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them  
that he would make them fall in the wilderness,  
<sup>27</sup> and would disperse their descendants among the nations,

scattering them over the lands.

<sup>28</sup> Then they attached themselves to the Baal of Peor,  
and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;  
<sup>29</sup> they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds,  
and a plague broke out among them.  
<sup>30</sup> Then Phinehas stood up and interceded,  
and the plague was stopped.  
<sup>31</sup> And that has been reckoned to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever.

**Proverbs 23:15–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> My child, if your heart is wise,  
my heart too will be glad.  
<sup>16</sup> My soul will rejoice when your lips speak what is right.



# September 17



## Ezekiel 20:1-26 (NRSV)

### *Israel's Continuing Rebellion*

**20** In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, certain elders of Israel came to consult the LORD, and sat down before me. <sup>2</sup> And the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>3</sup> Mortal, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: Why are you coming? To consult me? As I live, says the Lord GOD, I will not be consulted by you. <sup>4</sup> Will you judge them, mortal, will you judge them? Then let them know the abominations of their ancestors, <sup>5</sup> and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob—making myself known to them in the land of Egypt—I swore to them, saying, I am the LORD your God. <sup>6</sup> On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land

flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. <sup>7</sup> And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God. <sup>8</sup> But they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; not one of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. <sup>10</sup> So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. <sup>11</sup> I gave them my statutes and showed them my ordinances, by whose observance everyone shall live. <sup>12</sup> Moreover I gave them my sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, so that

they might know that I the LORD sanctify them.<sup>13</sup> But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they did not observe my statutes but rejected my ordinances, by whose observance everyone shall live; and my sabbaths they greatly profaned.

Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to make an end of them.<sup>14</sup> But I acted for the sake of my name, so that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.

<sup>15</sup> Moreover I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands,<sup>16</sup> because they rejected my ordinances and did not observe my statutes, and profaned my sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless my eye spared them, and I did not destroy them or make an end of them in the wilderness.

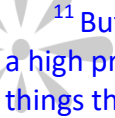
<sup>18</sup> I said to their children in the wilderness, Do not follow

the statutes of your parents, nor observe their ordinances, nor defile yourselves with their idols.<sup>19</sup> I the LORD am your God; follow my statutes, and be careful to observe my ordinances,<sup>20</sup> and hallow my sabbaths that they may be a sign between me and you, so that you may know that I the LORD am your God.<sup>21</sup> But the children rebelled against me; they did not follow my statutes, and were not careful to observe my ordinances, by whose observance everyone shall live; they profaned my sabbaths.

Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness.<sup>22</sup> But I withheld my hand, and acted for the sake of my name, so that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.<sup>23</sup> Moreover I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries,<sup>24</sup> because they had not executed my ordinances, but had rejected my statutes and

profaned my sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their ancestors' idols.<sup>25</sup> Moreover I gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live.<sup>26</sup> I defiled them through their very gifts, in their offering up all their firstborn, in order that I might horrify them, so that they might know that I am the LORD.

### Hebrews 9:11–23 (NRSV)



<sup>11</sup> But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation),<sup>12</sup> he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.<sup>13</sup> For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified,<sup>14</sup> how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our

conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

<sup>15</sup> For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.<sup>16</sup> Where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established.<sup>17</sup> For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.<sup>18</sup> Hence not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood.<sup>19</sup> For when every commandment had been told to all the people by Moses in accordance with the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people,<sup>20</sup> saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you."<sup>21</sup> And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, under the

law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

*Christ's Sacrifice  
Takes Away Sin*

<sup>23</sup> Thus it was necessary for the sketches of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves need better sacrifices than these.

**Psalm 106:32-46** (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> They angered the LORD at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses on their account;  
<sup>33</sup> for they made his spirit bitter, and he spoke words that were rash.  
<sup>34</sup> They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD commanded them,  
<sup>35</sup> but they mingled with the nations and learned to do as they did.  
<sup>36</sup> They served their idols, which became a snare to them.

<sup>37</sup> They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons;  
<sup>38</sup> they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood.  
<sup>39</sup> Thus they became unclean by their acts, and prostituted themselves in their doings.  
<sup>40</sup> Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people, and he abhorred his heritage;  
<sup>41</sup> he gave them into the hand of the nations, so that those who hated them ruled over them.  
<sup>42</sup> Their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their power.  
<sup>43</sup> Many times he delivered them, but they were rebellious in their purposes,

and were brought low  
through their iniquity.  
<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless he regarded  
their distress  
when he heard their cry.  
<sup>45</sup> For their sake he  
remembered his  
covenant,  
and showed compassion  
according to the  
abundance of his  
steadfast love.  
<sup>46</sup> He caused them to be  
pitied  
by all who held them  
captive.

**Proverbs 23:17–18** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Do not let your heart envy  
sinners,  
but always continue in  
the fear of the LORD.  
<sup>18</sup> Surely there is a future,  
and your hope will not be cut  
off.

**September  
18**



**Ezekiel 20:27-49** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Therefore, mortal, speak  
to the house of Israel and say  
to them, Thus says the Lord  
GOD: In this again your  
ancestors blasphemed me, by  
dealing treacherously with me.  
<sup>28</sup> For when I had brought  
them into the land that I  
swore to give them, then  
wherever they saw any high  
hill or any leafy tree, there  
they offered their sacrifices  
and presented the  
provocation of their offering;  
there they sent up their  
pleasing odors, and there they  
poured out their drink  
offerings. <sup>29</sup> (I said to them,  
What is the high place to  
which you go? So it is called  
Bamah to this day.)  
<sup>30</sup> Therefore say to the house  
of Israel, Thus says the Lord  
GOD: Will you defile yourselves  
after the manner of your  
ancestors and go astray after  
their detestable things?  
<sup>31</sup> When you offer your gifts  
and make your children pass  
through the fire, you defile  
yourselves with all your idols  
to this day. And shall I be  
consulted by you, O house of  
Israel? As I live, says the Lord

GOD, I will not be consulted by you.

<sup>32</sup>What is in your mind shall never happen—the thought, “Let us be like the nations, like the tribes of the countries, and worship wood and stone.”

*God Will Restore Israel*

<sup>33</sup>As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, I will be king over you. <sup>34</sup>I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; <sup>35</sup>and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. <sup>36</sup>As I entered into judgment with your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, says the Lord GOD. <sup>37</sup>I will make you pass under the staff, and will bring you within the bond of the covenant. <sup>38</sup>I will purge out the rebels among you, and

those who transgress against me; I will bring them out of the land where they reside as aliens, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>39</sup>As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD: Go serve your idols, everyone of you now and hereafter, if you will not listen to me; but my holy name you shall no more profane with your gifts and your idols.

<sup>40</sup>For on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, says the Lord GOD, there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the land; there I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred things. <sup>41</sup>As a pleasing odor I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations. <sup>42</sup>You shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country that I swore to give to your



ancestors. <sup>43</sup> There you shall remember your ways and all the deeds by which you have polluted yourselves; and you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed. <sup>44</sup> And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I deal with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, or corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, says the Lord GOD.

*A Prophecy against the Negeb*

<sup>45</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>46</sup> Mortal, set your face toward the south, preach against the south, and prophesy against the forest land in the Negeb; <sup>47</sup> say to the forest of the Negeb, Hear the word of the LORD: Thus says the Lord GOD, I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green tree in you and every dry tree; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from south to north shall be scorched by it. <sup>48</sup> All flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it; it shall not be quenched. <sup>49</sup> Then I said, "Ah Lord GOD! they are

saying of me, 'Is he not a maker of allegories?' "

**Hebrews 9:24–28** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. <sup>25</sup> Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the Holy Place year after year with blood that is not his own; <sup>26</sup> for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. <sup>27</sup> **And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgment,** <sup>28</sup> **so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.**

**Psalm 106:47-48** (NRSV)

<sup>47</sup> Save us, O LORD our God,  
and gather us from  
among the nations,

that we may give thanks to  
your holy name  
and glory in your praise.

48 Blessed be the LORD, the  
God of Israel,  
from everlasting to  
everlasting.  
And let all the people say,  
“Amen.”  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 23:19–21** (NRSV)

19 Hear, my child, and be  
wise,  
and direct your mind in  
the way.  
20 Do not be among  
winebibbers,  
or among gluttonous  
eaters of meat;  
21 for the drunkard and the  
glutton will come to  
poverty, and  
drowsiness will clothe  
them with rags.

**September  
19**



**Ezekiel 21:1-32** (NRSV)

*The Drawn Sword of God*

**21** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal, set your  
face toward Jerusalem and  
preach against the  
sanctuaries; prophesy against  
the land of Israel <sup>3</sup> and say to  
the land of Israel, Thus says  
the LORD: I am coming against  
you, and will draw my sword  
out of its sheath, and will cut  
off from you both righteous  
and wicked. <sup>4</sup> Because I will cut  
off from you both righteous  
and wicked, therefore my  
sword shall go out of its  
sheath against all flesh from  
south to north; <sup>5</sup> and all flesh  
shall know that I the LORD have  
drawn my sword out of its  
sheath; it shall not be  
sheathed again. <sup>6</sup> Moan  
therefore, mortal; moan with  
breaking heart and bitter grief  
before their eyes. <sup>7</sup> And when  
they say to you, “Why do you  
moan?” you shall say,  
“Because of the news that has  
come. Every heart will melt  
and all hands will be feeble,  
every spirit will faint and all  
knees will turn to water. See,  
it comes and it will be  
fulfilled,” says the Lord GOD.

<sup>8</sup> And the word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>9</sup> Mortal,

prophesy and say: Thus says  
the Lord; Say:

A sword, a sword is  
sharpened,

it is also polished;

<sup>10</sup> it is sharpened for  
slaughter,  
honed to flash like  
lightning!

How can we make merry?

You have despised the  
rod,

and all discipline.

<sup>11</sup> The sword is given to be  
polished,  
to be grasped in the  
hand;

it is sharpened, the sword  
is polished,

to be placed in the  
slayer's hand.

<sup>12</sup> Cry and wail, O mortal,  
for it is against my  
people;

it is against all Israel's  
princes;

they are thrown to the  
sword,

together with my people.

Ah! Strike the thigh!

<sup>13</sup> For consider: What! If you  
despise the rod, will it not  
happen? says the Lord GOD.

<sup>14</sup> And you, mortal, prophesy;  
strike hand to hand.

Let the sword fall twice,  
thrice;

it is a sword for killing.

A sword for great  
slaughter—

<sup>15</sup> it surrounds them;  
therefore hearts melt  
and many stumble.

At all their gates I have set  
the point of the sword.

Ah! It is made for flashing,  
it is polished for

slaughter.

<sup>16</sup> Attack to the right!

Engage to the left!

—wherever your edge is  
directed.

<sup>17</sup> I too will strike hand to  
hand,

I will satisfy my fury;

I the LORD have spoken.

<sup>18</sup> The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>19</sup> Mortal, mark  
out two roads for the sword of  
the king of Babylon to come;  
both of them shall issue from  
the same land. And make a  
signpost, make it for a fork in  
the road leading to a city;

<sup>20</sup> mark out the road for the  
sword to come to Rabbah of  
the Ammonites or to Judah  
and to Jerusalem the fortified.

<sup>21</sup> For the king of Babylon  
stands at the parting of the

way, at the fork in the two roads, to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the teraphim, he inspects the liver.<sup>22</sup> Into his right hand comes the lot for Jerusalem, to set battering rams, to call out for slaughter, for raising the battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build siege towers.<sup>23</sup> But to them it will seem like a false divination; they have sworn solemn oaths; but he brings their guilt to remembrance, bringing about their capture.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have brought your guilt to remembrance, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.

<sup>25</sup> As for you, vile, wicked prince of Israel, you whose day has come, the time of final punishment,

<sup>26</sup> thus says the Lord GOD: Remove the turban, take off the crown;

things shall not remain as they are.

Exalt that which is low, abase that which is high.

<sup>27</sup> A ruin, a ruin, a ruin—  
I will make it!  
(Such has never occurred.)

Until he comes whose right it is;  
to him I will give it.

<sup>28</sup> As for you, mortal, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; say:

A sword, a sword! Drawn for slaughter,  
polished to consume, to flash like lightning.

<sup>29</sup> Offering false visions for you,  
divining lies for you, they place you over the necks  
of the vile, wicked ones—

those whose day has come,  
the time of final punishment.

<sup>30</sup> Return it to its sheath!  
In the place where you were created,  
in the land of your origin,

I will judge you.  
<sup>31</sup> I will pour out my  
 indignation upon you,  
 with the fire of my wrath  
 I will blow upon you.  
 I will deliver you into  
 brutish hands,  
 those skillful to destroy.  
<sup>32</sup> You shall be fuel for the  
 fire,  
 your blood shall enter  
 the earth;  
 you shall be remembered  
 no more,  
 for I the LORD have  
 spoken.

**Hebrews 10:1–7 (NRSV)**

*Christ's Sacrifice Once for All*  
 (Cp Ps 40:6–8)

**10** Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? <sup>3</sup> But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after

year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me;

<sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’  
 (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

**Psalms 107:1–3 (NRSV)**

*Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Many Troubles*

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
 for he is good;  
 for his steadfast love  
 endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the  
 LORD say so,  
 those he redeemed from  
 trouble

<sup>3</sup> and gathered in from the  
 lands,  
 from the east and from  
 the west,

from the north and from  
the south.

**Proverbs 23:22** (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Listen to your father who  
begot you,  
and do not despise your  
mother when she is old.

## September 20



**Ezekiel 22:1-31** (NRSV)

*The Bloody City*

**22** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>You, mortal, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then declare to it all its abominable deeds. <sup>3</sup>You shall say, Thus says the Lord God: A city! Shedding blood within itself; its time has come; making its idols, defiling itself. <sup>4</sup>You have become guilty by the blood that you have shed, and defiled by the idols that you have made; you have brought your day near, the appointed time of your years has come. Therefore I

have made you a disgrace before the nations, and a mockery to all the countries.

<sup>5</sup>Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you, you infamous one, full of tumult.

<sup>6</sup>The princes of Israel in you, everyone according to his power, have been bent on shedding blood. <sup>7</sup>Father and mother are treated with contempt in you; the alien residing within you suffers extortion; the orphan and the widow are wronged in you.

<sup>8</sup>You have despised my holy things, and profaned my sabbaths. <sup>9</sup>In you are those who slander to shed blood, those in you who eat upon the mountains, who commit lewdness in your midst. <sup>10</sup>In you they uncover their fathers' nakedness; in you they violate women in their menstrual periods. <sup>11</sup>One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another in you defiles his sister, his father's daughter. <sup>12</sup>In you, they take bribes to shed blood; you take both advance interest and accrued

interest, and make gain of your neighbors by extortion; and you have forgotten me, says the Lord GOD.

<sup>13</sup> See, I strike my hands together at the dishonest gain you have made, and at the blood that has been shed within you. <sup>14</sup> Can your courage endure, or can your hands remain strong in the days when I shall deal with you? I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it. <sup>15</sup> I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the countries, and I will purge your filthiness out of you. <sup>16</sup> And I shall be profaned through you in the sight of the nations; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>17</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>18</sup> Mortal, the house of Israel has become dross to me; all of them, silver, bronze, tin, iron, and lead. In the smelter they have become dross. <sup>19</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have all become dross, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. <sup>20</sup> As one gathers silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into a smelter, to blow the

fire upon them in order to melt them; so I will gather you in my anger and in my wrath, and I will put you in and melt you. <sup>21</sup> I will gather you and blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and you shall be melted within it. <sup>22</sup> As silver is melted in a smelter, so you shall be melted in it; and you shall know that I the LORD have poured out my wrath upon you.

<sup>23</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>24</sup> Mortal, say to it: You are a land that is not cleansed, not rained upon in the day of indignation. <sup>25</sup> Its princes within it are like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have devoured human lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows within it. <sup>26</sup> Its priests have done violence to my teaching and have profaned my holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have disregarded my sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. <sup>27</sup> Its

officials within it are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood, destroying lives to get dishonest gain.<sup>28</sup> Its prophets have smeared whitewash on their behalf, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, “Thus says the Lord GOD,” when the LORD has not spoken.<sup>29</sup> The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery; they have oppressed the poor and needy, and have extorted from the alien without redress.<sup>30</sup> And I sought for anyone among them who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one.<sup>31</sup> Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; I have returned their conduct upon their heads, says the Lord GOD.

**Hebrews 10:8–17 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings

and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law),<sup>9</sup> then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.<sup>10</sup> And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

<sup>11</sup> And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins.<sup>12</sup> But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, “he sat down at the right hand of God,”<sup>13</sup> and since then has been waiting “until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.”<sup>14</sup> For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.<sup>15</sup> And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying,

<sup>16</sup> “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord:  
I will put my laws in their hearts,  
and I will write them on their minds,”



17 he also adds,  
"I will remember their sins  
and their lawless deeds  
no more."

**Psalms 107:4-32 (NRSV)**

4 Some wandered in desert  
wastes,  
finding no way to an  
inhabited town;  
5 hungry and thirsty,  
their soul fainted within  
them.  
6 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he delivered them  
from their distress;  
7 he led them by a straight  
way,  
until they reached an  
inhabited town.  
8 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
9 For he satisfies the thirsty,  
and the hungry he fills  
with good things.  
10 Some sat in darkness and  
in gloom,  
prisoners in misery and  
in irons,  
11 for they had rebelled  
against the words of  
God,

and spurned the counsel  
of the Most High.  
12 Their hearts were bowed  
down with hard labor;  
they fell down, with no  
one to help.  
13 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he saved them from  
their distress;  
14 he brought them out of  
darkness and gloom,  
and broke their bonds  
asunder.  
15 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
16 For he shatters the doors  
of bronze,  
and cuts in two the bars  
of iron.  
17 Some were sick through  
their sinful ways,  
and because of their  
iniquities endured  
affliction;  
18 they loathed any kind of  
food,  
and they drew near to  
the gates of death.  
19 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he saved them from  
their distress;

20 he sent out his word and  
healed them,  
and delivered them from  
destruction.  
21 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
22 And let them offer  
thanksgiving sacrifices,  
and tell of his deeds with  
songs of joy.  
23 Some went down to the  
sea in ships,  
doing business on the  
mighty waters;  
24 they saw the deeds of the  
LORD,  
his wondrous works in  
the deep.  
25 For he commanded and  
raised the stormy  
wind,  
which lifted up the  
waves of the sea.  
26 They mounted up to  
heaven, they went  
down to the depths;  
their courage melted  
away in their calamity;  
27 they reeled and staggered  
like drunkards,  
and were at their wits'  
end.

28 Then they cried to the LORD  
in their trouble,  
and he brought them out  
from their distress;  
29 he made the storm be still,  
and the waves of the sea  
were hushed.  
30 Then they were glad  
because they had  
quiet,  
and he brought them to  
their desired haven.  
31 Let them thank the LORD  
for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works  
to humankind.  
32 Let them extol him in the  
congregation of the  
people,  
and praise him in the  
assembly of the elders.

**Proverbs 23:23 (NRSV)**

23 Buy truth, and do not sell  
it;  
buy wisdom, instruction,  
and understanding.

# September 21



**Ezekiel 23:1-37 (NRSV)**

*Oholah and Oholibah*

**23** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>Mortal, there were two women, the daughters of one mother; <sup>3</sup>they played the whore in Egypt; they played the whore in their youth; their breasts were caressed there, and their virgin bosoms were fondled. <sup>4</sup>Oholah was the name of the elder and Oholibah the name of her sister. They became mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup>Oholah played the whore while she was mine; she lusted after her lovers the Assyrians, warriors <sup>6</sup>clothed in blue, governors and commanders, all of them handsome young men, mounted horsemen. <sup>7</sup>She bestowed her favors upon them, the choicest men of Assyria all of them; and she defiled herself with all the idols of everyone for whom she lusted. <sup>8</sup>She did not give

up her whorings that she had practiced since Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her and fondled her virgin bosom and poured out their lust upon her. <sup>9</sup>Therefore I delivered her into the hands of her lovers, into the hands of the Assyrians, for whom she lusted. <sup>10</sup>These uncovered her nakedness; they seized her sons and her daughters; and they killed her with the sword. Judgment was executed upon her, and she became a byword among women.

<sup>11</sup>Her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more corrupt than she in her lusting and in her whorings, which were worse than those of her sister. <sup>12</sup>She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and commanders, warriors clothed in full armor, mounted horsemen, all of them handsome young men. <sup>13</sup>And I saw that she was defiled; they both took the same way. <sup>14</sup>But she carried her whorings further; she saw male figures carved on the wall, images of the Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion, <sup>15</sup>with belts around their waists, with flowing

turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers—a picture of Babylonians whose native land was Chaldea.

<sup>16</sup>When she saw them she lusted after them, and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. <sup>17</sup>And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their lust; and after she defiled herself with them, she turned from them in disgust. <sup>18</sup>When she carried on her whorings so openly and flaunted her nakedness, I turned in disgust from her, as I had turned from her sister.

<sup>19</sup>Yet she increased her whorings, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the whore in the land of Egypt <sup>20</sup>and lusted after her paramours there, whose members were like those of donkeys, and whose emission was like that of stallions.

<sup>21</sup>Thus you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians fondled your bosom and caressed your young breasts.

<sup>22</sup>Therefore, O Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD: I will rouse against you your lovers

from whom you turned in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side: <sup>23</sup>the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, handsome young men, governors and commanders all of them, officers and warriors, all of them riding on horses. <sup>24</sup>They shall come against you from the north with chariots and wagons and a host of peoples; they shall set themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet, and I will commit the judgment to them, and they shall judge you according to their ordinances. <sup>25</sup>I will direct my indignation against you, in order that they may deal with you in fury. They shall cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors shall fall by the sword. They shall seize your sons and your daughters, and your survivors shall be devoured by fire. <sup>26</sup>They shall also strip you of your clothes and take away your fine jewels. <sup>27</sup>So I will put an end to your lewdness and your whoring brought from the

land of Egypt; you shall not long for them, or remember Egypt any more. <sup>28</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD: I will deliver you into the hands of those whom you hate, into the hands of those from whom you turned in disgust; <sup>29</sup> and they shall deal with you in hatred, and take away all the fruit of your labor, and leave you naked and bare, and the nakedness of your whorings shall be exposed. Your lewdness and your whorings <sup>30</sup> have brought this upon you, because you played the whore with the nations, and polluted yourself with their idols. <sup>31</sup> You have gone the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand. <sup>32</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:

You shall drink your sister's cup,  
deep and wide;  
you shall be scorned and derided,  
it holds so much.

<sup>33</sup> You shall be filled with drunkenness and sorrow.

A cup of horror and desolation

is the cup of your sister Samaria;

<sup>34</sup> you shall drink it and drain it out,  
and gnaw its sherds,  
and tear out your breasts;

for I have spoken, says the Lord GOD. <sup>35</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have forgotten me and cast me behind your back, therefore bear the consequences of your lewdness and whorings.

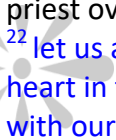
<sup>36</sup> The LORD said to me: Mortal, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominable deeds. <sup>37</sup> For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands; with their idols they have committed adultery; and they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me.

### **Hebrews 10:18–23 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

#### *A Call to Persevere*

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to



enter the sanctuary by the  
blood of Jesus,<sup>20</sup> by the new  
and living way that he opened  
for us through the curtain  
(that is, through his flesh),  
<sup>21</sup> and since we have a great  
priest over the house of God,  
<sup>22</sup> let us approach with a true  
heart in full assurance of faith,  
with our hearts sprinkled clean  
from an evil conscience and  
our bodies washed with pure  
water.<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast to the  
confession of our hope  
without wavering, for he who  
has promised is faithful.

**Psalms 107:33-43** (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> He turns rivers into a  
desert,  
springs of water into  
thirsty ground,  
<sup>34</sup> a fruitful land into a salty  
waste,  
because of the  
wickedness of its  
inhabitants.  
<sup>35</sup> He turns a desert into  
pools of water,  
a parched land into  
springs of water.  
<sup>36</sup> And there he lets the  
hungry live,  
and they establish a  
town to live in;

<sup>37</sup> they sow fields, and plant  
vineyards,  
and get a fruitful yield.  
<sup>38</sup> By his blessing they  
multiply greatly,  
and he does not let their  
cattle decrease.  
<sup>39</sup> When they are diminished  
and brought low  
through oppression,  
trouble, and sorrow,  
<sup>40</sup> he pours contempt on  
princes  
and makes them wander  
in trackless wastes;  
<sup>41</sup> but he raises up the needy  
out of distress,  
and makes their families  
like flocks.  
<sup>42</sup> The upright see it and are  
glad;  
and all wickedness stops  
its mouth.  
<sup>43</sup> Let those who are wise  
give heed to these  
things,  
and consider the  
steadfast love of the  
LORD.

**Proverbs 23:24** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> The father of the righteous  
will greatly rejoice;  
he who begets a wise son will  
be glad in him.

# September

## 22



### **Ezekiel 23:28-49** (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup> Moreover this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my sabbaths.

<sup>39</sup> For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. This is what they did in my house.

<sup>40</sup> They even sent for men to come from far away, to whom a messenger was sent, and they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and decked yourself with ornaments; <sup>41</sup> you sat on a stately couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed my incense and my oil. <sup>42</sup> The sound of a raucous multitude was around her, with many of the rabble brought in drunken from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on the arms of the women, and beautiful crowns upon their heads.

<sup>43</sup> Then I said, Ah, she is worn out with adulteries, but they carry on their sexual acts

with her. <sup>44</sup> For they have gone in to her, as one goes in to a whore. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, wanton women. <sup>45</sup> But righteous judges shall declare them guilty of adultery and of bloodshed; because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands.

<sup>46</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD: Bring up an assembly against them, and make them an object of terror and of plunder. <sup>47</sup> The assembly shall stone them and with their swords they shall cut them down; they shall kill their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses. <sup>48</sup> Thus will I put an end to lewdness in the land, so that all women may take warning and not commit lewdness as you have done. <sup>49</sup> They shall repay you for your lewdness, and you shall bear the penalty for your sinful idolatry; and you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

### **Hebrews 10:24-36** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together,

as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

<sup>26</sup> For if we willfully persist in sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, <sup>27</sup> but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. <sup>28</sup> Anyone who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy “on the testimony of two or three witnesses.” <sup>29</sup> How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by those who have spurned the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace? <sup>30</sup> For we know the one who said, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.”

<sup>31</sup> It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

<sup>32</sup> But recall those earlier days when, after you had been enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, <sup>33</sup> sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and

persecution, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. <sup>34</sup> For you had compassion for those who were in prison, and you cheerfully accepted the plundering of your possessions, knowing that you yourselves possessed something better and more lasting. <sup>35</sup> Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. <sup>36</sup> For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

**Psalm 108:1-4 (NRSV)**

*Praise and Prayer for Victory*  
(Ps 57:7–11; 60:5–12)

A Song. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> My heart is steadfast, O  
God, my heart is  
steadfast;  
I will sing and make  
melody.  
Awake, my soul!
- <sup>2</sup> Awake, O harp and lyre!  
I will awake the dawn.
- <sup>3</sup> I will give thanks to you, O  
LORD, among the  
peoples,  
and I will sing praises to  
you among the  
nations.



<sup>4</sup> For your steadfast love is  
higher than the  
heavens,  
and your faithfulness  
reaches to the clouds.

**Proverbs 23:25–28** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Let your father and mother  
be glad;  
let her who bore you  
rejoice.  
<sup>26</sup> My child, give me your  
heart,  
and let your eyes  
observe my ways.  
<sup>27</sup> For a prostitute is a deep  
pit;  
an adulteress is a narrow  
well.  
<sup>28</sup> She lies in wait like a  
robber  
and increases the  
number of the  
faithless.

**September  
23**



**Ezekiel 24:1-25:11** (NRSV)

*The Boiling Pot*  
(Cp Jer 1:13–19)

**24** In the ninth year, in the  
tenth month, on the tenth day  
of the month, the word of the  
LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal,  
write down the name of this  
day, this very day. The king of  
Babylon has laid siege to  
Jerusalem this very day. <sup>3</sup> And  
utter an allegory to the  
rebellious house and say to  
them, Thus says the Lord GOD:  
Set on the pot, set it on,  
pour in water also;  
<sup>4</sup> put in it the pieces,  
all the good pieces, the  
thigh and the shoulder;  
fill it with choice bones.  
<sup>5</sup> Take the choicest one of  
the flock,  
pile the logs under it;  
boil its pieces,  
seethe also its bones in  
it.  
<sup>6</sup> Therefore thus says the  
Lord GOD:  
Woe to the bloody city,  
the pot whose rust is in  
it,  
whose rust has not gone  
out of it!  
Empty it piece by piece,  
making no choice at all.  
<sup>7</sup> For the blood she shed is  
inside it;

she placed it on a bare  
rock;  
she did not pour it out on  
the ground,  
to cover it with earth.

8 To rouse my wrath, to take  
vengeance,  
I have placed the blood  
she shed  
on a bare rock,  
so that it may not be  
covered.

9 Therefore thus says the  
Lord GOD:

Woe to the bloody city!  
I will even make the pile  
great.

10 Heap up the logs, kindle  
the fire;  
boil the meat well, mix in  
the spices,  
let the bones be burned.

11 Stand it empty upon the  
coals,  
so that it may become  
hot, its copper glow,  
its filth melt in it, its rust  
be consumed.

12 In vain I have wearied  
myself;  
its thick rust does not  
depart.

To the fire with its rust!  
13 Yet, when I cleansed you in  
your filthy lewdness,

you did not become  
clean from your filth;  
you shall not again be  
cleansed  
until I have satisfied my  
fury upon you.

14 I the LORD have spoken; the  
time is coming, I will act. I will  
not refrain, I will not spare, I  
will not relent. According to  
your ways and your doings I  
will judge you, says the Lord  
GOD.

*Ezekiel's Bereavement*

15 The word of the LORD  
came to me: 16 Mortal, with  
one blow I am about to take  
away from you the delight of  
your eyes; yet you shall not  
mourn or weep, nor shall your  
tears run down. 17 Sigh, but  
not aloud; make no mourning  
for the dead. Bind on your  
turban, and put your sandals  
on your feet; do not cover  
your upper lip or eat the bread  
of mourners. 18 So I spoke to  
the people in the morning,  
and at evening my wife died.  
And on the next morning I did  
as I was commanded.

19 Then the people said to  
me, "Will you not tell us what  
these things mean for us, that

you are acting this way?"

<sup>20</sup> Then I said to them: The word of the LORD came to me:

<sup>21</sup> Say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the delight of your eyes, and your heart's desire; and your sons and your daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. <sup>22</sup> And you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your upper lip or eat the bread of mourners. <sup>23</sup> Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you shall not mourn or weep, but you shall pine away in your iniquities and groan to one another. <sup>24</sup> Thus Ezekiel shall be a sign to you; you shall do just as he has done. When this comes, then you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

<sup>25</sup> And you, mortal, on the day when I take from them their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes and their heart's affection, and also their sons and their daughters, <sup>26</sup> on that day, one who has escaped will come to you to report to you the news.

<sup>27</sup> On that day your mouth

shall be opened to the one who has escaped, and you shall speak and no longer be silent. So you shall be a sign to them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

### *Proclamation against Ammon*

**25** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. <sup>3</sup> Say to the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD, Because you said, "Aha!" over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah when it went into exile; <sup>4</sup> therefore I am handing you over to the people of the east for a possession. They shall set their encampments among you and pitch their tents in your midst; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. <sup>5</sup> I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a fold for flocks. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. <sup>6</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have clapped your hands and

stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the malice within you against the land of Israel,<sup>7</sup> therefore I have stretched out my hand against you, and will hand you over as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and will make you perish out of the countries; I will destroy you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

*Proclamation against Moab*

<sup>8</sup> Thus says the Lord God: Because Moab said, The house of Judah is like all the other nations,<sup>9</sup> therefore I will lay open the flank of Moab from the towns on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim.<sup>10</sup> I will give it along with Ammon to the people of the east as a possession. Thus Ammon shall be remembered no more among the nations,<sup>11</sup> and I will execute judgments upon Moab. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

**Hebrews 11:1–7 (NRSV)**

*The Meaning of Faith*

**11** Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the

conviction of things not seen.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.

<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

*The Examples of Abel,  
Enoch, and Noah*  
(Gen 4:1–16; 6:5–8:22)

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks.<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken so that he did not experience death; and "he was not found, because God had taken him." For it was attested before he was taken away that "he had pleased God."<sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household; by this he

condemned the world and  
became an heir to the  
righteousness that is in  
accordance with faith.

**Psalms 108:5-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Be exalted, O God, above  
the heavens,  
and let your glory be  
over all the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Give victory with your right  
hand, and answer me,  
so that those whom you  
love may be rescued.

<sup>7</sup> God has promised in his  
sanctuary:  
“With exultation I will  
divide up Shechem,  
and portion out the Vale  
of Succoth.

<sup>8</sup> Gilead is mine; Manasseh  
is mine;  
Ephraim is my helmet;  
Judah is my scepter.

<sup>9</sup> Moab is my washbasin;  
on Edom I hurl my shoe;  
over Philistia I shout in  
triumph.”

<sup>10</sup> Who will bring me to the  
fortified city?  
Who will lead me to  
Edom?

<sup>11</sup> Have you not rejected us,  
O God?

You do not go out, O  
God, with our armies.

<sup>12</sup> O grant us help against the  
foe,  
for human help is  
worthless.

<sup>13</sup> With God we shall do  
valiantly;  
it is he who will tread  
down our foes.

**Proverbs 23:29-35 (NRSV)**

<sup>29</sup> Who has woe? Who has  
sorrow?  
Who has strife? Who has  
complaining?  
Who has wounds without  
cause?  
Who has redness of  
eyes?

<sup>30</sup> Those who linger late over  
wine,  
those who keep trying  
mixed wines.

<sup>31</sup> Do not look at wine when  
it is red,  
when it sparkles in the  
cup  
and goes down  
smoothly.

<sup>32</sup> At the last it bites like a  
serpent,  
and stings like an adder.

<sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange  
things,

and your mind utter  
perverse things.

<sup>34</sup> You will be like one who  
lies down in the midst  
of the sea,  
like one who lies on the  
top of a mast.

<sup>35</sup> "They struck me," you will  
say, "but I was not  
hurt;  
they beat me, but I did  
not feel it.

When shall I awake?  
I will seek another  
drink."

## September 24



**Ezekiel 25:12-26:21 (NRSV)**

*Proclamation against Edom*

<sup>12</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:  
Because Edom acted  
revengefully against the house  
of Judah and has grievously  
offended in taking vengeance  
upon them, <sup>13</sup> therefore thus  
says the Lord GOD, I will  
stretch out my hand against  
Edom, and cut off from it  
humans and animals, and I will

make it desolate; from Teman  
even to Dedan they shall fall  
by the sword. <sup>14</sup> I will lay my  
vengeance upon Edom by the  
hand of my people Israel; and  
they shall act in Edom  
according to my anger and  
according to my wrath; and  
they shall know my  
vengeance, says the Lord GOD.

*Proclamation against Philistia*

<sup>15</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:  
Because with unending  
hostilities the Philistines acted  
in vengeance, and with malice  
of heart took revenge in  
destruction; <sup>16</sup> therefore thus  
says the Lord GOD, I will  
stretch out my hand against  
the Philistines, cut off the  
Cherethites, and destroy the  
rest of the seacoast. <sup>17</sup> I will  
execute great vengeance on  
them with wrathful  
punishments. Then they shall  
know that I am the LORD, when  
I lay my vengeance on them.

*Proclamation against Tyre*

**26** In the eleventh year, on  
the first day of the month, the  
word of the LORD came to me:  
<sup>2</sup> Mortal, because Tyre said  
concerning Jerusalem,

“Aha, broken is the  
gateway of the  
peoples;  
it has swung open to me;  
I shall be replenished,  
now that it is wasted,”  
<sup>3</sup> therefore, thus says the  
Lord GOD:  
See, I am against you, O  
Tyre!  
I will hurl many nations  
against you,  
as the sea hurls its  
waves.  
<sup>4</sup> They shall destroy the  
walls of Tyre  
and break down its  
towers.  
I will scrape its soil from it  
and make it a bare rock.  
<sup>5</sup> It shall become, in the  
midst of the sea,  
a place for spreading  
nets.  
I have spoken, says the Lord  
GOD.  
It shall become plunder for  
the nations,  
<sup>6</sup> and its daughter-towns  
in the country  
shall be killed by the  
sword.  
Then they shall know that I am  
the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> For thus says the Lord  
GOD: I will bring against Tyre  
from the north King  
Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon,  
king of kings, together with  
horses, chariots, cavalry, and a  
great and powerful army.  
<sup>8</sup> Your daughter-towns in  
the country  
he shall put to the  
sword.  
He shall set up a siege wall  
against you,  
cast up a ramp against  
you,  
and raise a roof of  
shields against you.  
<sup>9</sup> He shall direct the shock of  
his battering rams  
against your walls  
and break down your  
towers with his axes.  
<sup>10</sup> His horses shall be so  
many  
that their dust shall  
cover you.  
At the noise of cavalry,  
wheels, and chariots  
your very walls shall  
shake,  
when he enters your gates  
like those entering a  
breached city.  
<sup>11</sup> With the hoofs of his  
horses

he shall trample all your streets.

He shall put your people to the sword,  
and your strong pillars shall fall to the ground.

12 They will plunder your riches  
and loot your merchandise;  
they shall break down your walls  
and destroy your fine houses.

Your stones and timber and soil  
they shall cast into the water.

13 I will silence the music of your songs;  
the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more.

14 I will make you a bare rock;  
you shall be a place for spreading nets.

You shall never again be rebuilt,  
for I the LORD have spoken,  
says the Lord GOD.

15 Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre: Shall not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall, when the

wounded groan, when slaughter goes on within you?

16 Then all the princes of the sea shall step down from their thrones; they shall remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. They shall clothe themselves with trembling, and shall sit on the ground; they shall tremble every moment, and be appalled at you. 17 And they shall raise a lamentation over you, and say to you:

How you have vanished from the seas,  
O city renowned,  
once mighty on the sea,  
you and your inhabitants,  
who imposed your terror on all the mainland!

18 Now the coastlands tremble  
on the day of your fall;  
the coastlands by the sea are dismayed at your passing.

19 For thus says the Lord GOD: When I make you a city laid waste, like cities that are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you, and the great waters cover you, 20 then I will thrust you down with



those who descend into the Pit, to the people of long ago, and I will make you live in the world below, among primeval ruins, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you will not be inhabited or have a place in the land of the living.<sup>21</sup> I will bring you to a dreadful end, and you shall be no more; though sought for, you will never be found again, says the Lord God.

**Hebrews 11:8–16 (NRSV)**

*The Faith of Abraham*

(Gen 15:1–6; 21:1–7; 22:1–14; 48:8–16; 50:22–25)

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going.<sup>9</sup> By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.<sup>10</sup> For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.<sup>11</sup> By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah

herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, “as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.”

<sup>13</sup> All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth,<sup>14</sup> for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.<sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return.<sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

**Psalms 109:1–21a (NRSV)**

*Prayer for Vindication  
and Vengeance*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> Do not be silent, O God of my praise.

2 For wicked and deceitful  
 mouths are opened  
 against me,  
 speaking against me with  
 lying tongues.

3 They beset me with words  
 of hate,  
 and attack me without  
 cause.

4 In return for my love they  
 accuse me,  
 even while I make prayer  
 for them.

5 So they reward me evil for  
 good,  
 and hatred for my love.

6 They say, "Appoint a  
 wicked man against  
 him;  
 let an accuser stand on  
 his right.

7 When he is tried, let him  
 be found guilty;  
 let his prayer be counted  
 as sin.

8 May his days be few;  
 may another seize his  
 position.

9 May his children be  
 orphans,  
 and his wife a widow.

10 May his children wander  
 about and beg;

may they be driven out  
 of the ruins they  
 inhabit.

11 May the creditor seize all  
 that he has;  
 may strangers plunder  
 the fruits of his toil.

12 May there be no one to do  
 him a kindness,  
 nor anyone to pity his  
 orphaned children.

13 May his posterity be cut  
 off;  
 may his name be blotted  
 out in the second  
 generation.

14 May the iniquity of his  
 father be remembered  
 before the LORD,  
 and do not let the sin of  
 his mother be blotted  
 out.

15 Let them be before the  
 LORD continually,  
 and may his memory be  
 cut off from the earth.

16 For he did not remember  
 to show kindness,  
 but pursued the poor  
 and needy  
 and the brokenhearted  
 to their death.

17 He loved to curse; let  
 curses come on him.

He did not like blessing;  
 may it be far from him.

18 He clothed himself with  
 cursing as his coat,  
 may it soak into his body  
 like water,  
 like oil into his bones.

19 May it be like a garment  
 that he wraps around  
 himself,  
 like a belt that he wears  
 every day.”

20 May that be the reward of  
 my accusers from the  
 LORD,  
 of those who speak evil  
 against my life.

21a But you, O LORD my Lord,  
 act on my behalf for your  
 name’s sake;

**Proverbs 24:1–2 (NRSV)**

1 Do not envy the wicked,  
 nor desire to be with  
 them;

2 for their minds devise  
 violence,  
 and their lips talk of  
 mischief.

**September**  
**25**



**Ezekiel 27:1-36 (NRSV)**

*Lamentation over Tyre*

**27** The word of the LORD  
 came to me: <sup>2</sup> Now you,  
 mortal, raise a lamentation  
 over Tyre, <sup>3</sup> and say to Tyre,  
 which sits at the entrance to  
 the sea, merchant of the  
 peoples on many coastlands,  
 Thus says the Lord GOD:  
 O Tyre, you have said,  
 “I am perfect in beauty.”

4 Your borders are in the  
 heart of the seas;  
 your builders made  
 perfect your beauty.

5 They made all your planks  
 of fir trees from Senir;  
 they took a cedar from  
 Lebanon  
 to make a mast for you.

6 From oaks of Bashan  
 they made your oars;  
 they made your deck of  
 pines  
 from the coasts of  
 Cyprus,  
 inlaid with ivory.

7 Of fine embroidered linen  
 from Egypt  
 was your sail,

serving as your ensign;  
blue and purple from the  
    coasts of Elishah  
    was your awning.  
8 The inhabitants of Sidon  
    and Arvad  
    were your rowers;  
skilled men of Zemer were  
    within you,  
    they were your pilots.  
9 The elders of Gebal and its  
    artisans were within  
    you,  
    caulking your seams;  
all the ships of the sea with  
    their mariners were  
    within you,  
    to barter for your wares.  
10 Paras and Lud and Put  
    were in your army,  
    your mighty warriors;  
they hung shield and  
    helmet in you;  
    they gave you splendor.  
11 Men of Arvad and Helech  
    were on your walls all  
    around;  
    men of Gamad were at  
    your towers.  
They hung their quivers all  
    around your walls;  
    they made perfect your  
    beauty.  
12 Tarshish did business  
with you out of the abundance

of your great wealth; silver,  
iron, tin, and lead they  
exchanged for your wares.  
13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech  
traded with you; they  
exchanged human beings and  
vessels of bronze for your  
merchandise. 14 Beth-  
togarmah exchanged for your  
wares horses, war horses, and  
mules. 15 The Rhodians traded  
with you; many coastlands  
were your own special  
markets; they brought you in  
payment ivory tusks and  
ebony. 16 Edom did business  
with you because of your  
abundant goods; they  
exchanged for your wares  
turquoise, purple,  
embroidered work, fine linen,  
coral, and rubies. 17 Judah and  
the land of Israel traded with  
you; they exchanged for your  
merchandise wheat from  
Minnith, millet, honey, oil, and  
balm. 18 Damascus traded with  
you for your abundant  
goods—because of your great  
wealth of every kind—wine of  
Helbon, and white wool.  
19 Vedan and Javan from Uzal  
entered into trade for your  
wares; wrought iron, cassia,  
and sweet cane were bartered

for your merchandise.

<sup>20</sup> Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding.

<sup>21</sup> Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you. <sup>22</sup> The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares the best of all kinds of spices, and all precious stones, and gold.

<sup>23</sup> Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded with you.

<sup>24</sup> These traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored material, bound with cords and made secure; in these they traded with you. <sup>25</sup> The ships of Tarshish traveled for you in your trade.

So you were filled and heavily laden  
in the heart of the seas.

<sup>26</sup> Your rowers have brought you  
into the high seas.  
The east wind has wrecked you  
in the heart of the seas.

<sup>27</sup> Your riches, your wares,  
your merchandise,  
your mariners and your pilots,  
your caulkers, your dealers  
in merchandise,  
and all your warriors  
within you,  
with all the company  
that is with you,  
sink into the heart of the seas

on the day of your ruin.

<sup>28</sup> At the sound of the cry of your pilots

the countryside shakes,  
and down from their ships  
come all that handle the oar.

<sup>29</sup> The mariners and all the pilots of the sea  
stand on the shore

<sup>30</sup> and wail aloud over you,  
and cry bitterly.

They throw dust on their heads

and wallow in ashes;  
<sup>31</sup> they make themselves bald  
for you,

and put on sackcloth,  
and they weep over you in  
bitterness of soul,  
with bitter mourning.

<sup>32</sup> In their wailing they raise a  
lamentation for you,

and lament over you:  
“Who was ever destroyed  
like Tyre  
in the midst of the sea?  
33 When your wares came  
from the seas,  
you satisfied many  
peoples;  
with your abundant wealth  
and merchandise  
you enriched the kings of  
the earth.

34 Now you are wrecked by  
the seas,  
in the depths of the  
waters;  
your merchandise and all  
your crew  
have sunk with you.  
35 All the inhabitants of the  
coastlands  
are appalled at you;  
and their kings are horribly  
afraid,  
their faces are  
convulsed.

36 The merchants among the  
peoples hiss at you;  
you have come to a  
dreadful end  
and shall be no more  
forever.”

**Hebrews 11:17–23 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when  
put to the test, offered up  
Isaac. He who had received  
the promises was ready to  
offer up his only son, <sup>18</sup> of  
whom he had been told, “It is  
through Isaac that  
descendants shall be named  
for you.” <sup>19</sup> He considered the  
fact that God is able even to  
raise someone from the  
dead—and figuratively  
speaking, he did receive him  
back. <sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac invoked  
blessings for the future on  
Jacob and Esau. <sup>21</sup> By faith  
Jacob, when dying, blessed  
each of the sons of Joseph,  
“bowing in worship over the  
top of his staff.” <sup>22</sup> By faith  
Joseph, at the end of his life,  
made mention of the exodus  
of the Israelites and gave  
instructions about his burial.

*The Faith of Moses*  
(Ex 2:1–10; 12:31–51)

<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses was  
hidden by his parents for three  
months after his birth,  
because they saw that the  
child was beautiful; and they  
were not afraid of the king’s  
edict.

**Psalms 109:21b-31 (NRSV)**

<sup>21b</sup> because your steadfast  
love is good, deliver  
me.

<sup>22</sup> For I am poor and needy,  
and my heart is pierced  
within me.

<sup>23</sup> I am gone like a shadow at  
evening;  
I am shaken off like a  
locust.

<sup>24</sup> My knees are weak  
through fasting;  
my body has become  
gaunt.

<sup>25</sup> I am an object of scorn to  
my accusers;  
when they see me, they  
shake their heads.

<sup>26</sup> Help me, O LORD my God!  
Save me according to  
your steadfast love.

<sup>27</sup> Let them know that this is  
your hand;  
you, O LORD, have done  
it.

<sup>28</sup> Let them curse, but you  
will bless.  
Let my assailants be put  
to shame; may your  
servant be glad.

<sup>29</sup> May my accusers be  
clothed with dishonor;

may they be wrapped in  
their own shame as in  
a mantle.

<sup>30</sup> With my mouth I will give  
great thanks to the  
LORD;  
I will praise him in the  
midst of the throng.

<sup>31</sup> For he stands at the right  
hand of the needy,  
to save them from those  
who would condemn  
them to death.



**Proverbs 24:3-4 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> By wisdom a house is built,  
and by understanding it  
is established;

<sup>4</sup> by knowledge the rooms  
are filled  
with all precious and  
pleasant riches.

# September 26



**Ezekiel 28:1-26 (NRSV)**  
*Proclamation against  
the King of Tyre*

**28** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal, say to  
the prince of Tyre, Thus says  
the Lord GOD:  
Because your heart is  
proud  
and you have said, "I am  
a god;  
I sit in the seat of the gods,  
in the heart of the seas,"  
yet you are but a mortal,  
and no god,  
though you compare  
your mind  
with the mind of a god.  
<sup>3</sup> You are indeed wiser than  
Daniel;  
no secret is hidden from  
you;  
<sup>4</sup> by your wisdom and your  
understanding  
you have amassed  
wealth for yourself,  
and have gathered gold  
and silver  
into your treasuries.  
<sup>5</sup> By your great wisdom in  
trade

you have increased your  
wealth,  
and your heart has  
become proud in your  
wealth.  
<sup>6</sup> Therefore thus says the  
Lord GOD:  
Because you compare your  
mind  
with the mind of a god,  
<sup>7</sup> therefore, I will bring  
strangers against you,  
the most terrible of the  
nations;  
they shall draw their  
swords against the  
beauty of your wisdom  
and defile your splendor.  
<sup>8</sup> They shall thrust you down  
to the Pit,  
and you shall die a  
violent death  
in the heart of the seas.  
<sup>9</sup> Will you still say, "I am a  
god,"  
in the presence of those  
who kill you,  
though you are but a  
mortal, and no god,  
in the hands of those  
who wound you?  
<sup>10</sup> You shall die the death of  
the uncircumcised  
by the hand of  
foreigners;



for I have spoken, says  
the Lord GOD.

*Lamentation over the  
King of Tyre*

<sup>11</sup> Moreover the word of  
the LORD came to me:

<sup>12</sup> Mortal, raise a lamentation  
over the king of Tyre, and say  
to him, Thus says the Lord  
GOD:

You were the signet of  
perfection,  
full of wisdom and  
perfect in beauty.

<sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the  
garden of God;  
every precious stone was  
your covering,  
carnelian, chrysolite, and  
moonstone,  
beryl, onyx, and jasper,  
sapphire, turquoise, and  
emerald;  
and worked in gold were  
your settings  
and your engravings.  
On the day that you were  
created  
they were prepared.

<sup>14</sup> With an anointed cherub  
as guardian I placed  
you;  
you were on the holy  
mountain of God;

you walked among the  
stones of fire.

<sup>15</sup> You were blameless in  
your ways  
from the day that you  
were created,  
until iniquity was found  
in you.

<sup>16</sup> In the abundance of your  
trade  
you were filled with  
violence, and you  
sinned;  
so I cast you as a profane  
thing from the  
mountain of God,  
and the guardian cherub  
drove you out  
from among the stones  
of fire.

<sup>17</sup> Your heart was proud  
because of your  
beauty;  
you corrupted your  
wisdom for the sake of  
your splendor.

I cast you to the ground;  
I exposed you before  
kings,  
to feast their eyes on  
you.

<sup>18</sup> By the multitude of your  
iniquities,  
in the unrighteousness of  
your trade,

you profaned your sanctuaries.

So I brought out fire from within you;  
it consumed you,  
and I turned you to ashes on the earth  
in the sight of all who saw you.

<sup>19</sup> All who know you among the peoples  
are appalled at you;  
you have come to a dreadful end  
and shall be no more forever.

*Proclamation against Sidon*

<sup>20</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>21</sup> Mortal, set your face toward Sidon, and prophesy against it, <sup>22</sup> and say, Thus says the Lord GOD:

I am against you, O Sidon,  
and I will gain glory in your midst.

They shall know that I am the LORD  
when I execute judgments in it,  
and manifest my holiness in it;

<sup>23</sup> for I will send pestilence into it,

and bloodshed into its streets;

and the dead shall fall in its midst,  
by the sword that is against it on every side.  
And they shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>24</sup> The house of Israel shall no longer find a pricking brier or a piercing thorn among all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt.  
And they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

*Future Blessing for Israel*

<sup>25</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and manifest my holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they shall settle on their own soil that I gave to my servant Jacob. <sup>26</sup> They shall live in safety in it, and shall build houses and plant vineyards. They shall live in safety, when I execute judgments upon all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt.  
And they shall know that I am the LORD their God.

**Hebrews 11:24–31** (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh’s daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

<sup>26</sup> He considered abuse suffered for the Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward.

<sup>27</sup> By faith he left Egypt, unafraid of the king’s anger; for he persevered as though he saw him who is invisible.

<sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

*The Faith of Other  
Israelite Heroes*

<sup>29</sup> By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. <sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup> By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were

disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

**Psalm 110:1-3** (NRSV)

*Assurance of Victory for  
God’s Priest-King*  
(Mt 22:44; Acts 2:34–35)  
Of David. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> The LORD says to my lord,  
“Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies  
your footstool.”

<sup>2</sup> The LORD sends out from  
Zion  
your mighty scepter.  
Rule in the midst of your  
foes.

<sup>3</sup> Your people will offer  
themselves willingly  
on the day you lead your  
forces  
on the holy mountains.  
From the womb of the  
morning,  
like dew, your youth will  
come to you.

**Proverbs 24:5–6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Wise warriors are mightier  
than strong ones,  
and those who have  
knowledge than those  
who have strength;  
<sup>6</sup> for by wise guidance you  
can wage your war,



and in abundance of  
counselors there is  
victory.

## September 27



**Ezekiel 29:1-21 (NRSV)**  
*Proclamation against Egypt*

**29** In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt; <sup>3</sup> speak, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD:

I am against you,  
Pharaoh king of Egypt,  
the great dragon sprawling  
in the midst of its  
channels,  
saying, "My Nile is my  
own;

I made it for myself."  
<sup>4</sup> I will put hooks in your  
jaws,

and make the fish of  
your channels stick to  
your scales.

I will draw you up from  
your channels,  
with all the fish of your  
channels  
sticking to your scales.

<sup>5</sup> I will fling you into the  
wilderness,  
you and all the fish of  
your channels;  
you shall fall in the open  
field,  
and not be gathered and  
buried.

To the animals of the earth  
and to the birds of the  
air

I have given you as food.

<sup>6</sup> Then all the inhabitants of  
Egypt shall know  
that I am the LORD  
because you were a staff  
of reed

to the house of Israel;  
<sup>7</sup> when they grasped you

with the hand, you  
broke,  
and tore all their  
shoulders;  
and when they leaned on  
you, you broke,  
and made all their legs  
unsteady.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD: I will bring a sword upon you, and will cut off from you human being and animal; <sup>9</sup> and the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

Because you said, "The Nile is mine, and I made it," <sup>10</sup> therefore, I am against you, and against your channels, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia. <sup>11</sup> No human foot shall pass through it, and no animal foot shall pass through it; it shall be uninhabited forty years. <sup>12</sup> I will make the land of Egypt a desolation among desolated countries; and her cities shall be a desolation forty years among cities that are laid waste. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries.

<sup>13</sup> Further, thus says the Lord GOD: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered; <sup>14</sup> and I will restore

the fortunes of Egypt, and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin; and there they shall be a lowly kingdom. <sup>15</sup> It shall be the most lowly of the kingdoms, and never again exalt itself above the nations; and I will make them so small that they will never again rule over the nations. <sup>16</sup> The Egyptians shall never again be the reliance of the house of Israel; they will recall their iniquity, when they turned to them for aid. Then they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

#### *Babylonia Will Plunder Egypt*

<sup>17</sup> In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:

<sup>18</sup> Mortal, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre; every head was made bald and every shoulder was rubbed bare; yet neither he nor his army got anything from Tyre to pay for the labor that he had expended against it. <sup>19</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I will give the land of Egypt to King Nebuchadrezzar

of Babylon; and he shall carry off its wealth and despoil it and plunder it; and it shall be the wages for his army.<sup>20</sup> I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment for which he labored, because they worked for me, says the Lord God.

<sup>21</sup> On that day I will cause a horn to sprout up for the house of Israel, and I will open your lips among them. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

#### **Hebrews 11:32–40 (NRSV)**

<sup>32</sup> And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—<sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,<sup>34</sup> quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.<sup>35</sup> Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to

obtain a better resurrection.

<sup>36</sup> Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment.<sup>37</sup> They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented—<sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup> Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised,<sup>40</sup> since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

#### **Psalms 110:4–7 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind,  
“You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

<sup>5</sup> The Lord is at your right hand;  
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.



<sup>6</sup> He will execute judgment  
among the nations,  
filling them with corpses;  
he will shatter heads  
over the wide earth.

<sup>7</sup> He will drink from the  
stream by the path;  
therefore he will lift up  
his head.

**Proverbs 24:7** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Wisdom is too high for  
fools; in the gate they  
do not open their  
mouths.

**September  
28**



**Ezekiel 30:1-26** (NRSV)

*Lamentation for Egypt*

**30** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal,  
prophesy, and say, Thus says  
the Lord God:

Wail, "Alas for the day!"

<sup>3</sup> For a day is near,  
the day of the LORD is  
near;  
it will be a day of clouds,

a time of doom for the  
nations.

<sup>4</sup> A sword shall come upon  
Egypt,  
and anguish shall be in  
Ethiopia,  
when the slain fall in  
Egypt,  
and its wealth is carried  
away,  
and its foundations are  
torn down.

<sup>5</sup> Ethiopia, and Put, and Lud,  
and all Arabia, and Libya, and  
the people of the allied land  
shall fall with them by the  
sword.

<sup>6</sup> Thus says the LORD:  
Those who support Egypt  
shall fall,  
and its proud might shall  
come down;  
from Migdol to Syene  
they shall fall within it by  
the sword,  
says the Lord GOD.

<sup>7</sup> They shall be desolated  
among other desolated  
countries,  
and their cities shall lie  
among cities laid  
waste.

<sup>8</sup> Then they shall know that I  
am the LORD,

when I have set fire to  
Egypt,  
and all who help it are  
broken.

<sup>9</sup> On that day, messengers  
shall go out from me in ships  
to terrify the unsuspecting  
Ethiopians; and anguish shall  
come upon them on the day of  
Egypt's doom; for it is coming!

<sup>10</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:  
I will put an end to the  
hordes of Egypt,  
by the hand of King  
Nebuchadrezzar of  
Babylon.

<sup>11</sup> He and his people with  
him, the most terrible  
of the nations,  
shall be brought in to  
destroy the land;  
and they shall draw their  
swords against Egypt,  
and fill the land with the  
slain.

<sup>12</sup> I will dry up the channels,  
and will sell the land into  
the hand of evildoers;  
I will bring desolation upon  
the land and  
everything in it  
by the hand of  
foreigners;

I the LORD have spoken.

<sup>13</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:

I will destroy the idols  
and put an end to the  
images in Memphis;  
there shall no longer be a  
prince in the land of  
Egypt;  
so I will put fear in the  
land of Egypt.

<sup>14</sup> I will make Pathros a  
desolation,  
and will set fire to Zoan,  
and will execute acts of  
judgment on Thebes.

<sup>15</sup> I will pour my wrath upon  
Pelusium,  
the stronghold of Egypt,  
and cut off the hordes of  
Thebes.

<sup>16</sup> I will set fire to Egypt;  
Pelusium shall be in  
great agony;  
Thebes shall be breached,  
and Memphis face  
adversaries by day.

<sup>17</sup> The young men of On and  
of Pi-beseth shall fall  
by the sword;  
and the cities themselves  
shall go into captivity.

<sup>18</sup> At Tehaphnehes the day  
shall be dark,  
when I break there the  
dominion of Egypt,  
and its proud might shall  
come to an end;



the city shall be covered  
by a cloud,  
and its daughter-towns  
shall go into captivity.

<sup>19</sup> Thus I will execute acts of  
judgment on Egypt.  
Then they shall know  
that I am the LORD.

*Proclamation against Pharaoh*

<sup>20</sup> In the eleventh year, in  
the first month, on the  
seventh day of the month, the  
word of the LORD came to me:  
<sup>21</sup> Mortal, I have broken the  
arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt;  
it has not been bound up for  
healing or wrapped with a  
bandage, so that it may  
become strong to wield the  
sword. <sup>22</sup> Therefore thus says  
the Lord GOD: I am against  
Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will  
break his arms, both the  
strong arm and the one that  
was broken; and I will make  
the sword fall from his hand.  
<sup>23</sup> I will scatter the Egyptians  
among the nations, and  
disperse them throughout the  
lands. <sup>24</sup> I will strengthen the  
arms of the king of Babylon,  
and put my sword in his hand;  
but I will break the arms of  
Pharaoh, and he will groan

before him with the groans of  
one mortally wounded. <sup>25</sup> I will  
strengthen the arms of the  
king of Babylon, but the arms  
of Pharaoh shall fall. And they  
shall know that I am the LORD,  
when I put my sword into the  
hand of the king of Babylon.  
He shall stretch it out against  
the land of Egypt, <sup>26</sup> and I will  
scatter the Egyptians among  
the nations and disperse them  
throughout the countries.  
Then they shall know that I am  
the LORD.

**Hebrews 12:1–13** (NRSV)

*The Example of Jesus*  
(Prov 3:11–12)

**12** Therefore, since we are  
surrounded by so great a  
cloud of witnesses, let us also  
lay aside every weight and the  
sin that clings so closely, and  
let us run with perseverance  
the race that is set before us,  
<sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus the pioneer  
and perfecter of our faith, who  
for the sake of the joy that  
was set before him endured  
the cross, disregarding its  
shame, and has taken his seat  
at the right hand of the throne  
of God.

<sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart. <sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. <sup>5</sup> And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as children—

“My child, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,  
or lose heart when you are punished by him;  
<sup>6</sup> for the Lord disciplines those whom he loves,  
and chastises every child whom he accepts.”

<sup>7</sup> Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline? <sup>8</sup> If you do not have that discipline in which all children share, then you are illegitimate and not his children. <sup>9</sup> Moreover, we had human parents to discipline us, and we respected them. Should we not be even more willing to be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

<sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a

short time as seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share his holiness. <sup>11</sup> Now, discipline always seems painful rather than pleasant at the time, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup> and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

**Psalm 111:1-4a** (NRSV)

*Praise for God's  
Wonderful Works*

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.
- <sup>2</sup> Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them.
- <sup>3</sup> Full of honor and majesty is his work,

and his righteousness  
endures forever.

<sup>4a</sup> He has gained renown by  
his wonderful deeds;

**Proverbs 24:8** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Whoever plans to do evil  
will be called a mischief-  
maker.

## September 29



**Ezekiel 31:1-18** (NRSV)

*The Lofty Cedar*  
(Cp Ezek 17:22–24)

**31** In the eleventh year, in  
the third month, on the first  
day of the month, the word of  
the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal,  
say to Pharaoh king of Egypt  
and to his hordes:

Whom are you like in your  
greatness?

<sup>3</sup> Consider Assyria, a cedar  
of Lebanon,  
with fair branches and  
forest shade,  
and of great height,  
its top among the clouds.

<sup>4</sup> The waters nourished it,

the deep made it grow  
tall,  
making its rivers flow  
around the place it was  
planted,  
sending forth its streams  
to all the trees of the  
field.

<sup>5</sup> So it towered high  
above all the trees of the  
field;  
its boughs grew large  
and its branches long,  
from abundant water in  
its shoots.

<sup>6</sup> All the birds of the air  
made their nests in its  
boughs;  
under its branches all the  
animals of the field  
gave birth to their young;  
and in its shade  
all great nations lived.

<sup>7</sup> It was beautiful in its  
greatness,  
in the length of its  
branches;  
for its roots went down  
to abundant water.

<sup>8</sup> The cedars in the garden of  
God could not rival it,  
nor the fir trees equal its  
boughs;  
the plane trees were as  
nothing

compared with its  
branches;  
no tree in the garden of  
God  
was like it in beauty.  
<sup>9</sup> I made it beautiful  
with its mass of  
branches,  
the envy of all the trees of  
Eden  
that were in the garden  
of God.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore thus says the  
Lord GOD: Because it towered  
high and set its top among the  
clouds, and its heart was  
proud of its height, <sup>11</sup> I gave it  
into the hand of the prince of  
the nations; he has dealt with  
it as its wickedness deserves. I  
have cast it out. <sup>12</sup> Foreigners  
from the most terrible of the  
nations have cut it down and  
left it. On the mountains and  
in all the valleys its branches  
have fallen, and its boughs lie  
broken in all the watercourses  
of the land; and all the peoples  
of the earth went away from  
its shade and left it.

<sup>13</sup> On its fallen trunk settle  
all the birds of the air,  
and among its boughs  
lodge  
all the wild animals.

<sup>14</sup> All this is in order that no  
trees by the waters may grow  
to lofty height or set their tops  
among the clouds, and that no  
trees that drink water may  
reach up to them in height.

For all of them are handed  
over to death,  
to the world below;  
along with all mortals,  
with those who go down  
to the Pit.

<sup>15</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:  
On the day it went down to  
Sheol I closed the deep over it  
and covered it; I restrained its  
rivers, and its mighty waters  
were checked. I clothed  
Lebanon in gloom for it, and  
all the trees of the field fainted  
because of it. <sup>16</sup> I made the  
nations quake at the sound of  
its fall, when I cast it down to  
Sheol with those who go down  
to the Pit; and all the trees of  
Eden, the choice and best of  
Lebanon, all that were well  
watered, were consoled in the  
world below. <sup>17</sup> They also went  
down to Sheol with it, to those  
killed by the sword, along with  
its allies, those who lived in its  
shade among the nations.

<sup>18</sup> Which among the trees  
of Eden was like you in glory

and in greatness? Now you shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below; you shall lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are killed by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his horde, says the Lord GOD.

**Hebrews 12:14–24** (NRSV)

*Warnings against*

*Rejecting God's Grace*

*(Gen 25:29–34; 27:30–40)*

<sup>14</sup> Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup> See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and through it many become defiled. <sup>16</sup> See to it that no one becomes like Esau, an immoral and godless person, who sold his birthright for a single meal. <sup>17</sup> You know that later, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, even though he sought the blessing with tears.

<sup>18</sup> You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, <sup>19</sup> and the sound of a

trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. <sup>20</sup> (For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.” <sup>21</sup> Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.”) <sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

**Psalm 111:4b-10** (NRSV)

<sup>4b</sup> the LORD is gracious and merciful.  
<sup>5</sup> He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.  
<sup>6</sup> He has shown his people the power of his works,

in giving them the  
heritage of the nations.

7 The works of his hands are  
faithful and just;  
all his precepts are  
trustworthy.

8 They are established  
forever and ever,  
to be performed with  
faithfulness and  
uprightness.

9 He sent redemption to his  
people;  
he has commanded his  
covenant forever.  
Holy and awesome is his  
name.

10 The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom;  
all those who practice it  
have a good  
understanding.  
His praise endures  
forever.

### **Proverbs 24:9–10 (NRSV)**

9 The devising of folly is sin,  
and the scoffer is an  
abomination to all.

10 If you faint in the day of  
adversity,  
your strength being  
small;

## **September 30**



### **Ezekiel 32:1-32 (NRSV)**

*Lamentation over  
Pharaoh and Egypt*

**32** In the twelfth year, in the  
twelfth month, on the first day  
of the month, the word of the  
LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal,  
raise a lamentation over  
Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say  
to him:

You consider yourself a  
lion among the  
nations,  
but you are like a dragon  
in the seas;  
you thrash about in your  
streams,  
trouble the water with  
your feet,  
and foul your streams.

<sup>3</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:  
In an assembly of many  
peoples  
I will throw my net over  
you;  
and I will haul you up in  
my dragnet.

<sup>4</sup> I will throw you on the  
ground,  
on the open field I will  
fling you,

and will cause all the birds  
of the air to settle on  
you,  
and I will let the wild  
animals of the whole  
earth gorge themselves  
with you.

5 I will strew your flesh on  
the mountains,  
and fill the valleys with  
your carcass.

6 I will drench the land with  
your flowing blood  
up to the mountains,  
and the watercourses  
will be filled with you.

7 When I blot you out, I will  
cover the heavens,  
and make their stars  
dark;  
I will cover the sun with a  
cloud,  
and the moon shall not  
give its light.

8 All the shining lights of the  
heavens  
I will darken above you,  
and put darkness on your  
land,  
says the Lord God.

9 I will trouble the hearts of  
many peoples,  
as I carry you captive  
among the nations,

into countries you have  
not known.

10 I will make many peoples  
appalled at you;  
their kings shall shudder  
because of you.  
When I brandish my sword  
before them,  
they shall tremble every  
moment  
for their lives, each one of  
them,  
on the day of your  
downfall.

11 For thus says the Lord GOD:  
The sword of the king of  
Babylon shall come  
against you.

12 I will cause your hordes to  
fall  
by the swords of mighty  
ones,  
all of them most terrible  
among the nations.  
They shall bring to ruin the  
pride of Egypt,  
and all its hordes shall  
perish.

13 I will destroy all its  
livestock  
from beside abundant  
waters;  
and no human foot shall  
trouble them anymore,

nor shall the hoofs of  
cattle trouble them.  
<sup>14</sup> Then I will make their  
waters clear,  
and cause their streams  
to run like oil, says the  
LORD GOD.  
<sup>15</sup> When I make the land of  
Egypt desolate  
and when the land is  
stripped of all that fills  
it,  
when I strike down all who  
live in it,  
then they shall know that  
I am the LORD.  
<sup>16</sup> This is a lamentation; it  
shall be chanted.  
The women of the  
nations shall chant it.  
Over Egypt and all its  
hordes they shall chant  
it,  
says the Lord GOD.

*Dirge over Egypt*

<sup>17</sup> In the twelfth year, in  
the first month, on the  
fifteenth day of the month,  
the word of the LORD came to  
me:

<sup>18</sup> Mortal, wail over the  
hordes of Egypt,  
and send them down,

with Egypt and the  
daughters of majestic  
nations,  
to the world below,  
with those who go down  
to the Pit.  
<sup>19</sup> “Whom do you surpass in  
beauty?  
Go down! Be laid to rest  
with the  
uncircumcised!”  
<sup>20</sup> They shall fall among those  
who are killed by the sword.  
Egypt has been handed over  
to the sword; carry away both  
it and its hordes. <sup>21</sup> The mighty  
chiefs shall speak of them,  
with their helpers, out of the  
midst of Sheol: “They have  
come down, they lie still, the  
uncircumcised, killed by the  
sword.”  
<sup>22</sup> Assyria is there, and all  
its company, their graves all  
around it, all of them killed,  
fallen by the sword. <sup>23</sup> Their  
graves are set in the uttermost  
parts of the Pit. Its company is  
all around its grave, all of  
them killed, fallen by the  
sword, who spread terror in  
the land of the living.  
<sup>24</sup> Elam is there, and all its  
hordes around its grave; all of  
them killed, fallen by the



sword, who went down uncircumcised into the world below, who spread terror in the land of the living. They bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit.

<sup>25</sup> They have made Elam a bed among the slain with all its hordes, their graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, killed by the sword; for terror of them was spread in the land of the living, and they bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit; they are placed among the slain.

<sup>26</sup> Meshech and Tubal are there, and all their multitude, their graves all around them, all of them uncircumcised, killed by the sword; for they spread terror in the land of the living. <sup>27</sup> And they do not lie with the fallen warriors of long ago who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were laid under their heads, and whose shields are upon their bones; for the terror of the warriors was in the land of the living. <sup>28</sup> So you shall be broken and lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are killed by the sword.

<sup>29</sup> Edom is there, its kings and all its princes, who for all their might are laid with those who are killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the Pit.

<sup>30</sup> The princes of the north are there, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down in shame with the slain, for all the terror that they caused by their might; they lie uncircumcised with those who are killed by the sword, and bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit.

<sup>31</sup> When Pharaoh sees them, he will be consoled for all his hordes—Pharaoh and all his army, killed by the sword, says the Lord GOD. <sup>32</sup> For he spread terror in the land of the living; therefore he shall be laid to rest among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword—Pharaoh and all his multitude, says the Lord GOD.

**Hebrews 12:25–29 (NRSV)**


<sup>25</sup> See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the

one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven!<sup>26</sup> At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.”<sup>27</sup> This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

<sup>28</sup> Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe;<sup>29</sup> for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

### **Psalm 112:1-3** (NRSV)

*Blessings of the Righteous*

<sup>1</sup> **Praise the LORD!**  
**Happy are those who**  
**fear the LORD,**  
**who greatly delight in his**  
**commandments.**

<sup>2</sup> Their descendants will be mighty in the land;  
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

<sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches are in their houses,  
and their righteousness endures forever.

<sup>4</sup> They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright;  
they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.

### **Proverbs 24:11–12** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> if you hold back from rescuing those taken away to death,  
those who go staggering to the slaughter;

<sup>12</sup> if you say, “Look, we did not know this” —  
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?

Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it?

And will he not repay all according to their deeds?

## October 1



**Ezekiel 33:1-33** (NRSV)

*Ezekiel Israel's Sentry*

**33** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>O Mortal, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one of their number as their sentinel; <sup>3</sup>and if the sentinel sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people; <sup>4</sup>then if any who hear the sound of the trumpet do not take warning, and the sword comes and takes them away, their blood shall be upon their own heads. <sup>5</sup>They heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; their blood shall be upon themselves. But if they had taken warning, they would have saved their lives. <sup>6</sup>But if the sentinel sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any of them, they are taken away in their iniquity, but their

blood I will require at the sentinel's hand.

<sup>7</sup>So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

*God's Justice and Mercy*

<sup>10</sup>Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" <sup>11</sup>Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die,

O house of Israel? <sup>12</sup> And you, mortal, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not save them when they transgress; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, it shall not make them stumble when they turn from their wickedness; and the righteous shall not be able to live by their righteousness when they sin. <sup>13</sup> Though I say to the righteous that they shall surely live, yet if they trust in their righteousness and commit iniquity, none of their righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in the iniquity that they have committed they shall die.

<sup>14</sup> Again, though I say to the wicked, “You shall surely die,” yet if they turn from their sin and do what is lawful and right— <sup>15</sup> if the wicked restore the pledge, give back what they have taken by robbery, and walk in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity—they shall surely live, they shall not die. <sup>16</sup> None of the sins that they have committed shall be remembered against them; they have done what is lawful and right, they shall surely live.

<sup>17</sup> Yet your people say, “The way of the Lord is not just,” when it is their own way that is not just. <sup>18</sup> When the righteous turn from their righteousness, and commit iniquity, they shall die for it. <sup>19</sup> And when the wicked turn from their wickedness, and do what is lawful and right, they shall live by it. <sup>20</sup> Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is not just.” O house of Israel, I will judge all of you according to your ways!

#### *The Fall of Jerusalem*

<sup>21</sup> In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, someone who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has fallen.” <sup>22</sup> Now the hand of the LORD had been upon me the evening before the fugitive came; but he had opened my mouth by the time the fugitive came to me in the morning; so my mouth was opened, and I was no longer unable to speak.

*The Survivors in Judah*

<sup>23</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>24</sup>Mortal, the inhabitants of these waste places in the land of Israel keep saying, “Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely given us to possess.”

<sup>25</sup>Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: You eat flesh with the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood; shall you then possess the land? <sup>26</sup>You depend on your swords, you commit abominations, and each of you defiles his neighbor’s wife; shall you then possess the land? <sup>27</sup>Say this to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, surely those who are in the waste places shall fall by the sword; and those who are in the open field I will give to the wild animals to be devoured; and those who are in strongholds and in caves shall die by pestilence. <sup>28</sup>I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and its proud might shall come to an end; and the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that no

one will pass through. <sup>29</sup>Then they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations that they have committed.

<sup>30</sup>As for you, mortal, your people who talk together about you by the walls, and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to a neighbor, “Come and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD.” <sup>31</sup>They come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear your words, but they will not obey them. For flattery is on their lips, but their heart is set on their gain. <sup>32</sup>To them you are like a singer of love songs, one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument; they hear what you say, but they will not do it. <sup>33</sup>When this comes—and come it will!—then they shall know that a prophet has been among them.

**Hebrews 13:1–16 (NRSV)**

*Service Well-Pleasing to God*

**13** Let mutual love continue.

<sup>2</sup> Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup> Remember those

who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. <sup>4</sup> Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

<sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” <sup>6</sup> So we can say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper;

I will not be afraid.

What can anyone do to me?”

<sup>7</sup> Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. <sup>9</sup> Do not be carried away by all

kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food, which have not benefited those who observe them. <sup>10</sup> We have an altar from which those who officiate in the tent have no right to eat. <sup>11</sup> For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. <sup>12</sup> Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood. <sup>13</sup> Let us then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured. <sup>14</sup> For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. <sup>15</sup> Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. <sup>16</sup> Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

**Psalm 112:4-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> It is well with those who deal generously and lend,

who conduct their affairs  
with justice.  
6 For the righteous will  
never be moved;  
they will be remembered  
forever.  
7 They are not afraid of evil  
tidings;  
their hearts are firm,  
secure in the LORD.  
8 Their hearts are steady,  
they will not be afraid;  
in the end they will look  
in triumph on their  
foes.  
9 They have distributed  
freely, they have given  
to the poor;  
their righteousness  
endures forever;  
their horn is exalted in  
honor.  
10 The wicked see it and are  
angry;  
they gnash their teeth  
and melt away;  
the desire of the wicked  
comes to nothing.

**Proverbs 24:13–14** (NRSV)

13 My child, eat honey, for it  
is good,  
and the drippings of the  
honeycomb are sweet  
to your taste.

14 Know that wisdom is such  
to your soul;  
if you find it, you will find  
a future,  
and your hope will not  
be cut off.

## October 2



**Ezekiel 34:1-31** (NRSV)

*Israel's False Shepherds*

**34** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>Mortal, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel: prophesy, and say to them—to the shepherds: Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, you shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? <sup>3</sup>You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings; but you do not feed the sheep. <sup>4</sup>You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured, you have not brought back the strayed, you have not

sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled them. <sup>5</sup> So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd; and scattered, they became food for all the wild animals. <sup>6</sup> My sheep were scattered, they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill; my sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with no one to search or seek for them.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: <sup>8</sup> As I live, says the Lord GOD, because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild animals, since there was no shepherd; and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep; <sup>9</sup> therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: <sup>10</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD, I am against the shepherds; and I will demand my sheep at their hand, and put a stop to their feeding the sheep; no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from

their mouths, so that they may not be food for them.

*God, the True Shepherd*

<sup>11</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. <sup>12</sup> As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. <sup>13</sup> I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. <sup>14</sup> I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. <sup>15</sup> I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. <sup>16</sup> I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the



strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

<sup>17</sup> As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord GOD: I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats: <sup>18</sup> Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture? When you drink of clear water, must you foul the rest with your feet? <sup>19</sup> And must my sheep eat what you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have fouled with your feet?

<sup>20</sup> Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. <sup>21</sup> Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, <sup>22</sup> I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

<sup>23</sup> I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them:

he shall feed them and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup> And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

<sup>25</sup> I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild animals from the land, so that they may live in the wild and sleep in the woods securely. <sup>26</sup> I will make them and the region around my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. <sup>27</sup> The trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase. They shall be secure on their soil; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke, and save them from the hands of those who enslaved them. <sup>28</sup> They shall no more be plunder for the nations, nor shall the animals of the land devour them; they shall live in safety, and no one shall make them afraid. <sup>29</sup> I will provide for them a splendid vegetation so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the

insults of the nations. <sup>30</sup>They shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord God. <sup>31</sup>You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture and I am your God, says the Lord God.

**Hebrews 13:17–25 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup>Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing—for that would be harmful to you.

<sup>18</sup>Pray for us; we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. <sup>19</sup>I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you very soon.

*Benediction*

<sup>20</sup>Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, <sup>21</sup>make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which

is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

*Final Exhortation  
and Greetings*

<sup>22</sup>I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. <sup>23</sup>I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been set free; and if he comes in time, he will be with me when I see you.

<sup>24</sup>Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send you greetings. <sup>25</sup>Grace be with all of you.

**Psalms 113:1–9 (NRSV)**

*God the Helper of the Needy*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

Praise, O servants of the LORD;  
praise the name of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed be the name of the LORD  
from this time on and forevermore.

<sup>3</sup> From the rising of the sun  
to its setting  
the name of the LORD is  
to be praised.

4 The LORD is high above all  
nations,  
and his glory above the  
heavens.  
5 Who is like the LORD our  
God,  
who is seated on high,  
6 who looks far down  
on the heavens and the  
earth?  
7 He raises the poor from  
the dust,  
and lifts the needy from  
the ash heap,  
8 to make them sit with  
princes,  
with the princes of his  
people.  
9 He gives the barren  
woman a home,  
making her the joyous  
mother of children.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 24:15–16** (NRSV)

15 Do not lie in wait like an  
outlaw against the  
home of the righteous;  
do no violence to the  
place where the  
righteous live;  
16 for though they fall seven  
times, they will rise  
again;

but the wicked are  
overthrown by  
calamity.

## October 3



**Ezekiel 35:1-36:15** (NRSV)  
*Judgment on Mount Seir*

**35** The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>2</sup>Mortal, set your  
face against Mount Seir, and  
prophesy against it, <sup>3</sup>and say  
to it, Thus says the Lord GOD:

I am against you, Mount  
Seir;

I stretch out my hand  
against you  
to make you a desolation  
and a waste.

4 I lay your towns in ruins;  
you shall become a  
desolation,  
and you shall know that I  
am the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>Because you cherished an  
ancient enmity, and gave over  
the people of Israel to the  
power of the sword at the  
time of their calamity, at the  
time of their final punishment;

<sup>6</sup> therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed shall pursue you. <sup>7</sup> I will make Mount Seir a waste and a desolation; and I will cut off from it all who come and go. <sup>8</sup> I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your watercourses those killed with the sword shall fall. <sup>9</sup> I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall never be inhabited. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> Because you said, “These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will take possession of them,”—although the LORD was there— <sup>11</sup> therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, I will deal with you according to the anger and envy that you showed because of your hatred against them; and I will make myself known among you, when I judge you. <sup>12</sup> You shall know that I, the LORD, have heard all the abusive speech that you uttered

against the mountains of Israel, saying, “They are laid desolate, they are given us to devour.” <sup>13</sup> And you magnified yourselves against me with your mouth, and multiplied your words against me; I heard it. <sup>14</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: As the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. <sup>15</sup> As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will deal with you; you shall be desolate, Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

### *Blessing on Israel*

**36** And you, mortal, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say: O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Because the enemy said of you, “Aha!” and, “The ancient heights have become our possession,” <sup>3</sup> therefore prophesy, and say: Thus says the Lord GOD: Because they made you desolate indeed, and crushed you from all sides, so that you became the possession of the rest of the

nations, and you became an object of gossip and slander among the people; <sup>4</sup> therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and the hills, the watercourses and the valleys, the desolate wastes and the deserted towns, which have become a source of plunder and an object of derision to the rest of the nations all around; <sup>5</sup> therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I am speaking in my hot jealousy against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who, with wholehearted joy and utter contempt, took my land as their possession, because of its pasture, to plunder it. <sup>6</sup> Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, to the watercourses and valleys, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am speaking in my jealous wrath, because you have suffered the insults of the nations; <sup>7</sup> therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I swear that the nations that are all around you shall themselves suffer insults.

<sup>8</sup> But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot out your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they shall soon come home. <sup>9</sup> See now, I am for you; I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown; <sup>10</sup> and I will multiply your population, the whole house of Israel, all of it; the towns shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt; <sup>11</sup> and I will multiply human beings and animals upon you. They shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more good to you than ever before. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. <sup>12</sup> I will lead people upon you—my people Israel—and they shall possess you, and you shall be their inheritance. No longer shall you bereave them of children.

<sup>13</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Because they say to you, “You devour people, and you bereave your nation of children,” <sup>14</sup> therefore you shall no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, says the Lord GOD; <sup>15</sup> and no longer will

I let you hear the insults of the nations, no longer shall you bear the disgrace of the peoples; and no longer shall you cause your nation to stumble, says the Lord GOD.

**James 1:1–8** (NRSV)  
*Salutation*

**1** James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:  
Greetings.

*Faith and Wisdom*

<sup>2</sup> My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; <sup>4</sup> and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup> If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. <sup>6</sup> But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; <sup>7, 8</sup> for the doubter,

being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

**Psalm 114:1-8** (NRSV)  
*God's Wonders at the Exodus*  
(Cp Ex 14:1–31)

<sup>1</sup> When Israel went out from Egypt,  
the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,  
<sup>2</sup> Judah became God's sanctuary,  
Israel his dominion.  
<sup>3</sup> The sea looked and fled;  
Jordan turned back.  
<sup>4</sup> The mountains skipped like rams,  
the hills like lambs.  
<sup>5</sup> Why is it, O sea, that you flee?  
O Jordan, that you turn back?  
<sup>6</sup> O mountains, that you skip like rams?  
O hills, like lambs?  
<sup>7</sup> Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the LORD,  
at the presence of the God of Jacob,  
<sup>8</sup> who turns the rock into a pool of water,  
the flint into a spring of water.

**Proverbs 24:17–20 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> Do not rejoice when your  
enemies fall,  
and do not let your heart  
be glad when they  
stumble,  
<sup>18</sup> or else the LORD will see it  
and be displeased,  
and turn away his anger  
from them.  
<sup>19</sup> Do not fret because of  
evildoers.  
Do not envy the wicked;  
<sup>20</sup> for the evil have no future;  
the lamp of the wicked  
will go out.

**October 4**



**Ezekiel 36:16-38 (NRSV)**

*The Renewal of Israel*

<sup>16</sup> The word of the LORD  
came to me: <sup>17</sup> Mortal, when  
the house of Israel lived on  
their own soil, they defiled it  
with their ways and their  
deeds; their conduct in my  
sight was like the uncleanness  
of a woman in her menstrual  
period. <sup>18</sup> So I poured out my

wrath upon them for the  
blood that they had shed upon  
the land, and for the idols with  
which they had defiled it. <sup>19</sup> I  
scattered them among the  
nations, and they were  
dispersed through the  
countries; in accordance with  
their conduct and their deeds I  
judged them. <sup>20</sup> But when they  
came to the nations, wherever  
they came, they profaned my  
holy name, in that it was said  
of them, “These are the  
people of the LORD, and yet  
they had to go out of his land.”

<sup>21</sup> But I had concern for my  
holy name, which the house of  
Israel had profaned among the  
nations to which they came.

<sup>22</sup> Therefore say to the  
house of Israel, Thus says the  
Lord GOD: It is not for your  
sake, O house of Israel, that I  
am about to act, but for the  
sake of my holy name, which  
you have profaned among the  
nations to which you came. <sup>23</sup> I  
will sanctify my great name,  
which has been profaned  
among the nations, and which  
you have profaned among  
them; and the nations shall  
know that I am the LORD, says  
the Lord GOD, when through

you I display my holiness before their eyes. <sup>24</sup> I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. <sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup> A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. <sup>28</sup> Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. <sup>29</sup> I will save you from all your uncleannesses, and I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. <sup>30</sup> I will make the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field abundant, so that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. <sup>31</sup> Then you shall remember your evil ways, and your

dealings that were not good; and you shall loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominable deeds. <sup>32</sup> It is not for your sake that I will act, says the Lord GOD; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and dismayed for your ways, O house of Israel.

<sup>33</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the towns to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. <sup>34</sup> The land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by.

<sup>35</sup> And they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined towns are now inhabited and fortified."

<sup>36</sup> Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places, and replanted that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

<sup>37</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: I will also let the house of Israel ask me to do this for them: to



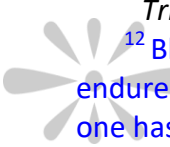
increase their population like a flock.<sup>38</sup> Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed festivals, so shall the ruined towns be filled with flocks of people. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

**James 1:9–18** (NRSV)

*Poverty and Riches*

<sup>9</sup> Let the believer who is lowly boast in being raised up,<sup>10</sup> and the rich in being brought low, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field.<sup>11</sup> For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the field; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. It is the same way with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.

*Trial and Temptation*



<sup>12</sup> Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.<sup>13</sup> No one, when tempted, should say, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no

one.<sup>14</sup> But one is tempted by one’s own desire, being lured and enticed by it;<sup>15</sup> then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death.<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved.

<sup>17</sup> Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.<sup>18</sup> In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

**Psalm 115:1-10** (NRSV)

*The Impotence of Idols and the Greatness of God*

<sup>1</sup> Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory,  
for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness.  
<sup>2</sup> Why should the nations say,  
“Where is their God?”  
<sup>3</sup> Our God is in the heavens;

he does whatever he  
pleases.  
4 Their idols are silver and  
gold,  
the work of human  
hands.  
5 They have mouths, but do  
not speak;  
eyes, but do not see.  
6 They have ears, but do not  
hear;  
noses, but do not smell.  
7 They have hands, but do  
not feel;  
feet, but do not walk;  
they make no sound in  
their throats.  
8 Those who make them are  
like them;  
so are all who trust in  
them.  
9 O Israel, trust in the LORD!  
He is their help and their  
shield.  
10 O house of Aaron, trust in  
the LORD!  
He is their help and their  
shield.

**Proverbs 24:21–22** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> My child, fear the LORD and  
the king,  
and do not disobey  
either of them;

<sup>22</sup> for disaster comes from  
them suddenly, and  
who knows the ruin  
that both can bring?

**October 5**



**Ezekiel 37:1-28** (NRSV)

*The Valley of Dry Bones*

<sup>37</sup> The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord God, you know.” <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you

with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

<sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup> I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” <sup>10</sup> I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

<sup>11</sup> Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’

<sup>12</sup> Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your

graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup> I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act,” says the LORD.

### *The Two Sticks*

<sup>15</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>16</sup> Mortal, take a stick and write on it, “For Judah, and the Israelites associated with it”; then take another stick and write on it, “For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with it”; <sup>17</sup> and join them together into one stick, so that they may become one in your hand. <sup>18</sup> And when your people say to you, “Will you not show us what you mean by these?” <sup>19</sup> say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am about to take the stick of Joseph (which is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with

it; and I will put the stick of Judah upon it, and make them one stick, in order that they may be one in my hand.

<sup>20</sup>When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, <sup>21</sup>then say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from every quarter, and bring them to their own land. <sup>22</sup>I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all. Never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms.

<sup>23</sup>They shall never again defile themselves with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. I will save them from all the apostasies into which they have fallen, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

<sup>24</sup>My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall follow my

ordinances and be careful to observe my statutes. <sup>25</sup>They shall live in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, in which your ancestors lived; they and their children and their children's children shall live there forever; and my servant David shall be their prince forever. <sup>26</sup>I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary among them forevermore.

<sup>27</sup>My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>28</sup>Then the nations shall know that I the LORD sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is among them forevermore.

### **James 1:19–27 (NRSV)**

#### *Hearing and Doing the Word*

<sup>19</sup>You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; <sup>20</sup>for your anger does not produce God's righteousness.

<sup>21</sup>Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth

of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. <sup>23</sup> For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. <sup>25</sup> But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

<sup>26</sup> If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

**Psalms 115:11-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> You who fear the LORD,  
trust in the LORD!

He is their help and their shield.

<sup>12</sup> The LORD has been mindful of us; he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron;

<sup>13</sup> he will bless those who fear the LORD,  
both small and great.

<sup>14</sup> May the LORD give you increase,  
both you and your children.

<sup>15</sup> May you be blessed by the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.

<sup>16</sup> The heavens are the LORD's heavens,  
but the earth he has given to human beings.

<sup>17</sup> The dead do not praise the LORD,  
nor do any that go down into silence.

<sup>18</sup> But we will bless the LORD from this time on and forevermore.

Praise the LORD!



**Proverbs 24:23–25** (NRSV)

*Further Sayings of the Wise*

- <sup>23</sup> These also are sayings of the wise:  
Partiality in judging is not good.
- <sup>24</sup> Whoever says to the wicked, “You are innocent,”  
will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by nations;
- <sup>25</sup> but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight,  
and a good blessing will come upon them.

**October 6**



**Ezekiel 38:1-23** (NRSV)

*Invasion by Gog*

**38** The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> Mortal, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophesy against him <sup>3</sup> and say: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of

Meshech and Tubal; <sup>4</sup> I will turn you around and put hooks into your jaws, and I will lead you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great company, all of them with shield and buckler, wielding swords. <sup>5</sup> Persia, Ethiopia, and Put are with them, all of them with buckler and helmet; <sup>6</sup> Gomer and all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remotest parts of the north with all its troops— many peoples are with you.

<sup>7</sup> Be ready and keep ready, you and all the companies that are assembled around you, and hold yourselves in reserve for them. <sup>8</sup> After many days you shall be mustered; in the latter years you shall go against a land restored from war, a land where people were gathered from many nations on the mountains of Israel, which had long lain waste; its people were brought out from the nations and now are living in safety, all of them. <sup>9</sup> You shall advance, coming on like a storm; you shall be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your

troops, and many peoples with you.

<sup>10</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil scheme.

<sup>11</sup> You will say, "I will go up against the land of unwalled villages; I will fall upon the quiet people who live in safety, all of them living without walls, and having no bars or gates"; <sup>12</sup> to seize spoil and carry off plunder; to assail the waste places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who are acquiring cattle and goods, who live at the center of the earth.

<sup>13</sup> Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all its young warriors will say to you, "Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your horde to carry off plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to seize a great amount of booty?"

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, mortal, prophesy, and say to Gog: Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day when my people Israel are living securely, you

will rouse yourself <sup>15</sup> and come from your place out of the remotest parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great horde, a mighty army; <sup>16</sup> you will come up against my people Israel, like a cloud covering the earth. In the latter days I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I display my holiness before their eyes.

#### *Judgment on Gog*

<sup>17</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Are you he of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who in those days prophesied for years that I would bring you against them? <sup>18</sup> On that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel, says the Lord GOD, my wrath shall be aroused. <sup>19</sup> For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare: On that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; <sup>20</sup> the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, and the animals of the field, and all creeping things that

creep on the ground, and all human beings that are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground. <sup>21</sup> I will summon the sword against Gog in all my mountains, says the Lord God; the swords of all will be against their comrades. <sup>22</sup> With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him; and I will pour down torrential rains and hailstones, fire and sulfur, upon him and his troops and the many peoples that are with him. <sup>23</sup> So I will display my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

**James 2:1–17 (NRSV)**

*Warning against Partiality*

**2** My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? <sup>2</sup> For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also

comes in, <sup>3</sup> and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Have a seat here, please,” while to the one who is poor you say, “Stand there,” or, “Sit at my feet,” <sup>4</sup> have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup> Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? <sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup> Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

<sup>8</sup> You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>9</sup> But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. <sup>11</sup> For the one who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also



said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup> So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup> For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

*Faith without Works Is Dead*  
(Cp Gen 22; Josh 2)

<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? <sup>17</sup> So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

**Psalm 116:1-5** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving for Recovery  
from Illness*

<sup>1</sup> I love the LORD, because he  
has heard  
my voice and my  
supplications.

- <sup>2</sup> Because he inclined his ear  
to me,  
therefore I will call on  
him as long as I live.
- <sup>3</sup> The snares of death  
encompassed me;  
the pangs of Sheol laid  
hold on me;  
I suffered distress and  
anguish.
- <sup>4</sup> Then I called on the name  
of the LORD:  
"O LORD, I pray, save my  
life!"
- <sup>5</sup> Gracious is the LORD, and  
righteous;  
our God is merciful.

**Proverbs 24:26** (NRSV)

- <sup>26</sup> One who gives an honest  
answer  
gives a kiss on the lips.

**October 7**



**Ezekiel 39:1-29** (NRSV)

*Gog's Armies Destroyed*

**39** And you, mortal, prophesy  
against Gog, and say: Thus  
says the Lord GOD: I am against

you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal! <sup>2</sup> I will turn you around and drive you forward, and bring you up from the remotest parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel. <sup>3</sup> I will strike your bow from your left hand, and will make your arrows drop out of your right hand. <sup>4</sup> You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples that are with you; I will give you to birds of prey of every kind and to the wild animals to be devoured. <sup>5</sup> You shall fall in the open field; for I have spoken, says the Lord GOD. <sup>6</sup> I will send fire on Magog and on those who live securely in the coastlands; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> My holy name I will make known among my people Israel; and I will not let my holy name be profaned any more; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. <sup>8</sup> It has come! It has happened, says the Lord GOD. This is the day of which I have spoken.

<sup>9</sup> Then those who live in the towns of Israel will go out

and make fires of the weapons and burn them—bucklers and shields, bows and arrows, handpikes and spears—and they will make fires of them for seven years. <sup>10</sup> They will not need to take wood out of the field or cut down any trees in the forests, for they will make their fires of the weapons; they will despoil those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, says the Lord GOD.

#### *The Burial of Gog*

<sup>11</sup> On that day I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the Valley of the Travelers east of the sea; it shall block the path of the travelers, for there Gog and all his horde will be buried; it shall be called the Valley of Hamon-gog. <sup>12</sup> Seven months the house of Israel shall spend burying them, in order to cleanse the land. <sup>13</sup> All the people of the land shall bury them; and it will bring them honor on the day that I show my glory, says the Lord GOD. <sup>14</sup> They will set apart men to pass through the land regularly and bury any

invaders who remain on the face of the land, so as to cleanse it; for seven months they shall make their search.

<sup>15</sup> As the searchers pass through the land, anyone who sees a human bone shall set up a sign by it, until the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon-gog. <sup>16</sup> (A city Hamonah is there also.) Thus they shall cleanse the land.

<sup>17</sup> As for you, mortal, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to the birds of every kind and to all the wild animals: Assemble and come, gather from all around to the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood.

<sup>18</sup> You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth—of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. <sup>19</sup> You shall eat fat until you are filled, and drink blood until you are drunk, at the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you. <sup>20</sup> And you shall be filled at my table with horses and charioteers, with

warriors and all kinds of soldiers, says the Lord GOD.

*Israel Restored to the Land*

<sup>21</sup> I will display my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them.

<sup>22</sup> The house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God, from that day forward.

<sup>23</sup> And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt treacherously with me. So I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they all fell by the sword. <sup>24</sup> I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions, and hid my face from them.

<sup>25</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name.

<sup>26</sup> They shall forget their shame, and all the treachery they have practiced against me, when they live securely in their land with no one to make

them afraid, <sup>27</sup> when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies' lands, and through them have displayed my holiness in the sight of many nations. <sup>28</sup> Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God because I sent them into exile among the nations, and then gathered them into their own land. I will leave none of them behind; <sup>29</sup> and I will never again hide my face from them, when I pour out my spirit upon the house of Israel, says the Lord God.

**James 1:18–3:6 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. <sup>19</sup> You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. <sup>20</sup> Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? <sup>21</sup> Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that faith was active along

with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. <sup>23</sup> Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” and he was called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. <sup>25</sup> Likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? <sup>26</sup> For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

*Taming the Tongue*

**3** Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. <sup>2</sup> For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. <sup>3</sup> If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. <sup>4</sup> Or look at ships: though they are so large

that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup> So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell.

#### **Psalm 116:6-14** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> **The LORD protects the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me.**

<sup>7</sup> Return, O my soul, to your rest,

for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

<sup>8</sup> For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

<sup>9</sup> I walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

<sup>10</sup> I kept my faith, even when I said, "I am greatly afflicted";

<sup>11</sup> I said in my consternation, "Everyone is a liar."

<sup>12</sup> What shall I return to the LORD

for all his bounty to me?

<sup>13</sup> I will lift up the cup of salvation

and call on the name of the LORD,

<sup>14</sup> I will pay my vows to the LORD

in the presence of all his people.

#### **Proverbs 24:27** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Prepare your work outside, get everything ready for you in the field; and after that build your house.

## **October 8**



#### **Ezekiel 40:1-27** (NRSV)

*The Vision of the New Temple*

**40** In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck

down, on that very day, the hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me there. <sup>2</sup> He brought me, in visions of God, to the land of Israel, and set me down upon a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south. <sup>3</sup> When he brought me there, a man was there, whose appearance shone like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway. <sup>4</sup> The man said to me, "Mortal, look closely and listen attentively, and set your mind upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you; declare all that you see to the house of Israel."

<sup>5</sup> Now there was a wall all around the outside of the temple area. The length of the measuring reed in the man's hand was six long cubits, each being a cubit and a handbreadth in length; so he measured the thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed. <sup>6</sup> Then he went into the gateway facing east, going up its steps, and measured the

threshold of the gate, one reed deep. There were <sup>7</sup> recesses, and each recess was one reed wide and one reed deep; and the space between the recesses, five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the gate at the inner end was one reed deep. <sup>8</sup> Then he measured the inner vestibule of the gateway, one cubit. <sup>9</sup> Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, eight cubits; and its <sup>5</sup> pilasters, two cubits; and the vestibule of the gate was at the inner end. <sup>10</sup> There were three recesses on either side of the east gate; the three were of the same size; and the pilasters on either side were of the same size. <sup>11</sup> Then he measured the width of the opening of the gateway, ten cubits; and the width of the gateway, thirteen cubits. <sup>12</sup> There was a barrier before the recesses, one cubit on either side; and the

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<sup>5</sup>a vertical structural part of a building that projects partway from a wall and is made to resemble an ornamental column by adding a base and capita

recesses were six cubits on either side. <sup>13</sup> Then he measured the gate from the back of the one recess to the back of the other, a width of twenty-five cubits, from wall to wall. <sup>14</sup> He measured also the vestibule, twenty cubits; and the gate next to the pilaster on every side of the court. <sup>15</sup> From the front of the gate at the entrance to the end of the inner vestibule of the gate was fifty cubits. <sup>16</sup> The recesses and their pilasters had windows, with shutters on the inside of the gateway all around, and the vestibules also had windows on the inside all around; and on the pilasters were palm trees.

<sup>17</sup> Then he brought me into the outer court; there were chambers there, and a pavement, all around the court; thirty chambers fronted on the pavement. <sup>18</sup> The pavement ran along the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement. <sup>19</sup> Then he measured the distance from the inner front of the lower gate to the outer

front of the inner court, one hundred cubits.

<sup>20</sup> Then he measured the gate of the outer court that faced north—its depth and width. <sup>21</sup> Its recesses, three on either side, and its pilasters and its vestibule were of the same size as those of the first gate; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. <sup>22</sup> Its windows, its vestibule, and its palm trees were of the same size as those of the gate that faced toward the east. Seven steps led up to it; and its vestibule was on the inside. <sup>23</sup> Opposite the gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court; he measured from gate to gate, one hundred cubits.

<sup>24</sup> Then he led me toward the south, and there was a gate on the south; and he measured its pilasters and its vestibule; they had the same dimensions as the others.

<sup>25</sup> There were windows all around in it and in its vestibule, like the windows of the others; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. <sup>26</sup> There were seven steps leading up to it; its

vestibule was on the inside. It had palm trees on its pilasters, one on either side.<sup>27</sup> There was a gate on the south of the inner court; and he measured from gate to gate toward the south, one hundred cubits.

**James 3:7–18** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species,<sup>8</sup> but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison.<sup>9</sup> With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God.<sup>10</sup> From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so.<sup>11</sup> Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water?<sup>12</sup> Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

*Two Kinds of Wisdom*

<sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you?

Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom.<sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth.<sup>15</sup> Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish.<sup>16</sup> For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.<sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.<sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

**Psalm 116:15-117:2** (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones.

<sup>16</sup> O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds.





17 I will offer to you a  
thanksgiving sacrifice  
and call on the name of  
the LORD.

18 I will pay my vows to the  
LORD  
in the presence of all his  
people,

19 in the courts of the house  
of the LORD,  
in your midst, O  
Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

### *Universal Call to Worship*

**117** Praise the LORD, all you  
nations!

Extol him, all you  
peoples!

2 For great is his steadfast  
love toward us,  
and the faithfulness of  
the LORD endures  
forever.

Praise the LORD!

### **Proverbs 24:28–29** (NRSV)

28 Do not be a witness  
against your neighbor  
without cause,  
and do not deceive with  
your lips.

29 Do not say, “I will do to  
others as they have  
done to me;

I will pay them back for  
what they have done.”

## October 9



### **Ezekiel 40:28-49** (NRSV)

28 Then he brought me to  
the inner court by the south  
gate, and he measured the  
south gate; it was of the same  
dimensions as the others. 29 Its  
recesses, its pilasters, and its  
vestibule were of the same  
size as the others; and there  
were windows all around in it  
and in its vestibule; its depth  
was fifty cubits, and its width  
twenty-five cubits. 30 There  
were vestibules all around,  
twenty-five cubits deep and  
five cubits wide. 31 Its vestibule  
faced the outer court, and  
palm trees were on its  
pilasters, and its stairway had  
eight steps.

32 Then he brought me to  
the inner court on the east  
side, and he measured the  
gate; it was of the same size as  
the others. 33 Its recesses, its

pilasters, and its vestibule were of the same dimensions as the others; and there were windows all around in it and in its vestibule; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.<sup>34</sup> Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its pilasters, on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.

<sup>35</sup> Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it; it had the same dimensions as the others.<sup>36</sup> Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others; and it had windows all around. Its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.<sup>37</sup> Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its pilasters, on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.

<sup>38</sup> There was a chamber with its door in the vestibule of the gate, where the burnt offering was to be washed.

<sup>39</sup> And in the vestibule of the gate were two tables on either side, on which the burnt offering and the sin offering

and the guilt offering were to be slaughtered.<sup>40</sup> On the outside of the vestibule at the entrance of the north gate were two tables; and on the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables.

<sup>41</sup> Four tables were on the inside, and four tables on the outside of the side of the gate, eight tables, on which the sacrifices were to be slaughtered.<sup>42</sup> There were also four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, a cubit and a half long, and one cubit and a half wide, and one cubit high, on which the instruments were to be laid with which the burnt offerings and the sacrifices were slaughtered.<sup>43</sup> There were pegs, one handbreadth long, fastened all around the inside. And on the tables the flesh of the offering was to be laid.

<sup>44</sup> On the outside of the inner gateway there were chambers for the singers in the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, the other at the side of the east gate facing north.

<sup>45</sup> He said to me, "This chamber that faces south is

for the priests who have charge of the temple,<sup>46</sup> and the chamber that faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar; these are the descendants of Zadok, who alone among the descendants of Levi may come near to the LORD to minister to him.”<sup>47</sup> He measured the court, one hundred cubits deep, and one hundred cubits wide, a square; and the altar was in front of the temple.

### *The Temple*

*(Cp 1 Kings 7:14–22)*

<sup>48</sup>Then he brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured the pilasters of the vestibule, five cubits on either side; and the width of the gate was fourteen cubits; and the sidewalls of the gate were three cubits on either side.<sup>49</sup> The depth of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the width twelve cubits; ten steps led up to it; and there were pillars beside the pilasters on either side.

**James 4:1–10** (NRSV)

*Friendship with the World*

**4** Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? <sup>2</sup>You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

<sup>4</sup>Adulterers! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup>Or do you suppose that it is for nothing that the scripture says, “God yearns jealously for the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? <sup>6</sup>But he gives all the more grace; therefore it says,

“God opposes the proud,  
but gives grace to the  
humble.”

<sup>7</sup>Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>Draw near to God, and he will draw

near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Lament and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection.

<sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

**Psalms 118:1-7** (NRSV)

*A Song of Victory*

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good;  
his steadfast love  
endures forever!

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel say,  
“His steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>3</sup> Let the house of Aaron say,  
“His steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>4</sup> Let those who fear the  
LORD say,  
“His steadfast love  
endures forever.”

<sup>5</sup> Out of my distress I called  
on the LORD;  
the LORD answered me  
and set me in a broad  
place.

<sup>6</sup> With the LORD on my side I  
do not fear.  
What can mortals do to  
me?

<sup>7</sup> The LORD is on my side to  
help me;  
I shall look in triumph on  
those who hate me.

**Proverbs 24:30–34** (NRSV)

<sup>30</sup> I passed by the field of one  
who was lazy,  
by the vineyard of a  
stupid person;  
<sup>31</sup> and see, it was all  
overgrown with thorns;  
the ground was covered  
with nettles,  
and its stone wall was  
broken down.

<sup>32</sup> Then I saw and considered  
it;  
I looked and received  
instruction.

<sup>33</sup> A little sleep, a little  
slumber,  
a little folding of the  
hands to rest,  
<sup>34</sup> and poverty will come  
upon you like a robber,  
and want, like an armed  
warrior.

## October 10



**Ezekiel 41:1-26** (NRSV)

**41** Then he [the Lord] brought me to the nave, and measured the pilasters; on each side six cubits was the width of the pilasters. <sup>2</sup>The width of the entrance was ten cubits; and the sidewalls of the entrance were five cubits on either side. He measured the length of the nave, forty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits. <sup>3</sup>Then he went into the inner room and measured the pilasters of the entrance, two cubits; and the width of the entrance, six cubits; and the sidewalls of the entrance, seven cubits. <sup>4</sup>He measured the depth of the room, twenty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits, beyond the nave. And he said to me, This is the most holy place.

<sup>5</sup>Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits thick; and the width of the side chambers, four cubits, all around the temple. <sup>6</sup>The side chambers were in three stories, one over another, thirty in each story. There

were offsets all around the wall of the temple to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple. <sup>7</sup>The passageway of the side chambers widened from story to story; for the structure was supplied with a stairway all around the temple. For this reason the structure became wider from story to story. One ascended from the bottom story to the uppermost story by way of the middle one. <sup>8</sup>I saw also that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers measured a full reed of six long cubits. <sup>9</sup>The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers was five cubits; and the free space between the side chambers of the temple <sup>10</sup>and the chambers of the court was a width of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side. <sup>11</sup>The side chambers opened onto the area left free, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south; and the width of the

part that was left free was five cubits all around.

<sup>12</sup>The building that was facing the temple yard on the west side was seventy cubits wide; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its depth ninety cubits.

<sup>13</sup>Then he measured the temple, one hundred cubits deep; and the yard and the building with its walls, one hundred cubits deep; <sup>14</sup>also the width of the east front of the temple and the yard, one hundred cubits.

<sup>15</sup>Then he measured the depth of the building facing the yard at the west, together with its galleries on either side, one hundred cubits.

The nave of the temple and the inner room and the outer vestibule <sup>16</sup>were paneled, and, all around, all three had windows with recessed frames. Facing the threshold the temple was paneled with wood all around, from the floor up to the windows (now the windows were covered), <sup>17</sup>to the space above the door, even to the inner room, and on the

outside. And on all the walls all around in the inner room and the nave there was a pattern. <sup>18</sup>It was formed of cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. Each cherub had two faces: <sup>19</sup>a human face turned toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion turned toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around; <sup>20</sup>from the floor to the area above the door, cherubim and palm trees were carved on the wall.

<sup>21</sup>The doorposts of the nave were square. In front of the holy place was something resembling <sup>22</sup>an altar of wood, three cubits high, two cubits long, and two cubits wide; its corners, its base, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that stands before the LORD." <sup>23</sup>The nave and the holy place had each a double door. <sup>24</sup>The doors had two leaves apiece, two swinging leaves for each door. <sup>25</sup>On the doors of the nave were carved cherubim and palm trees, such as were

carved on the walls; and there was a canopy of wood in front of the vestibule outside. <sup>26</sup> And there were recessed windows and palm trees on either side, on the sidewalls of the vestibule.

**James 4:11–17** (NRSV)

*Warning against*

*Judging Another*

<sup>11</sup> Do not speak evil against one another, brothers and sisters. Whoever speaks evil against another or judges another, speaks evil against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup> There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save and to destroy. So who, then, are you to judge your neighbor?

*Boasting about Tomorrow*

<sup>13</sup> Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money.” <sup>14</sup> Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

<sup>15</sup> Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that.” <sup>16</sup> As it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

<sup>17</sup> Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin.

**Psalm 118:8-18** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> It is better to take refuge  
in the LORD  
than to put confidence in  
mortals.

<sup>9</sup> It is better to take refuge  
in the LORD  
than to put confidence in  
princes.

<sup>10</sup> All nations surrounded me;  
in the name of the LORD I  
cut them off!

<sup>11</sup> They surrounded me,  
surrounded me on  
every side;  
in the name of the LORD I  
cut them off!

<sup>12</sup> They surrounded me like  
bees;  
they blazed like a fire of  
thorns;  
in the name of the LORD I  
cut them off!

<sup>13</sup> I was pushed hard, so that  
I was falling,  
but the LORD helped me.



<sup>14</sup> The LORD is my strength  
 and my might;  
 he has become my  
 salvation.  
<sup>15</sup> There are glad songs of  
 victory in the tents of  
 the righteous:  
 "The right hand of the LORD  
 does valiantly;  
<sup>16</sup> the right hand of the  
 LORD is exalted;  
 the right hand of the  
 LORD does valiantly."  
<sup>17</sup> I shall not die, but I shall  
 live,  
 and recount the deeds of  
 the LORD.  
<sup>18</sup> The LORD has punished me  
 severely,  
 but he did not give me  
 over to death.

**Proverbs 25:1–5 (NRSV)**

*Further Wise  
 Sayings of Solomon*

<sup>1</sup> These are other proverbs of  
 Solomon that the officials of  
 King Hezekiah of Judah copied.  
<sup>2</sup> It is the glory of God to  
 conceal things,  
 but the glory of kings is  
 to search things out.  
<sup>3</sup> Like the heavens for  
 height, like the earth  
 for depth,

so the mind of kings is  
 unsearchable.  
<sup>4</sup> Take away the dross from  
 the silver,  
 and the smith has  
 material for a vessel;  
<sup>5</sup> take away the wicked from  
 the presence of the  
 king,  
 and his throne will be  
 established in  
 righteousness.

**October 11**



**Ezekiel 42:1-43:4 (NRSV)**  
*The Holy Chambers  
 and the Outer Wall*

**42** Then he led me out into  
 the outer court, toward the  
 north, and he brought me to  
 the chambers that were  
 opposite the temple yard and  
 opposite the building on the  
 north. <sup>2</sup> The length of the  
 building that was on the north  
 side was one hundred cubits,  
 and the width fifty cubits.  
<sup>3</sup> Across the twenty cubits that  
 belonged to the inner court,



and facing the pavement that belonged to the outer court, the chambers rose gallery by gallery in three stories.<sup>4</sup> In front of the chambers was a passage on the inner side, ten cubits wide and one hundred cubits deep, and its entrances were on the north.<sup>5</sup> Now the upper chambers were narrower, for the galleries took more away from them than from the lower and middle chambers in the building.<sup>6</sup> For they were in three stories, and they had no pillars like the pillars of the outer court; for this reason the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and the middle ones.<sup>7</sup> There was a wall outside parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers, fifty cubits long.<sup>8</sup> For the chambers on the outer court were fifty cubits long, while those opposite the temple were one hundred cubits long.<sup>9</sup> At the foot of these chambers ran a passage that one entered from the east in order to enter them from the outer court.<sup>10</sup> The width of

the passage was fixed by the wall of the court.

On the south also, opposite the vacant area and opposite the building, there were chambers<sup>11</sup> with a passage in front of them; they were similar to the chambers on the north, of the same length and width, with the same exits and arrangements and doors.<sup>12</sup> So the entrances of the chambers to the south were entered through the entrance at the head of the corresponding passage, from the east, along the matching wall.

<sup>13</sup> Then he said to me, “The north chambers and the south chambers opposite the vacant area are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach the LORD shall eat the most holy offerings; there they shall deposit the most holy offerings—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering— for the place is holy.<sup>14</sup> When the priests enter the holy place, they shall not go out of it into the outer court without laying there the vestments in which they minister, for these are

holy; they shall put on other garments before they go near to the area open to the people.”

<sup>15</sup>When he had finished measuring the interior of the temple area, he led me out by the gate that faces east, and measured the temple area all around. <sup>16</sup>He measured the east side with the measuring reed, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. <sup>17</sup>Then he turned and measured the north side, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. <sup>18</sup>Then he turned and measured the south side, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. <sup>19</sup>Then he turned to the west side and measured, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. <sup>20</sup>He measured it on the four sides. It had a wall around it, five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits wide, to make a separation between the holy and the common.

*The Divine Glory  
Returns to the Temple*

**43** Then he brought me to the gate, the gate facing east. <sup>2</sup>And there, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from

the east; the sound was like the sound of mighty waters; and the earth shone with his glory. <sup>3</sup>The vision I saw was like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and like the vision that I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. <sup>4</sup>As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east,


**James 5:1–8** (NRSV)

*Warning to Rich Oppressors*

**5** Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are coming to you. <sup>2</sup>Your riches have rotted, and your clothes are moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup>Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you, and it will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. <sup>4</sup>Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. <sup>5</sup>You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup>You have

condemned and murdered the righteous one, who does not resist you.

*Patience in Suffering*



<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

**Psalm 118:19-26** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.  
<sup>20</sup> This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous shall enter through it.  
<sup>21</sup> I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.  
<sup>22</sup> The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.  
<sup>23</sup> This is the LORD's doing;

it is marvelous in our eyes.

<sup>24</sup> This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
<sup>25</sup> Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!  
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!  
<sup>26</sup> Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD.  
We bless you from the house of the LORD.

**Proverbs 25:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence  
or stand in the place of the great;  
<sup>7</sup> for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"  
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.  
What your eyes have seen  
<sup>8</sup> do not hastily bring into court;  
for what will you do in the end,  
when your neighbor puts you to shame?

## October 12



### **Ezekiel 43:5-27 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> the spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

<sup>6</sup> While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me out of the temple. <sup>7</sup> He said to me: Mortal, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will reside among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their whoring, and by the corpses of their kings at their death. <sup>8</sup> When they placed their threshold by my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they were defiling my holy name by their abominations that they committed; therefore I have consumed them in my anger.

<sup>9</sup> Now let them put away their idolatry and the corpses of their kings far from me, and I will reside among them forever.

<sup>10</sup> As for you, mortal, describe the temple to the house of Israel, and let them measure the pattern; and let them be ashamed of their iniquities. <sup>11</sup> When they are

ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the plan of the temple, its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, and its whole form—all its ordinances and its entire plan and all its laws; and write it down in their sight, so that they may observe and follow the entire plan and all its ordinances.

<sup>12</sup> This is the law of the temple: the whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. This is the law of the temple.

### *The Altar*

<sup>13</sup> These are the dimensions of the altar by cubits (the cubit being one cubit and a handbreadth): its base shall be one cubit high, and one cubit wide, with a rim

of one span around its edge. This shall be the height of the altar: <sup>14</sup> From the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits, with a width of one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge, four cubits, with a width of one cubit; <sup>15</sup> and the altar hearth, four cubits; and from the altar hearth projecting upward, four horns. <sup>16</sup> The altar hearth shall be square, twelve cubits long by twelve wide. <sup>17</sup> The ledge also shall be square, fourteen cubits long by fourteen wide, with a rim around it half a cubit wide, and its surrounding base, one cubit. Its steps shall face east.

<sup>18</sup> Then he said to me: Mortal, thus says the Lord GOD: These are the ordinances for the altar: On the day when it is erected for offering burnt offerings upon it and for dashing blood against it, <sup>19</sup> you shall give to the levitical priests of the family of Zadok, who draw near to me to minister to me, says the Lord GOD, a bull for a sin offering. <sup>20</sup> And you shall take some of its blood, and put it on the four horns of the altar, and on

the four corners of the ledge, and upon the rim all around; thus you shall purify it and make atonement for it. <sup>21</sup> You shall also take the bull of the sin offering, and it shall be burnt in the appointed place belonging to the temple, outside the sacred area.

<sup>22</sup> On the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering; and the altar shall be purified, as it was purified with the bull.

<sup>23</sup> When you have finished purifying it, you shall offer a bull without blemish and a ram from the flock without blemish. <sup>24</sup> You shall present them before the LORD, and the priests shall throw salt on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD.

<sup>25</sup> For seven days you shall provide daily a goat for a sin offering; also a bull and a ram from the flock, without blemish, shall be provided.

<sup>26</sup> Seven days shall they make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, and so consecrate it. <sup>27</sup> When these days are over, then from the eighth day onward the priests shall offer upon the altar your burnt

offerings and your offerings of well-being; and I will accept you, says the Lord GOD.

**James 5:9–20** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

<sup>12</sup> Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “Yes” be yes and your “No” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

*The Prayer of Faith*

*(Cp 1 Kings 18:41–46)*

<sup>13</sup> Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup> Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the

church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. <sup>17</sup> Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. <sup>18</sup> Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

<sup>19</sup> My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, <sup>20</sup> you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner’s soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

**Psalm 118:27-29** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> The LORD is God,  
and he has given us light.

Bind the festal procession  
with branches,  
up to the horns of the  
altar.

<sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will  
give thanks to you;  
you are my God, I will  
extol you.

<sup>29</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

### **Proverbs 25:9–10 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Argue your case with your  
neighbor directly,  
and do not disclose  
another's secret;  
<sup>10</sup> or else someone who  
hears you will bring  
shame upon you,  
and your ill repute will  
have no end.

## **October 13**



### **Ezekiel 44:1-31 (NRSV)**

#### *The Closed Gate*

**44** Then he brought me back  
to the outer gate of the

sanctuary, which faces east;  
and it was shut. <sup>2</sup>The LORD said  
to me: This gate shall remain  
shut; it shall not be opened,  
and no one shall enter by it;  
for the LORD, the God of Israel,  
has entered by it; therefore it  
shall remain shut. <sup>3</sup>Only the  
prince, because he is a prince,  
may sit in it to eat food before  
the LORD; he shall enter by way  
of the vestibule of the gate,  
and shall go out by the same  
way.

#### *Admission to the Temple*

<sup>4</sup>Then he brought me by  
way of the north gate to the  
front of the temple; and I  
looked, and lo! the glory of the  
LORD filled the temple of the  
LORD; and I fell upon my face.  
<sup>5</sup>The LORD said to me: Mortal,  
mark well, look closely, and  
listen attentively to all that I  
shall tell you concerning all the  
ordinances of the temple of  
the LORD and all its laws; and  
mark well those who may be  
admitted to the temple and all  
those who are to be excluded  
from the sanctuary. <sup>6</sup>Say to  
the rebellious house, to the  
house of Israel, Thus says the  
Lord GOD: O house of Israel, let

there be an end to all your abominations<sup>7</sup> in admitting foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant with all your abominations.<sup>8</sup> And you have not kept charge of my sacred offerings; but you have appointed foreigners to act for you in keeping my charge in my sanctuary.

<sup>9</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary.<sup>10</sup> But the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment.<sup>11</sup> They shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving in the temple; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall attend on them and serve them.<sup>12</sup> Because they ministered to them before

their idols and made the house of Israel stumble into iniquity, therefore I have sworn concerning them, says the Lord GOD, that they shall bear their punishment.<sup>13</sup> They shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my sacred offerings, the things that are most sacred; but they shall bear their shame, and the consequences of the abominations that they have committed.<sup>14</sup> Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its chores, all that is to be done in it.

#### *The Levitical Priests*

<sup>15</sup> But the levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me; and they shall attend me to offer me the fat and the blood, says the Lord GOD.<sup>16</sup> It is they who shall enter my sanctuary, it is they who shall approach my table, to minister to me, and they shall keep my charge.<sup>17</sup> When they enter the gates of the



inner court, they shall wear linen vestments; they shall have nothing of wool on them, while they minister at the gates of the inner court, and within. <sup>18</sup> They shall have linen turbans on their heads, and linen undergarments on their loins; they shall not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat. <sup>19</sup> When they go out into the outer court to the people, they shall remove the vestments in which they have been ministering, and lay them in the holy chambers; and they shall put on other garments, so that they may not communicate holiness to the people with their vestments. <sup>20</sup> They shall not shave their heads or let their locks grow long; they shall only trim the hair of their heads. <sup>21</sup> No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. <sup>22</sup> They shall not marry a widow, or a divorced woman, but only a virgin of the stock of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest. <sup>23</sup> They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish

between the unclean and the clean. <sup>24</sup> In a controversy they shall act as judges, and they shall decide it according to my judgments. They shall keep my laws and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals, and they shall keep my sabbaths holy. <sup>25</sup> They shall not defile themselves by going near to a dead person; for father or mother, however, and for son or daughter, and for brother or unmarried sister they may defile themselves. <sup>26</sup> After he has become clean, they shall count seven days for him. <sup>27</sup> On the day that he goes into the holy place, into the inner court, to minister in the holy place, he shall offer his sin offering, says the Lord GOD. <sup>28</sup> This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no holding in Israel; I am their holding. <sup>29</sup> They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering; and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs. <sup>30</sup> The first of all the first fruits of all kinds, and every offering of all kinds from all your offerings, shall belong to the priests; you

shall also give to the priests the first of your dough, in order that a blessing may rest on your house.<sup>31</sup> The priests shall not eat of anything, whether bird or animal, that died of itself or was torn by animals.

**1 Peter 1:1–5** (NRSV)  
*Salutation*

**1** Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,<sup>2</sup> who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood:

May grace and peace be yours in abundance.

*A Living Hope*

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,<sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and

unfading, kept in heaven for you,<sup>5</sup> who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**Psalm 119:1-8** (NRSV)

*The Glories of God's Law*

- <sup>1</sup> Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.
- <sup>2</sup> Happy are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole heart,
- <sup>3</sup> who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways.
- <sup>4</sup> You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.
- <sup>5</sup> O that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!
- <sup>6</sup> Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.
- <sup>7</sup> I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous ordinances.
- <sup>8</sup> I will observe your statutes;

do not utterly forsake  
me.

**Proverbs 25:11–14** (NRSV)

- <sup>11</sup> A word fitly spoken  
is like apples of gold in a  
setting of silver.
- <sup>12</sup> Like a gold ring or an  
ornament of gold  
is a wise rebuke to a  
listening ear.
- <sup>13</sup> Like the cold of snow in  
the time of harvest  
are faithful messengers  
to those who send  
them;  
they refresh the spirit of  
their masters.
- <sup>14</sup> Like clouds and wind  
without rain  
is one who boasts of a  
gift never given.

## October 14



**Ezekiel 45:1-12** (NRSV)

*The Holy District*

**45** When you allot the land  
as an inheritance, you shall set  
aside for the LORD a portion of  
the land as a holy district,

twenty-five thousand cubits  
long and twenty thousand  
cubits wide; it shall be holy  
throughout its entire extent.

<sup>2</sup> Of this, a square plot of five  
hundred by five hundred  
cubits shall be for the  
sanctuary, with fifty cubits for  
an open space around it. <sup>3</sup> In  
the holy district you shall  
measure off a section twenty-  
five thousand cubits long and  
ten thousand wide, in which  
shall be the sanctuary, the  
most holy place. <sup>4</sup> It shall be a  
holy portion of the land; it  
shall be for the priests, who  
minister in the sanctuary and  
approach the LORD to minister  
to him; and it shall be both a  
place for their houses and a  
holy place for the sanctuary.

<sup>5</sup> Another section, twenty-five  
thousand cubits long and ten  
thousand cubits wide, shall be  
for the Levites who minister at  
the temple, as their holding  
for cities to live in.

<sup>6</sup> Alongside the portion set  
apart as the holy district you  
shall assign as a holding for  
the city an area five thousand  
cubits wide, and twenty-five  
thousand cubits long; it shall

belong to the whole house of Israel.

<sup>7</sup> And to the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy district and the holding of the city, alongside the holy district and the holding of the city, on the west and on the east, corresponding in length to one of the tribal portions, and extending from the western to the eastern boundary <sup>8</sup> of the land. It is to be his property in Israel. And my princes shall no longer oppress my people; but they shall let the house of Israel have the land according to their tribes.

<sup>9</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Enough, O princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression, and do what is just and right. Cease your evictions of my people, says the Lord God.

#### *Weights and Measures*

<sup>10</sup> You shall have honest balances, an honest ephah, and an honest bath. <sup>11</sup> The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, the bath containing one-tenth of a homer, and the ephah one-

tenth of a homer; the homer shall be the standard measure.

<sup>12</sup> The shekel shall be twenty gerahs. Twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, and fifteen shekels shall make a mina for you.

#### **1 Peter 1:6–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

<sup>8</sup> Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup> for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

<sup>10</sup> Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and inquiry, <sup>11</sup> inquiring about the person or time that the Spirit of Christ within them



indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glory.<sup>12</sup> It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look!

**Psalms 119:9-16 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> How can young people  
keep their way pure?  
By guarding it according  
to your word.

<sup>10</sup> With my whole heart I  
seek you;  
do not let me stray from  
your commandments.

<sup>11</sup> I treasure your word in my  
heart,  
so that I may not sin  
against you.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed are you, O LORD;  
teach me your statutes.

<sup>13</sup> With my lips I declare  
all the ordinances of  
your mouth.

<sup>14</sup> I delight in the way of your  
decrees  
as much as in all riches.

<sup>15</sup> I will meditate on your  
precepts,  
and fix my eyes on your  
ways.

<sup>16</sup> I will delight in your  
statutes;  
I will not forget your  
word.

**Proverbs 25:15 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> With patience a ruler may  
be persuaded,  
and a soft tongue can  
break bones.

**October 15**



**Ezekiel 45:13-46:3 (NRSV)**

*Offerings*

<sup>13</sup> This is the offering that  
you shall make: one-sixth of an  
<sup>t</sup>ephah from each <sup>u</sup>homer of  
wheat, and one-sixth of an  
ephah from each homer of  
barley,<sup>14</sup> and as the fixed

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<sup>t</sup>1 ephah = one bushel

<sup>u</sup>1 homoer = 49.94 dry gallons or 1/8  
of a bushel

portion of oil, one-tenth of a <sup>v</sup>bath from each cor (the cor, like the homer, contains ten baths); <sup>15</sup> and one sheep from every flock of two hundred, from the pastures of Israel. This is the offering for grain offerings, burnt offerings, and offerings of well-being, to make atonement for them, says the Lord GOD. <sup>16</sup> All the people of the land shall join with the prince in Israel in making this offering. <sup>17</sup> But this shall be the obligation of the prince regarding the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the festivals, the new moons, and the sabbaths, all the appointed festivals of the house of Israel: he shall provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, the burnt offerings, and the offerings of well-being, to make atonement for the house of Israel.

### *Festivals*

(Ex 12:1–20; Lev 23:33–43)

<sup>18</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall

take a young bull without blemish, and purify the sanctuary. <sup>19</sup> The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court. <sup>20</sup> You shall do the same on the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance; so you shall make atonement for the temple.

<sup>21</sup> In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the festival of the passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. <sup>22</sup> On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a sin offering.

<sup>23</sup> And during the seven days of the festival he shall provide as a burnt offering to the LORD seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a male goat daily for a sin offering. <sup>24</sup> He shall provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin of oil to each ephah.

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<sup>v</sup> 1 bath = 6.5 gallons

<sup>25</sup> In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and for the seven days of the festival, he shall make the same provision for sin offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, and for the oil.

#### *Miscellaneous Regulations*

**46** Thus says the Lord GOD: The gate of the inner court that faces east shall remain closed on the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. <sup>2</sup> The prince shall enter by the vestibule of the gate from outside, and shall take his stand by the post of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his offerings of well-being, and he shall bow down at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be closed until evening. <sup>3</sup> The people of the land shall bow down at the entrance of that gate before the LORD on the sabbaths and on the new moons.

**1 Peter 1:13–25** (NRSV)  
*A Call to Holy Living*

<sup>13</sup> Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. <sup>14</sup> Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance.

<sup>15</sup> Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; <sup>16</sup> for it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

<sup>17</sup> If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile.

<sup>18</sup> You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. <sup>20</sup> He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake.

<sup>21</sup> Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

<sup>22</sup> Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. <sup>23</sup> You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup> For  
“All flesh is like grass  
and all its glory like the  
flower of grass.  
The grass withers,  
and the flower falls,  
<sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord  
endures forever.”  
That word is the good news  
that was announced to you.

**Psalms 119:17-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>17</sup> Deal bountifully with your  
servant,  
so that I may live and  
observe your word.  
<sup>18</sup> Open my eyes, so that I  
may behold  
wondrous things out of  
your law.  
<sup>19</sup> I live as an alien in the  
land;  
do not hide your  
commandments from  
me.

<sup>20</sup> My soul is consumed with  
longing  
for your ordinances at all  
times.  
<sup>21</sup> You rebuke the insolent,  
accursed ones,  
who wander from your  
commandments;  
<sup>22</sup> take away from me their  
scorn and contempt,  
for I have kept your  
decrees.  
<sup>23</sup> Even though princes sit  
plotting against me,  
your servant will  
meditate on your  
statutes.  
<sup>24</sup> Your decrees are my  
delight,  
they are my counselors.

**Proverbs 25:16 (NRSV)**

<sup>16</sup> If you have found honey,  
eat only enough for  
you,  
or else, having too much,  
you will vomit it.



## October 16



### Ezekiel 46:4-24 (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup>The burnt offering that the prince offers to the LORD on the sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish; <sup>5</sup>and the grain offering with the ram shall be an ephah, and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he wishes to give, together with a hin of oil to each ephah. <sup>6</sup>On the day of the new moon he shall offer a young bull without blemish, and six lambs and a ram, which shall be without blemish; <sup>7</sup>as a grain offering he shall provide an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wishes, together with a hin of oil to each ephah. <sup>8</sup>When the prince enters, he shall come in by the vestibule of the gate, and he shall go out by the same way.

<sup>9</sup>When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed festivals, whoever enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south gate; and whoever

enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate: they shall not return by way of the gate by which they entered, but shall go out straight ahead. <sup>10</sup>When they come in, the prince shall come in with them; and when they go out, he shall go out.

<sup>11</sup>At the festivals and the appointed seasons the grain offering with a young bull shall be an ephah, and with a ram an ephah, and with the lambs as much as one wishes to give, together with a hin of oil to an ephah. <sup>12</sup>When the prince provides a freewill offering, either a burnt offering or offerings of well-being as a freewill offering to the LORD, the gate facing east shall be opened for him; and he shall offer his burnt offering or his offerings of well-being as he does on the sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and after he has gone out the gate shall be closed.

<sup>13</sup>He shall provide a lamb, a yearling, without blemish, for a burnt offering to the LORD daily; morning by morning he shall provide it. <sup>14</sup>And he shall provide a grain offering with it

morning by morning regularly, one-sixth of an ephah, and one-third of a hin of oil to moisten the choice flour, as a grain offering to the LORD; this is the ordinance for all time.

<sup>15</sup> Thus the lamb and the grain offering and the oil shall be provided, morning by morning, as a regular burnt offering.

<sup>16</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: If the prince makes a gift to any of his sons out of his inheritance, it shall belong to his sons, it is their holding by inheritance. <sup>17</sup> But if he makes a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his to the year of liberty; then it shall revert to the prince; only his sons may keep a gift from his inheritance. <sup>18</sup> The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people, thrusting them out of their holding; he shall give his sons their inheritance out of his own holding, so that none of my people shall be dispossessed of their holding.

<sup>19</sup> Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, to the north row of the holy

chambers for the priests; and there I saw a place at the extreme western end of them.

<sup>20</sup> He said to me, "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they shall bake the grain offering, in order not to bring them out into the outer court and so communicate holiness to the people."

<sup>21</sup> Then he brought me out to the outer court, and led me past the four corners of the court; and in each corner of the court there was a court—<sup>22</sup> in the four corners of the court were small courts, forty cubits long and thirty wide; the four were of the same size. <sup>23</sup> On the inside, around each of the four courts was a row of masonry, with hearths made at the bottom of the rows all around. <sup>24</sup> Then he said to me, "These are the kitchens where those who serve at the temple shall boil the sacrifices of the people."

### **1 Peter 2:1–10 (NRSV)**

*The Living Stone  
and a Chosen People  
(Ps 118:22; Isa 28:16)*

**2** Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. <sup>2</sup> Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— <sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

<sup>4</sup> Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and <sup>5</sup> like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup> For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,  
a cornerstone chosen  
and precious;  
and whoever believes in  
him will not be put to  
shame.”

<sup>7</sup> To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,  
“The stone that the  
builders rejected  
has become the very  
head of the corner,”

<sup>8</sup> and  
“A stone that makes them  
stumble,  
and a rock that makes  
them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

<sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people,  
but now you are God's people;  
once you had not received mercy,  
but now you have received mercy.

**Psalm 119:25-32 (NRSV)**

<sup>25</sup> My soul clings to the dust;  
revive me according to  
your word.

<sup>26</sup> When I told of my ways,  
you answered me;  
teach me your statutes.

<sup>27</sup> Make me understand the  
way of your precepts,  
and I will meditate on  
your wondrous works.

28 My soul melts away for  
sorrow;  
strengthen me according  
to your word.

29 Put false ways far from  
me;  
and graciously teach me  
your law.

30 I have chosen the way of  
faithfulness;  
I set your ordinances  
before me.

31 I cling to your decrees, O  
LORD;  
let me not be put to  
shame.

32 I run the way of your  
commandments,  
for you enlarge my  
understanding.

**Proverbs 25:17 (NRSV)**

17 Let your foot be seldom in  
your neighbor's house,  
otherwise the neighbor  
will become weary of  
you and hate you.

**October 17**



**Ezekiel 47:1-23 (NRSV)**

*Water Flowing  
from the Temple*

**47** Then he brought me back  
to the entrance of the temple;  
there, water was flowing from  
below the threshold of the  
temple toward the east (for  
the temple faced east); and  
the water was flowing down  
from below the south end of  
the threshold of the temple,  
south of the altar. <sup>2</sup> Then he  
brought me out by way of the  
north gate, and led me around  
on the outside to the outer  
gate that faces toward the  
east; and the water was  
coming out on the south side.

<sup>3</sup> Going on eastward with a  
cord in his hand, the man  
measured one thousand  
cubits, and then led me  
through the water; and it was  
ankle-deep. <sup>4</sup> Again he  
measured one thousand, and  
led me through the water; and  
it was knee-deep. Again he  
measured one thousand, and  
led me through the water; and  
it was up to the waist. <sup>5</sup> Again  
he measured one thousand,

and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. <sup>6</sup> He said to me, “Mortal, have you seen this?”

Then he led me back along the bank of the river. <sup>7</sup> As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. <sup>8</sup> He said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. <sup>9</sup> Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes. <sup>10</sup> People will stand fishing beside the sea from En-ge-di to En-eg-laim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. <sup>11</sup> But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. <sup>12</sup> On the banks, on both sides of the

river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”

*The New Boundaries  
of the Land*

*(Cp Num 34:1–12)*

<sup>13</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: These are the boundaries by which you shall divide the land for inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph shall have two portions. <sup>14</sup> You shall divide it equally; I swore to give it to your ancestors, and this land shall fall to you as your inheritance.

<sup>15</sup> This shall be the boundary of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, and on to Zedad, <sup>16</sup> Berothah, Sibraim (which lies between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath), as far as Hazer-hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran. <sup>17</sup> So the boundary shall run from the sea to Hazar-enon, which is

north of the border of Damascus, with the border of Hamath to the north. This shall be the north side.

<sup>18</sup> On the east side, between Hauran and Damascus; along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel; to the eastern sea and as far as Tamar. This shall be the east side.

<sup>19</sup> On the south side, it shall run from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribath-kadesh, from there along the Wadi of Egypt to the Great Sea. This shall be the south side.

<sup>20</sup> On the west side, the Great Sea shall be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This shall be the west side.

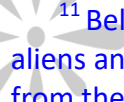
<sup>21</sup> So you shall divide this land among you according to the tribes of Israel. <sup>22</sup> You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens who reside among you and have begotten children among you. They shall be to you as citizens of Israel; with you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. <sup>23</sup> In whatever tribe aliens reside,

there you shall assign them their inheritance, says the Lord GOD.

### **1 Peter 2:11–25 (NRSV)**

*Live as Servants of God*

*(Cp Rom 13:1–5)*



<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul. <sup>12</sup> Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.

<sup>13</sup> For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. <sup>16</sup> As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. <sup>17</sup> Honor everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

*The Example  
of Christ's Suffering  
(Isa 53:7-9)*

<sup>18</sup> Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh.

<sup>19</sup> For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

<sup>22</sup> "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

<sup>23</sup> When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.

<sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were going

astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

**Psalm 119:33-40 (NRSV)**

<sup>33</sup> Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end.

<sup>34</sup> Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

<sup>35</sup> Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

<sup>36</sup> Turn my heart to your decrees, and not to selfish gain.

<sup>37</sup> Turn my eyes from looking at vanities; give me life in your ways.

<sup>38</sup> Confirm to your servant your promise, which is for those who fear you.

<sup>39</sup> Turn away the disgrace that I dread, for your ordinances are good.

<sup>40</sup> See, I have longed for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life.

**Proverbs 25:18–19 (NRSV)**

- <sup>18</sup> Like a war club, a sword, or a sharp arrow is one who bears false witness against a neighbor.
- <sup>19</sup> Like a bad tooth or a lame foot is trust in a faithless person in time of trouble.

**October  
18**



**Ezekiel 48:1-35 (NRSV)**

*The Tribal Portions*

**48** These are the names of the tribes: Beginning at the northern border, on the Hethlon road, from Lebohamath, as far as Hazar-enon (which is on the border of Damascus, with Hamath to the north), and extending from the east side to the west, Dan, one portion. <sup>2</sup> Adjoining the territory of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher, one portion. <sup>3</sup> Adjoining the

territory of Asher, from the east side to the west, Naphtali, one portion. <sup>4</sup> Adjoining the territory of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, Manasseh, one portion. <sup>5</sup> Adjoining the territory of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, Ephraim, one portion. <sup>6</sup> Adjoining the territory of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, Reuben, one portion. <sup>7</sup> Adjoining the territory of Reuben, from the east side to the west, Judah, one portion.

<sup>8</sup> Adjoining the territory of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall be the portion that you shall set apart, twenty-five thousand cubits in width, and in length equal to one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west, with the sanctuary in the middle of it. <sup>9</sup> The portion that you shall set apart for the LORD shall be twenty-five thousand cubits in length, and twenty thousand in width. <sup>10</sup> These shall be the allotments of the holy portion: the priests shall have an allotment measuring twenty-five thousand cubits on the northern side, ten



thousand cubits in width on the western side, ten thousand in width on the eastern side, and twenty-five thousand in length on the southern side, with the sanctuary of the LORD in the middle of it. <sup>11</sup> This shall be for the consecrated priests, the descendants of Zadok, who kept my charge, who did not go astray when the people of Israel went astray, as the Levites did. <sup>12</sup> It shall belong to them as a special portion from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place, adjoining the territory of the Levites.

<sup>13</sup> Alongside the territory of the priests, the Levites shall have an allotment twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand in width. The whole length shall be twenty-five thousand cubits and the width twenty thousand.

<sup>14</sup> They shall not sell or exchange any of it; they shall not transfer this choice portion of the land, for it is holy to the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> The remainder, five thousand cubits in width and twenty-five thousand in length, shall be for ordinary

use for the city, for dwellings and for open country. In the middle of it shall be the city; <sup>16</sup> and these shall be its dimensions: the north side four thousand five hundred cubits, the south side four thousand five hundred, the east side four thousand five hundred, and the west side four thousand five hundred.

<sup>17</sup> The city shall have open land: on the north two hundred fifty cubits, on the south two hundred fifty, on the east two hundred fifty, on the west two hundred fifty.

<sup>18</sup> The remainder of the length alongside the holy portion shall be ten thousand cubits to the east, and ten thousand to the west, and it shall be alongside the holy portion. Its produce shall be food for the workers of the city. <sup>19</sup> The workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it. <sup>20</sup> The whole portion that you shall set apart shall be twenty-five thousand cubits square, that is, the holy portion together with the property of the city.

<sup>21</sup> What remains on both sides of the holy portion and

of the property of the city shall belong to the prince.

Extending from the twenty-five thousand cubits of the holy portion to the east border, and westward from the twenty-five thousand cubits to the west border, parallel to the tribal portions, it shall belong to the prince.

The holy portion with the sanctuary of the temple in the middle of it, <sup>22</sup> and the property of the Levites and of the city, shall be in the middle of that which belongs to the prince. The portion of the prince shall lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

<sup>23</sup> As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west, Benjamin, one portion. <sup>24</sup> Adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, Simeon, one portion. <sup>25</sup> Adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the east side to the west, Issachar, one portion. <sup>26</sup> Adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the east side to the west, Zebulun, one portion. <sup>27</sup> Adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, Gad, one

portion. <sup>28</sup> And adjoining the territory of Gad to the south, the boundary shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, from there along the Wadi of Egypt to the Great Sea. <sup>29</sup> This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, says the Lord GOD.

<sup>30</sup> These shall be the exits of the city: On the north side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits by measure, <sup>31</sup> three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel. <sup>32</sup> On the east side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan. <sup>33</sup> On the south side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun. <sup>34</sup> On the west side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits, three gates, the gate of Gad, the

gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali.<sup>35</sup> The circumference of the city shall be eighteen thousand cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD is There.

**1 Peter 3:1–7** (NRSV)


*Wives and Husbands*

**3** Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct,<sup>2</sup> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.<sup>3</sup> Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing;<sup>4</sup> rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight.<sup>5</sup> It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands.<sup>6</sup> Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long

as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you.

<sup>7</sup> Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life—so that nothing may hinder your prayers.

**Psalm 119:41-48** (NRSV)



<sup>41</sup> Let your steadfast love  
come to me, O LORD,  
your salvation according  
to your promise.  
<sup>42</sup> Then I shall have an  
answer for those who  
taunt me,  
for I trust in your word.  
<sup>43</sup> Do not take the word of  
truth utterly out of my  
mouth,  
for my hope is in your  
ordinances.  
<sup>44</sup> I will keep your law  
continually,  
forever and ever.  
<sup>45</sup> I shall walk at liberty,  
for I have sought your  
precepts.  
<sup>46</sup> I will also speak of your  
decrees before kings,

and shall not be put to  
shame;  
47 I find my delight in your  
commandments,  
because I love them.  
48 I revere your  
commandments, which  
I love,  
and I will meditate on  
your statutes.

**Proverbs 25:18–19** (NRSV)

18 Like a war club, a sword, or  
a sharp arrow  
is one who bears false  
witness against a  
neighbor.  
19 Like a bad tooth or a lame  
foot  
is trust in a faithless  
person in time of  
trouble.

**October  
19**



**Daniel 1:1-21** (NRSV)

*Four Young Israelites at the  
Babylonian Court  
(Cp 2 Kings 24:10–17)*

**1** In the third year of the reign  
of King Jehoiakim of Judah,  
King Nebuchadnezzar of  
Babylon came to Jerusalem  
and besieged it. <sup>2</sup>The Lord let  
King Jehoiakim of Judah fall  
into his power, as well as  
some of the vessels of the  
house of God. These he  
brought to the land of Shinar,  
and placed the vessels in the  
treasury of his gods.

<sup>3</sup>Then the king  
commanded his palace master  
Ashpenaz to bring some of the  
Israelites of the royal family  
and of the nobility, <sup>4</sup>young  
men without physical defect  
and handsome, versed in  
every branch of wisdom,  
endowed with knowledge and  
insight, and competent to  
serve in the king's palace; they  
were to be taught the  
literature and language of the  
Chaldeans. <sup>5</sup>The king assigned  
them a daily portion of the  
royal rations of food and wine.  
They were to be educated for  
three years, so that at the end  
of that time they could be  
stationed in the king's court.  
<sup>6</sup>Among them were Daniel,  
Hananiah, Mishael, and  
Azariah, from the tribe of

Judah. <sup>7</sup> The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

<sup>8</sup> But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. <sup>9</sup> Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master. <sup>10</sup> The palace master said to Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king.” <sup>11</sup> Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: <sup>12</sup> “Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. <sup>13</sup> You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal

rations, and deal with your servants according to what you observe.” <sup>14</sup> So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. <sup>15</sup> At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. <sup>16</sup> So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. <sup>17</sup> To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

<sup>18</sup> At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, <sup>19</sup> and the king spoke with them. And among them all, no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they were stationed in the king’s court. <sup>20</sup> In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning

which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. <sup>21</sup> And Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.

**1 Peter 3:8–22** (NRSV)

*Suffering for Doing Right*

<sup>8</sup> Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

<sup>9</sup> Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing. <sup>10</sup> For

“Those who desire life  
and desire to see good  
days,

let them keep their  
tongues from evil  
and their lips from  
speaking deceit;

<sup>11</sup> let them turn away from  
evil and do good;  
let them seek peace and  
pursue it.

<sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the Lord  
are on the righteous,  
and his ears are open to  
their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is  
against those who do  
evil.”

<sup>13</sup> Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; <sup>16</sup> yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil. <sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup> in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup> who in former times did not obey, when God

waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup> And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

**Psalms 119:49-58 (NRSV)**

<sup>49</sup> Remember your word to your servant,  
in which you have made me hope.  
<sup>50</sup> This is my comfort in my distress,  
that your promise gives me life.  
<sup>51</sup> The arrogant utterly deride me,  
but I do not turn away from your law.  
<sup>52</sup> When I think of your ordinances from of old,  
I take comfort, O LORD.  
<sup>53</sup> Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked,

those who forsake your law.

<sup>54</sup> Your statutes have been my songs  
wherever I make my home.  
<sup>55</sup> I remember your name in the night, O LORD,  
and keep your law.  
<sup>56</sup> This blessing has fallen to me,  
for I have kept your precepts.  
<sup>57</sup> The LORD is my portion;  
I promise to keep your words.  
<sup>58</sup> I implore your favor with all my heart;  
be gracious to me according to your promise.

**Proverbs 25:23-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> The north wind produces rain,  
and a backbiting tongue, angry looks.  
<sup>24</sup> It is better to live in a corner of the housetop  
than in a house shared with a contentious wife.

# October 20



**Daniel 2:1-23** (NRSV)

## *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*

**2** In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. <sup>2</sup> So the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, <sup>3</sup> he said to them, "I have had such a dream that my spirit is troubled by the desire to understand it." <sup>4</sup> The Chaldeans said to the king (in Aramaic), "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will reveal the interpretation." <sup>5</sup> The king answered the Chaldeans, "This is a public decree: if you do not tell me both the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. <sup>6</sup> But if you do tell me the dream and its

interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation." <sup>7</sup> They answered a second time, "Let the king first tell his servants the dream, then we can give its interpretation." <sup>8</sup> The king answered, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see I have firmly decreed: <sup>9</sup> if you do not tell me the dream, there is but one verdict for you. You have agreed to speak lying and misleading words to me until things take a turn. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation." <sup>10</sup> The Chaldeans answered the king, "There is no one on earth who can reveal what the king demands! In fact no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. <sup>11</sup> The thing that the king is asking is too difficult, and no one can reveal it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals." <sup>12</sup> Because of this the king flew into a violent rage and



commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed.<sup>13</sup> The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them.<sup>14</sup> Then Daniel responded with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the king's chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon;<sup>15</sup> he asked Arioch, the royal official, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel.<sup>16</sup> So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation.

### *God Reveals*

#### *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*

<sup>17</sup> Then Daniel went to his home and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,<sup>18</sup> and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not perish.<sup>19</sup> Then the mystery was

revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

<sup>20</sup> Daniel said:

"Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his.


<sup>21</sup> He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.

<sup>22</sup> He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him.

<sup>23</sup> To you, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and power, and have now revealed to me what we asked of you, for you have revealed to us what the king ordered."

**1 Peter 4:1–6** (NRSV)

*Good Stewards of God's Grace*



**4** Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), <sup>2</sup> so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God.

<sup>3</sup> You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. <sup>4</sup> They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. <sup>5</sup> But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. <sup>6</sup> For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

**Psalms 119:59-64** (NRSV)

<sup>59</sup> When I think of your ways,

I turn my feet to your decrees;

<sup>60</sup> I hurry and do not delay to keep your commandments.

<sup>61</sup> Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law.

<sup>62</sup> At midnight I rise to praise you, because of your righteous ordinances.

<sup>63</sup> I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts.

<sup>64</sup> The earth, O LORD, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes.

**Proverbs 25:25–27** (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

<sup>26</sup> Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain are the righteous who give way before the wicked.

<sup>27</sup> It is not good to eat much honey, or to seek honor on top of honor.

# October 21



## Daniel 2:24-49 (NRSV)

### *Daniel Interprets the Dream*

<sup>24</sup> Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will give the king the interpretation.”

<sup>25</sup> Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king and said to him: “I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the interpretation.” <sup>26</sup> The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?” <sup>27</sup> Daniel answered the king, “No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, <sup>28</sup> but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of

your head as you lay in bed were these: <sup>29</sup> To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be. <sup>30</sup> But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

<sup>31</sup> “You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue. This statue was huge, its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its appearance was frightening. <sup>32</sup> The head of that statue was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, <sup>33</sup> its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. <sup>34</sup> As you looked on, a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. <sup>35</sup> Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became

like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

<sup>36</sup> “This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. <sup>37</sup> You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, <sup>38</sup> into whose hand he has given human beings, wherever they live, the wild animals of the field, and the birds of the air, and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. <sup>39</sup> After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. <sup>40</sup> And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these.

<sup>41</sup> As you saw the feet and toes partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of

the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay. <sup>42</sup> As the toes of the feet were part iron and part clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. <sup>43</sup> As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. <sup>44</sup> And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; <sup>45</sup> just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.”

*Daniel and His  
Friends Promoted*

<sup>46</sup> Then King  
Nebuchadnezzar fell on his

face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him.<sup>47</sup> The king said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery!"<sup>48</sup> Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.<sup>49</sup> Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court.

**1 Peter 4:7–19** (NRSV)

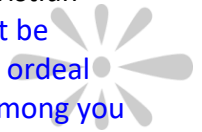
<sup>7</sup> The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers.<sup>8</sup> Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.<sup>9</sup> Be hospitable to one another without complaining.<sup>10</sup> Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift

each of you has received.

<sup>11</sup> Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

*Suffering as a Christian*

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.<sup>13</sup> But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.<sup>14</sup> If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.<sup>15</sup> But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker.<sup>16</sup> Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name.



<sup>17</sup> For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup> And

“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?”

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God’s will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

**Psalms 119:65-72 (NRSV)**

<sup>65</sup> You have dealt well with your servant,  
O LORD, according to your word.

<sup>66</sup> Teach me good judgment and knowledge,  
for I believe in your commandments.

<sup>67</sup> Before I was humbled I went astray,  
but now I keep your word.

<sup>68</sup> You are good and do good; teach me your statutes.

<sup>69</sup> The arrogant smear me with lies,

but with my whole heart I keep your precepts.

<sup>70</sup> Their hearts are fat and gross,

but I delight in your law.

<sup>71</sup> It is good for me that I was humbled,  
so that I might learn your statutes.

<sup>72</sup> The law of your mouth is better to me  
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

**Proverbs 25:28 (NRSV)**

<sup>28</sup> Like a city breached,  
without walls,  
is one who lacks self-control.

## October 22



**Daniel 3:1-30 (NRSV)**

*The Golden Image*

**3** King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue whose height was sixty cubits and whose width was six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the

province of Babylon. <sup>2</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent for the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to assemble and come to the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>3</sup> So the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. When they were standing before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, <sup>4</sup> the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup> that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, you are to fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire."

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, at this time certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! <sup>10</sup> You, O king, have made a decree, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, shall fall down and worship the golden statue, <sup>11</sup> and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. <sup>12</sup> There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These pay no heed to you, O king. They do not serve your gods and they do not worship the golden statue that you have set up."

<sup>13</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought in; so they brought those men before the king.

<sup>14</sup> Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and you do not worship the golden statue that I have set up?

<sup>15</sup> Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?"

<sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. <sup>17</sup> If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. <sup>18</sup> But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not

serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up."

### *The Fiery Furnace*

<sup>19</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, <sup>20</sup> and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.

<sup>21</sup> So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. <sup>22</sup> Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup> But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

<sup>24</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up



quickly. He said to his counselors, "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king."<sup>25</sup> He replied, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god."

<sup>26</sup> Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire.<sup>27</sup> And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them.

<sup>28</sup> Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him.

They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.<sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way."<sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.


### **1 Peter 5:1–14 (NRSV)**

#### *Tending the Flock of God*

**5** Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you<sup>2</sup> to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it—not for sordid gain but eagerly.<sup>3</sup> Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock.<sup>4</sup> And when the chief shepherd

appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away. <sup>5</sup> In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for

“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”



<sup>6</sup> **Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup> Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. <sup>10</sup> And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.**

*Final Greetings  
and Benediction*

<sup>12</sup> Through Silvanus, whom I consider a faithful brother, I have written this short letter to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. <sup>13</sup> Your sister church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings; and so does my son Mark. <sup>14</sup> Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

**Psalm 119:73-80 (NRSV)**

<sup>73</sup> Your hands have made and fashioned me;  
give me understanding  
that I may learn your  
commandments.

<sup>74</sup> Those who fear you shall  
see me and rejoice,  
because I have hoped in  
your word.

<sup>75</sup> I know, O LORD, that your  
judgments are right,  
and that in faithfulness  
you have humbled me.

<sup>76</sup> Let your steadfast love  
become my comfort

according to your  
promise to your  
servant.

77 Let your mercy come to  
me, that I may live;  
for your law is my  
delight.

78 Let the arrogant be put to  
shame,  
because they have  
subverted me with  
guile;  
as for me, I will meditate  
on your precepts.

79 Let those who fear you  
turn to me,  
so that they may know  
your decrees.

80 May my heart be  
blameless in your  
statutes,  
so that I may not be put  
to shame.

**Proverbs 26:1–2 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> Like snow in summer or  
rain in harvest,  
so honor is not fitting for  
a fool.

<sup>2</sup> Like a sparrow in its  
flitting, like a swallow  
in its flying,  
an undeserved curse  
goes nowhere.

**October  
23**



**Daniel 4:1–27 (NRSV)**

*Nebuchadnezzar's Second  
Dream*

**4** King Nebuchadnezzar to all  
peoples, nations, and  
languages that live throughout  
the earth: May you have  
abundant prosperity! <sup>2</sup>The  
signs and wonders that the  
Most High God has worked for  
me I am pleased to recount.

<sup>3</sup> How great are his signs,  
how mighty his wonders!  
His kingdom is an  
everlasting kingdom,  
and his sovereignty is  
from generation to  
generation.

<sup>4</sup> I, Nebuchadnezzar, was  
living at ease in my home and  
prospering in my palace. <sup>5</sup>I  
saw a dream that frightened  
me; my fantasies in bed and  
the visions of my head  
terrified me. <sup>6</sup>So I made a  
decree that all the wise men  
of Babylon should be brought  
before me, in order that they  
might tell me the  
interpretation of the dream.

<sup>7</sup>Then the magicians, the

enchanters, the Chaldeans,  
and the diviners came in, and I  
told them the dream, but they  
could not tell me its  
interpretation. <sup>8</sup> At last Daniel  
came in before me—he who  
was named Belteshazzar after  
the name of my god, and who  
is endowed with a spirit of the  
holy gods—and I told him the  
dream: <sup>9</sup> “O Belteshazzar, chief  
of the magicians, I know that  
you are endowed with a spirit  
of the holy gods and that no  
mystery is too difficult for you.  
Hear the dream that I saw; tell  
me its interpretation.

<sup>10</sup> Upon my bed this is what I  
saw;  
there was a tree at the  
center of the earth,  
and its height was great.

<sup>11</sup> The tree grew great and  
strong,  
its top reached to  
heaven,  
and it was visible to the  
ends of the whole  
earth.

<sup>12</sup> Its foliage was beautiful,  
its fruit abundant,  
and it provided food for  
all.  
The animals of the field  
found shade under it,

the birds of the air  
nested in its branches,  
and from it all living  
beings were fed.

<sup>13</sup> I continued looking, in  
the visions of my head as I lay  
in bed, and there was a holy  
watcher, coming down from  
heaven. <sup>14</sup> He cried aloud and  
said:

‘Cut down the tree and  
chop off its branches,  
strip off its foliage and  
scatter its fruit.

Let the animals flee from  
beneath it  
and the birds from its  
branches.

<sup>15</sup> But leave its stump and  
roots in the ground,  
with a band of iron and  
bronze,  
in the tender grass of the  
field.

Let him be bathed with the  
dew of heaven,  
and let his lot be with  
the animals of the field  
in the grass of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Let his mind be changed  
from that of a human,  
and let the mind of an  
animal be given to him.  
And let seven times pass  
over him.

<sup>17</sup> The sentence is rendered  
by decree of the  
watchers,  
the decision is given by  
order of the holy ones,  
in order that all who live  
may know  
that the Most High is  
sovereign over the  
kingdom of mortals;  
he gives it to whom he will  
and sets over it the  
lowliest of human  
beings.’

<sup>18</sup> This is the dream that I,  
King Nebuchadnezzar, saw.  
Now you, Belteshazzar,  
declare the interpretation,  
since all the wise men of my  
kingdom are unable to tell me  
the interpretation. You are  
able, however, for you are  
endowed with a spirit of the  
holy gods.”

*Daniel Interprets  
the Second Dream*

<sup>19</sup> Then Daniel, who was  
called Belteshazzar, was  
severely distressed for a while.  
His thoughts terrified him. The  
king said, “Belteshazzar, do  
not let the dream or the  
interpretation terrify you.”  
Belteshazzar answered, “My

lord, may the dream be for  
those who hate you, and its  
interpretation for your  
enemies! <sup>20</sup> The tree that you  
saw, which grew great and  
strong, so that its top reached  
to heaven and was visible to  
the end of the whole earth,  
<sup>21</sup> whose foliage was beautiful  
and its fruit abundant, and  
which provided food for all,  
under which animals of the  
field lived, and in whose  
branches the birds of the air  
had nests— <sup>22</sup> it is you, O king!  
You have grown great and  
strong. Your greatness has  
increased and reaches to  
heaven, and your sovereignty  
to the ends of the earth.

<sup>23</sup> And whereas the king saw a  
holy watcher coming down  
from heaven and saying, ‘Cut  
down the tree and destroy it,  
but leave its stump and roots  
in the ground, with a band of  
iron and bronze, in the grass  
of the field; and let him be  
bathed with the dew of  
heaven, and let his lot be with  
the animals of the field, until  
seven times pass over him’—  
<sup>24</sup> this is the interpretation, O  
king, and it is a decree of the  
Most High that has come upon

my lord the king: <sup>25</sup> You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the wild animals. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, you shall be bathed with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and gives it to whom he will. <sup>26</sup> As it was commanded to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be re-established for you from the time that you learn that Heaven is sovereign.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore, O king, may my counsel be acceptable to you: atone for your sins with righteousness, and your iniquities with mercy to the oppressed, so that your prosperity may be prolonged.”

## **2 Peter 1:1–9 (NRSV)**

### *Salutation*

**1** Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have received a faith as precious as ours through the

righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

<sup>2</sup> May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

### *The Christian's Call and Election*

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup> Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature. <sup>5</sup> For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.

<sup>8</sup> For if these things are yours and are increasing among you,

they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>9</sup> For anyone who lacks these things is nearsighted and blind, and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins.

**Psalms 119:81-88** (NRSV)

<sup>81</sup> My soul languishes for your salvation;  
I hope in your word.  
<sup>82</sup> My eyes fail with watching for your promise;  
I ask, "When will you comfort me?"  
<sup>83</sup> For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,  
yet I have not forgotten your statutes.  
<sup>84</sup> How long must your servant endure?  
When will you judge those who persecute me?  
<sup>85</sup> The arrogant have dug pitfalls for me;  
they flout your law.  
<sup>86</sup> All your commandments are enduring;  
I am persecuted without cause; help me!  
<sup>87</sup> They have almost made an end of me on earth;

but I have not forsaken your precepts.

<sup>88</sup> In your steadfast love spare my life,  
so that I may keep the decrees of your mouth.

**Proverbs 26:3-5** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> A whip for the horse, a  
bridle for the donkey,  
and a rod for the back of fools.  
<sup>4</sup> Do not answer fools according to their folly,  
or you will be a fool yourself.  
<sup>5</sup> Answer fools according to their folly,  
or they will be wise in their own eyes.

**October  
24**



**Daniel 4:28-37** (NRSV)

*Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation*  
<sup>28</sup> All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>29</sup> At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon,<sup>30</sup> and

the king said, "Is this not magnificent Babylon, which I have built as a royal capital by my mighty power and for my glorious majesty?"<sup>31</sup> While the words were still in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven: "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: The kingdom has departed from you!"<sup>32</sup> You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the animals of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals and gives it to whom he will."

<sup>33</sup> Immediately the sentence was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven away from human society, ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers and his nails became like birds' claws.

### *Nebuchadnezzar Praises God*

<sup>34</sup> When that period was over, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me.

I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored the one who lives forever.

For his sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation.

<sup>35</sup> All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does what he wills with the host of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth.

There is no one who can stay his hand or say to him, "What are you doing?"

<sup>36</sup> At that time my reason returned to me; and my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My counselors and my lords sought me out, I was re-established over my kingdom, and still more



greatness was added to me.

<sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar,  
praise and extol and honor the  
King of heaven,

for all his works are truth,  
and his ways are justice;  
and he is able to bring low  
those who walk in pride.

## **2 Peter 1:10–21** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble. <sup>11</sup> For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore I intend to keep on reminding you of these things, though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. <sup>13</sup> I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, <sup>14</sup> since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. <sup>15</sup> And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

## *Eyewitnesses of Christ's Glory*

(Mt 17:5; Mk 9:7; Lk 9:35)

<sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty.

<sup>17</sup> For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." <sup>18</sup> We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

<sup>19</sup> So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> **First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**



**Psalms 119:89-96 (NRSV)**

<sup>89</sup> The LORD exists forever;  
your word is firmly fixed  
in heaven.  
<sup>90</sup> Your faithfulness endures  
to all generations;  
you have established the  
earth, and it stands  
fast.  
<sup>91</sup> By your appointment they  
stand today,  
for all things are your  
servants.  
<sup>92</sup> If your law had not been  
my delight,  
I would have perished in  
my misery.  
<sup>93</sup> I will never forget your  
precepts,  
for by them you have  
given me life.  
<sup>94</sup> I am yours; save me,  
for I have sought your  
precepts.  
<sup>95</sup> The wicked lie in wait to  
destroy me,  
but I consider your  
decrees.  
<sup>96</sup> I have seen a limit to all  
perfection,  
but your commandment  
is exceedingly broad.

**Proverbs 26:6-8 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> It is like cutting off one's  
foot and drinking down  
violence,  
to send a message by a  
fool.  
<sup>7</sup> The legs of a disabled  
person hang limp;  
so does a proverb in the  
mouth of a fool.  
<sup>8</sup> It is like binding a stone in  
a sling  
to give honor to a fool.

**October  
25**



**Daniel 5:1-12 (NRSV)**

*Belshazzar's Feast*

**5** King Belshazzar made a great festival for a thousand of his lords, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar commanded that they bring in the vessels of gold and silver that his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken

out of the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. <sup>3</sup> So they brought in the vessels of gold and silver that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. <sup>4</sup> They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

*The Writing on the Wall*

<sup>5</sup> Immediately the fingers of a human hand appeared and began writing on the plaster of the wall of the royal palace, next to the lampstand. The king was watching the hand as it wrote. <sup>6</sup> Then the king's face turned pale, and his thoughts terrified him. His limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together. <sup>7</sup> The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the diviners; and the king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me its interpretation shall be clothed

in purple, have a chain of gold around his neck, and rank third in the kingdom." <sup>8</sup> Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king the interpretation. <sup>9</sup> Then King Belshazzar became greatly terrified and his face turned pale, and his lords were perplexed.

<sup>10</sup> The queen, when she heard the discussion of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall. The queen said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts terrify you or your face grow pale. <sup>11</sup> There is a man in your kingdom who is endowed with a spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father he was found to have enlightenment, understanding, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and diviners, <sup>12</sup> because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems

were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”

## **2 Peter 2:1–11** (NRSV)

### *False Prophets and Their Punishment*

**2** But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive opinions. They will even deny the Master who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. <sup>2</sup> Even so, many will follow their licentious ways, and because of these teachers the way of truth will be maligned. <sup>3</sup> And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation, pronounced against them long ago, has not been idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgment; <sup>5</sup> and if he did not spare the ancient

world, even though he saved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood on a world of the ungodly; <sup>6</sup> and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example of what is coming to the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless <sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), <sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment <sup>10</sup>—especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority.

Bold and willful, they are not afraid to slander the glorious ones, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring against them a slanderous judgment from the Lord.

**Psalm 119:97-104 (NRSV)**

<sup>97</sup> Oh, how I love your law!

It is my meditation all  
day long.

<sup>98</sup> Your commandment  
makes me wiser than  
my enemies,  
for it is always with me.

<sup>99</sup> I have more understanding  
than all my teachers,  
for your decrees are my  
meditation.

<sup>100</sup> I understand more than  
the aged,  
for I keep your precepts.

<sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from  
every evil way,  
in order to keep your  
word.

<sup>102</sup> I do not turn away from  
your ordinances,  
for you have taught me.

<sup>103</sup> How sweet are your words  
to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to  
my mouth!

<sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I  
get understanding;  
therefore I hate every  
false way.

**Proverbs 26:9–12 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Like a thornbush  
brandished by the  
hand of a drunkard

is a proverb in the mouth  
of a fool.

<sup>10</sup> Like an archer who  
wounds everybody  
is one who hires a  
passing fool or  
drunkard.

<sup>11</sup> Like a dog that returns to  
its vomit  
is a fool who reverts to  
his folly.

<sup>12</sup> Do you see persons wise in  
their own eyes? There  
is more hope for fools  
than for them.

## October 26



**Daniel 5:13–31 (NRSV)**

*The Writing on the Wall  
Interpreted*

<sup>13</sup> Then Daniel was brought  
in before the king. The king  
said to Daniel, “So you are  
Daniel, one of the exiles of  
Judah, whom my father the  
king brought from Judah? <sup>14</sup> I  
have heard of you that a spirit  
of the gods is in you, and that  
enlightenment,

understanding, and excellent wisdom are found in you.

<sup>15</sup> Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and tell me its interpretation, but they were not able to give the interpretation of the matter.

<sup>16</sup> But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you are able to read the writing and tell me its interpretation, you shall be clothed in purple, have a chain of gold around your neck, and rank third in the kingdom.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Daniel answered in the presence of the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, or give your rewards to someone else! Nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and let him know the interpretation.

<sup>18</sup> O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar kingship, greatness, glory, and majesty.

<sup>19</sup> And because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. He killed those he wanted to kill, kept

alive those he wanted to keep alive, honored those he wanted to honor, and degraded those he wanted to degrade. <sup>20</sup> But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he acted proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory was stripped from him. <sup>21</sup> He was driven from human society, and his mind was made like that of an animal. His dwelling was with the wild asses, he was fed grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and sets over it whomever he will.

<sup>22</sup> And you, Belshazzar his son, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this!

<sup>23</sup> You have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven! The vessels of his temple have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them. You have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or

know; but the God in whose power is your very breath, and to whom belong all your ways, you have not honored.

<sup>24</sup> “So from his presence the hand was sent and this writing was inscribed. <sup>25</sup> And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. <sup>26</sup> This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; <sup>27</sup> TEKEL, you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting; <sup>28</sup> PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”

<sup>29</sup> Then Belshazzar gave the command, and Daniel was clothed in purple, a chain of gold was put around his neck, and a proclamation was made concerning him that he should rank third in the kingdom.

<sup>30</sup> That very night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed. <sup>31</sup> And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

## **2 Peter 2:12–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>12</sup> These people, however, are like irrational animals, mere creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed. They slander what they do not understand, and when those creatures are destroyed, they also will be destroyed, <sup>13</sup> suffering the penalty for doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their dissipation while they feast with you. <sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

<sup>15</sup> They have left the straight road and have gone astray, following the road of Balaam son of Bosor, who loved the wages of doing wrong, <sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.

<sup>17</sup> These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm; for them the deepest darkness has been reserved.

<sup>18</sup> For they speak bombastic

nonsense, and with licentious desires of the flesh they entice people who have just escaped from those who live in error.

<sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for people are slaves to whatever masters them. <sup>20</sup> For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. <sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them.

<sup>22</sup> It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "The dog turns back to its own vomit," and, "The sow is washed only to wallow in the mud."

**Psalms 119:105-112 (NRSV)**

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.

<sup>106</sup> I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,  
to observe your righteous ordinances.

<sup>107</sup> I am severely afflicted;  
give me life, O LORD,  
according to your word.

<sup>108</sup> Accept my offerings of praise, O LORD,  
and teach me your ordinances.

<sup>109</sup> I hold my life in my hand continually,  
but I do not forget your law.

<sup>110</sup> The wicked have laid a snare for me,  
but I do not stray from your precepts.

<sup>111</sup> Your decrees are my heritage forever;  
they are the joy of my heart.

<sup>112</sup> I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.

**Proverbs 26:13-16 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> The lazy person says,  
"There is a lion in the road!  
There is a lion in the streets!"





- <sup>14</sup> As a door turns on its hinges,  
so does a lazy person in bed.
- <sup>15</sup> The lazy person buries a hand in the dish,  
and is too tired to bring it back to the mouth.
- <sup>16</sup> The lazy person is wiser in self-esteem  
than seven who can answer discreetly.

## October 27



**Daniel 6:1–18** (NRSV)

*The Plot against Daniel*

**6** It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred twenty satraps, stationed throughout the whole kingdom, <sup>2</sup> and over them three presidents, including Daniel; to these the satraps gave account, so that the king might suffer no loss. <sup>3</sup> Soon Daniel distinguished himself above all the other presidents and satraps because an

excellent spirit was in him, and the king planned to appoint him over the whole kingdom. <sup>4</sup> So the presidents and the satraps tried to find grounds for complaint against Daniel in connection with the kingdom. But they could find no grounds for complaint or any corruption, because he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption could be found in him. <sup>5</sup> The men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”

<sup>6</sup> So the presidents and satraps conspired and came to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever! <sup>7</sup> All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever prays to anyone, divine or human, for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions. <sup>8</sup> Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according

to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore King Darius signed the document and interdict.

*Daniel in the Lions’ Den*

<sup>10</sup> Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him, just as he had done previously.<sup>11</sup> The conspirators came and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God.<sup>12</sup> Then they approached the king and said concerning the interdict, “O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human, within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions?” The king answered, “The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.”<sup>13</sup> Then they responded to the king, “Daniel, one of the exiles from

Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the interdict you have signed, but he is saying his prayers three times a day.”

<sup>14</sup> When the king heard the charge, he was very much distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down he made every effort to rescue him.<sup>15</sup> Then the conspirators came to the king and said to him, “Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.”

<sup>16</sup> Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!”<sup>17</sup> A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.<sup>18</sup> Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

**2 Peter 3:1–13** (NRSV)  
*The Promise of  
the Lord’s Coming*  
(Gen 6:5–8:22)

**3** This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you <sup>2</sup> that you should remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles. <sup>3</sup> First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts <sup>4</sup> and saying, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!” <sup>5</sup> They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water, <sup>6</sup> through which the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. <sup>7</sup> But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept

until the day of judgment and destruction of the godless.

<sup>8</sup> But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup> **The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.** <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup> But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

**Psalm 119:113-120** (NRSV)

<sup>113</sup> I hate the double-minded,  
but I love your law.  
<sup>114</sup> You are my hiding place  
and my shield;  
I hope in your word.  
<sup>115</sup> Go away from me, you  
evildoers,  
that I may keep the  
commandments of my  
God.  
<sup>116</sup> Uphold me according to  
your promise, that I  
may live,  
and let me not be put to  
shame in my hope.  
<sup>117</sup> Hold me up, that I may be  
safe  
and have regard for your  
statutes continually.  
<sup>118</sup> You spurn all who go  
astray from your  
statutes;  
for their cunning is in  
vain.  
<sup>119</sup> All the wicked of the earth  
you count as dross;  
therefore I love your  
decrees.  
<sup>120</sup> My flesh trembles for fear  
of you,  
and I am afraid of your  
judgments.

**Proverbs 26:17** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> Like somebody who takes  
a passing dog by the  
ears is one who  
meddles in the quarrel  
of another.

**October  
28**



**Daniel 6:19–28** (NRSV)

*Daniel Saved from the Lions*  
<sup>19</sup> Then, at break of day,  
the king got up and hurried to  
the den of lions. <sup>20</sup> When he  
came near the den where  
Daniel was, he cried out  
anxiously to Daniel, “O Daniel,  
servant of the living God, has  
your God whom you faithfully  
serve been able to deliver you  
from the lions?” <sup>21</sup> Daniel then  
said to the king, “O king, live  
forever! <sup>22</sup> My God sent his  
angel and shut the lions’  
mouths so that they would not  
hurt me, because I was found  
blameless before him; and  
also before you, O king, I have  
done no wrong.” <sup>23</sup> Then the  
king was exceedingly glad and

commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. <sup>24</sup> The king gave a command, and those who had accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. Before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

<sup>25</sup> Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: “May you have abundant prosperity! <sup>26</sup> I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel:

For he is the living God,  
enduring forever.

His kingdom shall never be  
destroyed,  
and his dominion has no  
end.

<sup>27</sup> He delivers and rescues,  
he works signs and  
wonders in heaven and  
on earth;  
for he has saved Daniel

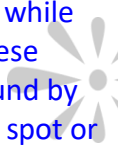
from the power of the  
lions.”

<sup>28</sup> So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

## **2 Peter 3:14–18** (NRSV)

### *Final Exhortation and Doxology*

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15</sup> and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, <sup>16</sup> speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures. <sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, since you are forewarned, beware that you are not carried away with the error of the lawless and lose your own stability. <sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.



**Psalms 119:121-128 (NRSV)**

121 I have done what is just  
and right;  
do not leave me to my  
oppressors.

122 Guarantee your servant's  
well-being;  
do not let the godless  
oppress me.

123 My eyes fail from watching  
for your salvation,  
and for the fulfillment of  
your righteous  
promise.

124 Deal with your servant  
according to your  
steadfast love,  
and teach me your  
statutes.

125 I am your servant; give me  
understanding,  
so that I may know your  
decrees.

126 It is time for the LORD to  
act,  
for your law has been  
broken.

127 Truly I love your  
commandments  
more than gold, more  
than fine gold.

128 Truly I direct my steps by  
all your precepts;  
I hate every false way.

**Proverbs 26:18-19 (NRSV)**

18 Like a maniac who shoots  
deadly firebrands and  
arrows,  
19 so is one who deceives a  
neighbor  
and says, "I am only  
joking!"

**October  
29**



**Daniel 7:1-14 (NRSV)**

*Visions of the Four Beasts*

**7** In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream: <sup>2</sup>I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, <sup>3</sup>and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. <sup>4</sup>The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like

a human being; and a human mind was given to it. <sup>5</sup> Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its teeth and was told, "Arise, devour many bodies!" <sup>6</sup> After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it. <sup>7</sup> After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that preceded it, and it had ten horns. <sup>8</sup> I was considering the horns, when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly.

*Judgment before  
the Ancient One*

<sup>9</sup> As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire.

<sup>10</sup> A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

<sup>11</sup> I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. <sup>12</sup> As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but

their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.<sup>13</sup> As I watched in the night visions,

I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven.

And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him.

<sup>14</sup> To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

### **1 John 1:1–4** (NRSV)

#### *The Word of Life*

**1** We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—<sup>2</sup> this life

was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—<sup>3</sup> we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

### **Psalm 119:129-136** (NRSV)

<sup>129</sup> Your decrees are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.

<sup>130</sup> The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

<sup>131</sup> With open mouth I pant, because I long for your commandments.

<sup>132</sup> Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your custom toward those who love your name.

<sup>133</sup> Keep my steps steady according to your promise,





and never let iniquity  
have dominion over  
me.

<sup>134</sup> Redeem me from human  
oppression,  
that I may keep your  
precepts.

<sup>135</sup> Make your face shine upon  
your servant,  
and teach me your  
statutes.

<sup>136</sup> My eyes shed streams of  
tears  
because your law is not  
kept.

### **Proverbs 26:20 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> For lack of wood the fire  
goes out,  
and where there is no  
whisperer, quarreling  
ceases.

## **October 30**



### **Daniel 7:15–28 (NRSV)**

*Daniel's Visions Interpreted*

<sup>15</sup> As for me, Daniel, my  
spirit was troubled within me,  
and the visions of my head

terrified me. <sup>16</sup> I approached  
one of the attendants to ask  
him the truth concerning all  
this. So he said that he would  
disclose to me the

interpretation of the matter:  
<sup>17</sup> “As for these four great  
beasts, four kings shall arise  
out of the earth. <sup>18</sup> But the  
holy ones of the Most High  
shall receive the kingdom and  
possess the kingdom forever—  
forever and ever.”

<sup>19</sup> Then I desired to know  
the truth concerning the  
fourth beast, which was  
different from all the rest,  
exceedingly terrifying, with its  
teeth of iron and claws of  
bronze, and which devoured  
and broke in pieces, and  
stamped what was left with its  
feet; <sup>20</sup> and concerning the ten  
horns that were on its head,  
and concerning the other  
horn, which came up and to  
make room for which three of  
them fell out—the horn that  
had eyes and a mouth that  
spoke arrogantly, and that  
seemed greater than the  
others. <sup>21</sup> As I looked, this horn  
made war with the holy ones  
and was prevailing over them,  
<sup>22</sup> until the Ancient One came;

then judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom.

<sup>23</sup> This is what he said: "As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth that shall be different from all the other kingdoms; it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces.

<sup>24</sup> As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them. This one shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings.

<sup>25</sup> He shall speak words against the Most High, shall wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law; and they shall be given into his power

for a time, two times, and half a time.

<sup>26</sup> Then the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and totally destroyed.

<sup>27</sup> The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them."

<sup>28</sup> Here the account ends. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly terrified me, and my face turned pale; but I kept the matter in my mind.

### **1 John 1:5–10 (NRSV)**

#### *God Is Light*

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do

what is true; <sup>7</sup> but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. <sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> **If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** <sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

**Psalm 119:137-152 (NRSV)**

<sup>137</sup> You are righteous, O LORD,  
and your judgments are  
right.  
<sup>138</sup> You have appointed your  
decrees in  
righteousness  
and in all faithfulness.  
<sup>139</sup> My zeal consumes me  
because my foes forget  
your words.  
<sup>140</sup> Your promise is well tried,  
and your servant loves it.  
<sup>141</sup> I am small and despised,  
yet I do not forget your  
precepts.  
<sup>142</sup> Your righteousness is an  
everlasting  
righteousness,

and your law is the truth.  
<sup>143</sup> Trouble and anguish have  
come upon me,  
but your commandments  
are my delight.  
<sup>144</sup> Your decrees are righteous  
forever;  
give me understanding  
that I may live.  
<sup>145</sup> With my whole heart I cry;  
answer me, O LORD.  
I will keep your statutes.  
<sup>146</sup> I cry to you; save me,  
that I may observe your  
decrees.  
<sup>147</sup> I rise before dawn and cry  
for help;  
I put my hope in your  
words.  
<sup>148</sup> My eyes are awake before  
each watch of the  
night,  
that I may meditate on  
your promise.  
<sup>149</sup> In your steadfast love hear  
my voice;  
O LORD, in your justice  
preserve my life.  
<sup>150</sup> Those who persecute me  
with evil purpose draw  
near;  
they are far from your  
law.  
<sup>151</sup> Yet you are near, O LORD,

and all your  
commandments are  
true.

<sup>152</sup> Long ago I learned from  
your decrees  
that you have  
established them  
forever.

**Proverbs 26:21–22 (NRSV)**

<sup>21</sup> As charcoal is to hot  
embers and wood to  
fire,  
so is a quarrelsome  
person for kindling  
strife.

<sup>22</sup> The words of a whisperer  
are like delicious  
morsels;  
they go down into the  
inner parts of the body.

**October  
31**



**Daniel 8:1–14 (NRSV)**

*Vision of a Ram and a Goat*

**8** In the third year of the reign  
of King Belshazzar a vision  
appeared to me, Daniel, after

the one that had appeared to  
me at first. <sup>2</sup> In the vision I was  
looking and saw myself in Susa  
the capital, in the province of  
Elam, and I was by the river  
Ulai. <sup>3</sup> I looked up and saw a  
ram standing beside the river.  
It had two horns. Both horns  
were long, but one was longer  
than the other, and the longer  
one came up second. <sup>4</sup> I saw  
the ram charging westward  
and northward and  
southward. All beasts were  
powerless to withstand it, and  
no one could rescue from its  
power; it did as it pleased and  
became strong.

<sup>5</sup> As I was watching, a male  
goat appeared from the west,  
coming across the face of the  
whole earth without touching  
the ground. The goat had a  
horn between its eyes. <sup>6</sup> It  
came toward the ram with the  
two horns that I had seen  
standing beside the river, and  
it ran at it with savage force. <sup>7</sup> I  
saw it approaching the ram. It  
was enraged against it and  
struck the ram, breaking its  
two horns. The ram did not  
have power to withstand it; it  
threw the ram down to the  
ground and trampled upon it,

and there was no one who could rescue the ram from its power. <sup>8</sup> Then the male goat grew exceedingly great; but at the height of its power, the great horn was broken, and in its place there came up four prominent horns toward the four winds of heaven.

<sup>9</sup> Out of one of them came another horn, a little one, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the beautiful land. <sup>10</sup> It grew as high as the host of heaven. It threw down to the earth some of the host and some of the stars, and trampled on them. <sup>11</sup> Even against the prince of the host it acted arrogantly; it took the regular burnt offering away from him and overthrew the place of his sanctuary.

<sup>12</sup> Because of wickedness, the host was given over to it together with the regular burnt offering; it cast truth to the ground, and kept prospering in what it did.

<sup>13</sup> Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one that spoke, "For how long is this vision concerning the regular

burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled?" <sup>14</sup> And he answered him, "For two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

### **1 John 2:1–6 (NRSV)**

*Christ Our Advocate*

**2** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; <sup>2</sup> and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

<sup>3</sup> Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments.

<sup>4</sup> Whoever says, "I have come to know him," but does not obey his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist; <sup>5</sup> but whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection. By this we may be sure that we are in

him: <sup>6</sup> whoever says, “I abide in him,” ought to walk just as he walked.

**Psalms 119:153-159** (NRSV)

- <sup>153</sup> Look on my misery and  
rescue me,  
for I do not forget your  
law.
- <sup>154</sup> Plead my cause and  
redeem me;  
give me life according to  
your promise.
- <sup>155</sup> Salvation is far from the  
wicked,  
for they do not seek your  
statutes.
- <sup>156</sup> Great is your mercy, O  
LORD;  
give me life according to  
your justice.
- <sup>157</sup> Many are my persecutors  
and my adversaries,  
yet I do not swerve from  
your decrees.
- <sup>158</sup> I look at the faithless with  
disgust,  
because they do not  
keep your commands.
- <sup>159</sup> Consider how I love your  
precepts;  
preserve my life  
according to your  
steadfast love.

**Proverbs 26:23** (NRSV)

- <sup>23</sup> Like the glaze covering an  
earthen vessel  
are smooth lips with an  
evil heart.

## November 1



**Daniel 8:15–27** (NRSV)

*Gabriel Interprets the Vision*

- <sup>15</sup> When I, Daniel, had seen  
the vision, I tried to  
understand it. Then someone  
appeared standing before me,  
having the appearance of a  
man, <sup>16</sup> and I heard a human  
voice by the Ulai, calling,  
“Gabriel, help this man  
understand the vision.” <sup>17</sup> So  
he came near where I stood;  
and when he came, I became  
frightened and fell prostrate.  
But he said to me,  
“Understand, O mortal, that  
the vision is for the time of the  
end.”
- <sup>18</sup> As he was speaking to  
me, I fell into a trance, face to  
the ground; then he touched  
me and set me on my feet.

<sup>19</sup> He said, "Listen, and I will tell you what will take place later in the period of wrath; for it refers to the appointed time of the end." <sup>20</sup> As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. <sup>21</sup> The male goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn between its eyes is the first king. <sup>22</sup> As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.

<sup>23</sup> At the end of their rule, when the transgressions have reached their full measure, a king of bold countenance shall arise, skilled in intrigue.

<sup>24</sup> He shall grow strong in power, shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does.

He shall destroy the powerful and the people of the holy ones.

<sup>25</sup> By his cunning

he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall be great.

Without warning he shall destroy many and shall even rise up against the Prince of princes.

But he shall be broken, and not by human hands.

<sup>26</sup> The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true. As for you, seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now."

<sup>27</sup> So I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days; then I arose and went about the king's business. But I was dismayed by the vision and did not understand it.


### **1 John 2:7–17 (NRSV)**

*A New Commandment*

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard.

<sup>8</sup> Yet I am writing you a new commandment that is true in

him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.<sup>9</sup> Whoever says, “I am in the light,” while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness.<sup>10</sup> Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling.<sup>11</sup> But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness.

<sup>12</sup> I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven on account of his name.

<sup>13</sup> I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young people, because you have conquered the evil one.

<sup>14</sup> I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I write to you, young people, because you are strong and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world;<sup>16</sup> for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world.

<sup>17</sup> And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.

**Psalm 119:160-168 (NRSV)**

<sup>160</sup> The sum of your word is truth; and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever.

<sup>161</sup> Princes persecute me without cause, but my heart stands in awe of your words.



162 I rejoice at your word  
 like one who finds great  
 spoil.  
 163 I hate and abhor  
 falsehood,  
 but I love your law.  
 164 Seven times a day I praise  
 you  
 for your righteous  
 ordinances.  
 165 Great peace have those  
 who love your law;  
 nothing can make them  
 stumble.  
 166 I hope for your salvation, O  
 LORD,  
 and I fulfill your  
 commandments.  
 167 My soul keeps your  
 decrees;  
 I love them exceedingly.  
 168 I keep your precepts and  
 decrees,  
 for all my ways are  
 before you.

**Proverbs 26:24–26** (NRSV)

24 An enemy dissembles in  
 speaking  
 while harboring deceit  
 within;  
 25 when an enemy speaks  
 graciously, do not  
 believe it,

for there are seven  
 abominations  
 concealed within;  
 26 though hatred is covered  
 with guile,  
 the enemy's wickedness  
 will be exposed in the  
 assembly.

**November  
 2**



**Daniel 9:1-27** (NRSV)

*Daniel's Prayer for the People*

**9** In the first year of Darius  
 son of Ahasuerus, by birth a  
 Mede, who became king over  
 the realm of the Chaldeans—  
<sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign, I,  
 Daniel, perceived in the books  
 the number of years that,  
 according to the word of the  
 LORD to the prophet Jeremiah,  
 must be fulfilled for the  
 devastation of Jerusalem,  
 namely, seventy years.

<sup>3</sup> Then I turned to the Lord  
 God, to seek an answer by  
 prayer and supplication with  
 fasting and sackcloth and

ashes. <sup>4</sup> I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying,

“Ah, Lord, great and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love with those who love you and keep your commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned and done wrong, acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and ordinances. <sup>6</sup> We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

<sup>7</sup> “Righteousness is on your side, O Lord, but open shame, as at this day, falls on us, the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. <sup>8</sup> Open shame, O LORD, falls on us, our kings, our officials, and our ancestors, because we have sinned against you. <sup>9</sup> To the Lord our God belong mercy

and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him, <sup>10</sup> and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

<sup>11</sup> “All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. So the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against you. <sup>12</sup> He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers, by bringing upon us a calamity so great that what has been done against Jerusalem has never before been done under the whole heaven. <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us. We did not entreat the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and reflecting on his fidelity. <sup>14</sup> So the LORD kept watch over this calamity until he brought it upon us. Indeed, the LORD our God is right in all that he has

done; for we have disobeyed his voice.

<sup>15</sup> “And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and made your name renowned even to this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly. <sup>16</sup> O Lord, in view of all your righteous acts, let your anger and wrath, we pray, turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain; because of our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people have become a disgrace among all our neighbors. <sup>17</sup> Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication, and for your own sake, Lord, let your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary. <sup>18</sup> Incline your ear, O my God, and hear. Open your eyes and look at our desolation and the city that bears your name. We do not present our supplication before you on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercies. <sup>19</sup> O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen and act

and do not delay! For your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people bear your name!”

*The Seventy Weeks*

<sup>20</sup> While I was speaking, and was praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God— <sup>21</sup> while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. <sup>22</sup> He came and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. <sup>23</sup> At the beginning of your supplications a word went out, and I have come to declare it, for you are greatly beloved. So consider the word and understand the vision:

<sup>24</sup> “Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting

righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

<sup>25</sup> Know therefore and understand: from the time that the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of an anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time. <sup>26</sup> After the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing, and the troops of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. <sup>27</sup> He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease; and in their place shall be an abomination that desolates, until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator.”

**1 John 2:18–29 (NRSV)**

*Warning against Antichrists*

<sup>18</sup> Children, it is the last hour! As you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. From this we know that it is the last hour. <sup>19</sup> They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But by going out they made it plain that none of them belongs to us. <sup>20</sup> But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge. <sup>21</sup> I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and you know that no lie comes from the truth. <sup>22</sup> Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. <sup>23</sup> No one who denies the Son has the Father; **everyone who confesses the Son has the Father also.** <sup>24</sup> **Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father.** <sup>25</sup> **And this is what he has promised us, eternal life.**

<sup>26</sup> I write these things to you concerning those who would deceive you. <sup>27</sup> As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him.

<sup>28</sup> And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he is revealed we may have confidence and not be put to shame before him at his coming.

*Children of God*

<sup>29</sup> If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who does right has been born of him.

**Psalms 119:169-176** (NRSV)

<sup>169</sup> Let my cry come before you, O LORD;  
give me understanding  
according to your  
word.

<sup>170</sup> Let my supplication come  
before you;  
deliver me according to  
your promise.

<sup>171</sup> My lips will pour forth  
praise,  
because you teach me  
your statutes.

<sup>172</sup> My tongue will sing of your  
promise,  
for all your  
commandments are  
right.

<sup>173</sup> Let your hand be ready to  
help me,  
for I have chosen your  
precepts.

<sup>174</sup> I long for your salvation, O  
LORD,  
and your law is my  
delight.

<sup>175</sup> Let me live that I may  
praise you,  
and let your ordinances  
help me.

<sup>176</sup> I have gone astray like a  
lost sheep; seek out  
your servant,  
for I do not forget your  
commandments.

**Proverbs 26:27** (NRSV)

<sup>27</sup> Whoever digs a pit will fall  
into it,  
and a stone will come  
back on the one who  
starts it rolling.

# November

## 3



**Daniel 10:1 – 11:1** (NRSV)  
*Conflict of Nations and  
Heavenly Powers*

**10** In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The word was true, and it concerned a great conflict. He understood the word, having received understanding in the vision.

<sup>2</sup> At that time I, Daniel, had been mourning for three weeks. <sup>3</sup> I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine had entered my mouth, and I had not anointed myself at all, for the full three weeks. <sup>4</sup> On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris), <sup>5</sup> I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen, with a belt of gold from Uphaz around his waist. <sup>6</sup> His body was like beryl, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the

roar of a multitude. <sup>7</sup> I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision, though a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. <sup>8</sup> So I was left alone to see this great vision. My strength left me, and my complexion grew deathly pale, and I retained no strength. <sup>9</sup> Then I heard the sound of his words; and when I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a trance, face to the ground.

<sup>10</sup> But then a hand touched me and roused me to my hands and knees. <sup>11</sup> He said to me, “Daniel, greatly beloved, pay attention to the words that I am going to speak to you. Stand on your feet, for I have now been sent to you.” So while he was speaking this word to me, I stood up trembling. <sup>12</sup> He said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. <sup>13</sup> But the prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed me twenty-

one days. So Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia, <sup>14</sup> and have come to help you understand what is to happen to your people at the end of days. For there is a further vision for those days.”

<sup>15</sup> While he was speaking these words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and was speechless. <sup>16</sup> Then one in human form touched my lips, and I opened my mouth to speak, and said to the one who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision such pains have come upon me that I retain no strength. <sup>17</sup> How can my lord’s servant talk with my lord? For I am shaking, no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me.”

<sup>18</sup> Again one in human form touched me and strengthened me. <sup>19</sup> He said, “Do not fear, greatly beloved, you are safe. Be strong and courageous!” When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

<sup>20</sup> Then he said, “Do you know

why I have come to you? Now I must return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I am through with him, the prince of Greece will come.

<sup>21</sup> But I am to tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth. There is no one with me who contends against these princes except Michael, your prince.

**11** <sup>1</sup> As for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to support and strengthen him.

**1 John 3:1–6** (NRSV)

**3** <sup>1</sup> See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

<sup>4</sup> Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. <sup>5</sup> You know that

he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.  
<sup>6</sup> No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him.

**Psalm 120:1-7** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from  
Slanderers*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> In my distress I cry to the  
LORD,  
that he may answer me:  
<sup>2</sup> “Deliver me, O LORD,  
from lying lips,  
from a deceitful tongue.”  
<sup>3</sup> What shall be given to  
you?  
And what more shall be  
done to you,  
you deceitful tongue?  
<sup>4</sup> A warrior’s sharp arrows,  
with glowing coals of the  
broom tree!  
<sup>5</sup> Woe is me, that I am an  
alien in Meshech,  
that I must live among  
the tents of Kedar.  
<sup>6</sup> Too long have I had my  
dwelling  
among those who hate  
peace.  
<sup>7</sup> I am for peace;  
but when I speak,  
they are for war.

**Proverbs 26:28** (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup> A lying tongue hates its  
victims,  
and a flattering mouth  
works ruin.

**November  
4**



**Daniel 11:2-12** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> “Now I will announce the truth to you. Three more kings shall arise in Persia. The fourth shall be far richer than all of them, and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. <sup>3</sup> Then a warrior king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and take action as he pleases. <sup>4</sup> And while still rising in power, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted and go to others besides these.



<sup>5</sup> “Then the king of the south shall grow strong, but one of his officers shall grow stronger than he and shall rule a realm greater than his own realm. <sup>6</sup> After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to ratify the agreement. But she shall not retain her power, and his offspring shall not endure. She shall be given up, she and her attendants and her child and the one who supported her.

“In those times <sup>7</sup> a branch from her roots shall rise up in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall take action against them and prevail.

<sup>8</sup> Even their gods, with their idols and with their precious vessels of silver and gold, he shall carry off to Egypt as spoils of war. For some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north; <sup>9</sup> then the latter shall invade the realm of the king of the south, but will return to his own land.

<sup>10</sup> “His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of

great forces, which shall advance like a flood and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress.

<sup>11</sup> Moved with rage, the king of the south shall go out and do battle against the king of the north, who shall muster a great multitude, which shall, however, be defeated by his enemy. <sup>12</sup> When the multitude has been carried off, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall overthrow tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail.

### **1 John 3:7–13 (NRSV)**

<sup>7</sup> Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

<sup>8</sup> Everyone who commits sin is a child of the devil; for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The Son of God was revealed for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. <sup>9</sup> Those who have been born of God do not sin, because God’s seed abides in them; they cannot sin, because they have been born of God. <sup>10</sup> The children of God and the children of the devil are revealed in this way: all

who do not do what is right are not from God, nor are those who do not love their brothers and sisters.

*Love One Another*  
(Mt 22:39)

<sup>11</sup>For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. <sup>12</sup>We must not be like Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. <sup>13</sup>Do not be astonished, brothers and sisters, that the world hates you.

**Psalm 121:1-4** (NRSV)  
*Assurance of God's Protection*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
from where will my help come?  
<sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.

<sup>3</sup> **He will not let your foot be moved;  
he who keeps you will not slumber.**

<sup>4</sup> **He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**

**Proverbs 27:1–2** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Do not boast about tomorrow,  
for you do not know what a day may bring.  
<sup>2</sup> Let another praise you,  
and not your own mouth—  
a stranger, and not your own lips.

## November 5



**Daniel 11:13-35** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup>For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, larger than the former, and after some years he shall advance with a great army and abundant supplies.

<sup>14</sup>“In those times many shall rise against the king of the south. The lawless among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall

fail. <sup>15</sup> Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks, and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, not even his picked troops, for there shall be no strength to resist. <sup>16</sup> But he who comes against him shall take the actions he pleases, and no one shall withstand him. He shall take a position in the beautiful land, and all of it shall be in his power. <sup>17</sup> He shall set his mind to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace and perform them. In order to destroy the kingdom, he shall give him a woman in marriage; but it shall not succeed or be to his advantage. <sup>18</sup> Afterward he shall turn to the coastlands, and shall capture many. But a commander shall put an end to his insolence; indeed, he shall turn his insolence back upon him. <sup>19</sup> Then he shall turn back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found.

<sup>20</sup> "Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an official for the glory of the

kingdom; but within a few days he shall be broken, though not in anger or in battle. <sup>21</sup> In his place shall arise a contemptible person on whom royal majesty had not been conferred; he shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom through intrigue. <sup>22</sup> Armies shall be utterly swept away and broken before him, and the prince of the covenant as well. <sup>23</sup> And after an alliance is made with him, he shall act deceitfully and become strong with a small party. <sup>24</sup> Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province and do what none of his predecessors had ever done, lavishing plunder, spoil, and wealth on them. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. <sup>25</sup> He shall stir up his power and determination against the king of the south with a great army, and the king of the south shall wage war with a much greater and stronger army. But he shall not succeed, for plots shall be devised against him <sup>26</sup> by those who eat of the royal rations.

They shall break him, his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall slain.<sup>27</sup> The two kings, their minds bent on evil, shall sit at one table and exchange lies. But it shall not succeed, for there remains an end at the time appointed.

<sup>28</sup> He shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. He shall work his will, and return to his own land.

<sup>29</sup> “At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but this time it shall not be as it was before.<sup>30</sup> For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall lose heart and withdraw. He shall be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay heed to those who forsake the holy covenant.<sup>31</sup> Forces sent by him shall occupy and profane the temple and fortress. They shall abolish the regular burnt offering and set up the abomination that makes desolate.<sup>32</sup> He shall seduce with intrigue those who violate the covenant; but the people who are loyal to their

God shall stand firm and take action.<sup>33</sup> The wise among the people shall give understanding to many; for some days, however, they shall fall by sword and flame, and suffer captivity and plunder.<sup>34</sup> When they fall victim, they shall receive a little help, and many shall join them insincerely.<sup>35</sup> Some of the wise shall fall, so that they may be refined, purified, and cleansed, until the time of the end, for there is still an interval until the time appointed.

### **1 John 3:14–24 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Whoever does not love abides in death.<sup>15</sup> All who hate a brother or sister are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them.<sup>16</sup> We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.<sup>17</sup> How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods

and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

<sup>18</sup> Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. <sup>19</sup> And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him <sup>20</sup> whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup> Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; <sup>22</sup> and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

<sup>23</sup> And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. <sup>24</sup> All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

**Psalms 121:5-8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is your keeper;  
the LORD is your shade at  
your right hand.

<sup>6</sup> The sun shall not strike you  
by day,  
nor the moon by night.  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you  
from all evil;  
he will keep your life.  
<sup>8</sup> The LORD will keep  
your going out and your  
coming in  
from this time on and  
forevermore.

**Proverbs 27:3** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> A stone is heavy, and sand  
is weighty,  
but a fool's provocation  
is heavier than both.

## November 6



**Daniel 11:36-45** (NRSV)

<sup>36</sup> "The king shall act as he pleases. He shall exalt himself and consider himself greater than any god, and shall speak horrendous things against the God of gods. He shall prosper until the period of wrath is completed, for what is determined shall be done.

<sup>37</sup> He shall pay no respect to the gods of his ancestors, or to the one beloved by women; he shall pay no respect to any other god, for he shall consider himself greater than all. <sup>38</sup> He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom his ancestors did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. <sup>39</sup> He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall make more wealthy, and shall appoint them as rulers over many, and shall distribute the land for a price.

*The Time of the End*

<sup>40</sup> "At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him. But the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. He shall advance against countries and pass through like a flood. <sup>41</sup> He shall come into the beautiful land, and tens of thousands shall fall victim, but Edom and Moab and the main part of the

Ammonites shall escape from his power. <sup>42</sup> He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. <sup>43</sup> He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the riches of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train. <sup>44</sup> But reports from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to bring ruin and complete destruction to many. <sup>45</sup> He shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with no one to help him.

**1 John 4:1–6** (NRSV)

*Testing the Spirits*

**4** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, <sup>3</sup> and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. And this is the spirit of the

antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming; and now it is already in the world.

<sup>4</sup> Little children, you are from God, and have conquered them; for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. <sup>5</sup> They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup> We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

### **Psalms 122:1-5** (NRSV)

*Song of Praise and Prayer for Jerusalem*

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

- <sup>1</sup> I was glad when they said to me,  
“Let us go to the house of the LORD!”
- <sup>2</sup> Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.
- <sup>3</sup> Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.
- <sup>4</sup> To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel,

to give thanks to the name of the LORD.

- <sup>5</sup> For there the thrones for judgment were set up, the thrones of the house of David.

### **Proverbs 27:4-6** (NRSV)

- <sup>4</sup> Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming, but who is able to stand before jealousy?
- <sup>5</sup> Better is open rebuke than hidden love.
- <sup>6</sup> Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts, but profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

## **November** **7**



### **Daniel 12:1-13** (NRSV)

*The Resurrection of the Dead*

**12** “At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred

since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. <sup>2</sup> Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. <sup>3</sup> Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. <sup>4</sup> But you, Daniel, keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be running back and forth, and evil shall increase.”

<sup>5</sup> Then I, Daniel, looked, and two others appeared, one standing on this bank of the stream and one on the other. <sup>6</sup> One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was upstream, “How long shall it be until the end of these wonders?” <sup>7</sup> The man clothed in linen, who was upstream, raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven. And I heard him swear by the one who lives forever that it would be for a time, two times, and

half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished. <sup>8</sup> I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” <sup>9</sup> He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end. <sup>10</sup> Many shall be purified, cleansed, and refined, but the wicked shall continue to act wickedly. None of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. <sup>11</sup> From the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that desolates is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred ninety days. <sup>12</sup> Happy are those who persevere and attain the thousand three hundred thirty-five days. <sup>13</sup> But you, go your way, and rest; you shall rise for your reward at the end of the days.”

**1 John 4:7–21** (NRSV)

*God Is Love*


*(Cp Jn 3:16)*

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from



God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

<sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.



<sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

<sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. <sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us

in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us.

<sup>20</sup> Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup> The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

**Psalm 122:6-9 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

"May they prosper who love you.

<sup>7</sup> Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

<sup>8</sup> For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say, "Peace be within you."

<sup>9</sup> For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,

I will seek your good.

**Proverbs 27:7–9** (NRSV)

- <sup>7</sup> The sated appetite spurns honey,  
but to a ravenous appetite even the bitter is sweet.
- <sup>8</sup> Like a bird that strays from its nest  
is one who strays from home.
- <sup>9</sup> Perfume and incense make the heart glad,  
but the soul is torn by trouble.

**November  
8**



**Hosea 1:1 - 2:1** (NRSV)

The word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beerī, in the days of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel.

*The Family of Hosea  
(Cp 2 Kings 24:10–17)*

<sup>2</sup> When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take for yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.” <sup>3</sup> So he went and took Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

<sup>4</sup> And the LORD said to him, “Name him Jezreel; for in a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. <sup>5</sup> On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.”

<sup>6</sup> She conceived again and bore a daughter. Then the LORD said to him, “Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer have pity on the house of Israel or forgive them. <sup>7</sup> But I will have pity on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the LORD their God; I will not save them by bow, or by sword, or by war, or by horses, or by horsemen.”

<sup>8</sup> When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. <sup>9</sup> Then the

LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not my people and I am not your God."

*The Restoration of Israel*

<sup>10</sup> Yet the number of the people of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered; and in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," it shall be said to them, "Children of the living God."

<sup>11</sup> The people of Judah and the people of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head; and they shall take possession of the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

**2** Say to your brother, Ammi, and to your sister, Ruhamah.

**1 John 5:1–12** (NRSV)

*Faith Conquers the World*

**5** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God,

when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup> For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup> for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

*Testimony concerning  
the Son of God*

<sup>6</sup> This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth. <sup>7</sup> There are three that testify: <sup>8</sup> the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree. <sup>9</sup> If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. <sup>10</sup> Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by

not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. <sup>11</sup> **And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.** <sup>12</sup> **Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.**

**Psalm 123:1-2** (NRSV)

*Supplication for Mercy*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> To you I lift up my eyes,  
O you who are  
enthroned in the  
heavens!
- <sup>2</sup> As the eyes of servants  
look to the hand of their  
master,  
as the eyes of a maid  
to the hand of her  
mistress,  
so our eyes look to the  
LORD our God,  
until he has mercy upon  
us.

**Proverbs 27:10** (NRSV)

- <sup>10</sup> Do not forsake your friend  
or the friend of your  
parent;  
do not go to the house of  
your kindred in the day  
of your calamity.

Better is a neighbor who is  
nearby  
than kindred who are far  
away.

**November**  
**9**



**Hosea 2:2 – 3:5** (NRSV)

- Israel's Infidelity, Punishment,  
and Redemption*
- <sup>2</sup> Plead with your mother,  
plead—  
for she is not my wife,  
and I am not her  
husband—  
that she put away her  
whoring from her face,  
and her adultery from  
between her breasts,  
<sup>3</sup> or I will strip her naked  
and expose her as in the  
day she was born,  
and make her like a  
wilderness,  
and turn her into a  
parched land,  
and kill her with thirst.  
<sup>4</sup> Upon her children also I  
will have no pity,

because they are  
children of whoredom.  
5 For their mother has  
played the whore;  
she who conceived them  
has acted shamefully.  
For she said, "I will go after  
my lovers;  
they give me my bread  
and my water,  
my wool and my flax, my  
oil and my drink."  
6 Therefore I will hedge up  
her way with thorns;  
and I will build a wall  
against her,  
so that she cannot find  
her paths.  
7 She shall pursue her  
lovers,  
but not overtake them;  
and she shall seek them,  
but shall not find them.  
Then she shall say, "I will  
go  
and return to my first  
husband,  
for it was better with me  
then than now."  
8 She did not know  
that it was I who gave  
her  
the grain, the wine, and  
the oil,

and who lavished upon her  
silver  
and gold that they used  
for Baal.  
9 Therefore I will take back  
my grain in its time,  
and my wine in its  
season;  
and I will take away my  
wool and my flax,  
which were to cover her  
nakedness.  
10 Now I will uncover her  
shame  
in the sight of her lovers,  
and no one shall rescue  
her out of my hand.  
11 I will put an end to all her  
mirth,  
her festivals, her new  
moons, her sabbaths,  
and all her appointed  
festivals.  
12 I will lay waste her vines  
and her fig trees,  
of which she said,  
"These are my pay,  
which my lovers have  
given me."  
I will make them a forest,  
and the wild animals  
shall devour them.  
13 I will punish her for the  
festival days of the  
Baals,

when she offered  
incense to them  
and decked herself with  
her ring and jewelry,  
and went after her  
lovers,  
and forgot me, says the  
LORD.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, I will now allure  
her,  
and bring her into the  
wilderness,  
and speak tenderly to  
her.

<sup>15</sup> From there I will give her  
her vineyards,  
and make the Valley of  
Achor a door of hope.  
There she shall respond as  
in the days of her  
youth,  
as at the time when she  
came out of the land of  
Egypt.

<sup>16</sup> On that day, says the LORD,  
you will call me, "My  
husband," and no longer will  
you call me, "My Baal." <sup>17</sup> For I  
will remove the names of the  
Baal from her mouth, and  
they shall be mentioned by  
name no more. <sup>18</sup> I will make  
for you a covenant on that day  
with the wild animals, the  
birds of the air, and the

creeping things of the ground;  
and I will abolish the bow, the  
sword, and war from the land;  
and I will make you lie down in  
safety. <sup>19</sup> And I will take you  
for my wife forever; I will take  
you for my wife in  
righteousness and in justice, in  
steadfast love, and in mercy.

<sup>20</sup> I will take you for my wife in  
faithfulness; and you shall  
know the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> On that day I will answer,  
says the LORD,  
I will answer the heavens  
and they shall answer  
the earth;

<sup>22</sup> and the earth shall answer  
the grain, the wine,  
and the oil,  
and they shall answer  
Jezreel;

<sup>23</sup> and I will sow him for  
myself in the land.  
And I will have pity on Lo-  
ruhamah,  
and I will say to Lo-ammi,  
"You are my people";  
and he shall say, "You  
are my God."

*Further Assurances of  
God's Redeeming Love*

**3** The LORD said to me again,  
"Go, love a woman who has a

lover and is an adulteress, just as the LORD loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes.”<sup>2</sup> So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer of barley and a measure of wine.<sup>3</sup> And I said to her, “You must remain as mine for many days; you shall not play the whore, you shall not have intercourse with a man, nor I with you.”<sup>4</sup> For the Israelites shall remain many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or teraphim.<sup>5</sup> Afterward the Israelites shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; they shall come in awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

### **1 John 5:13–21 (NRSV)**

#### *Epilogue*

<sup>13</sup> I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

<sup>14</sup> And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.<sup>15</sup> And if we know

that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him.<sup>16</sup> If you see your brother or sister committing what is not a mortal sin, you will ask, and God will give life to such a one—to those whose sin is not mortal. <sup>w</sup>There is sin that is mortal; I do not say that you should pray about that.<sup>17</sup> All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not mortal.

<sup>18</sup> **We know that those who are born of God do not sin, but the one who was born of God protects them, and the evil one does not touch them.**

<sup>19</sup> We know that we are God’s children, and that the whole world lies under the power of the evil one.<sup>20</sup> And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

<sup>21</sup> Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

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<sup>w</sup> Matthew 12:22-32 “The unforgivable sin”

**Psalm 123:3-4** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Have mercy upon us, O  
LORD, have mercy upon  
us,  
for we have had more  
than enough of  
contempt.  
<sup>4</sup> Our soul has had more  
than its fill  
of the scorn of those  
who are at ease,  
of the contempt of the  
proud.

**Proverbs 27:11** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> Be wise, my child, and  
make my heart glad,  
so that I may answer  
whoever reproaches  
me.

**November  
10**



**Hosea 4:1-19** (NRSV)

*God Accuses Israel*

**4** Hear the word of the  
LORD, O people of  
Israel;

for the LORD has an  
indictment against the  
inhabitants of the land.  
There is no faithfulness or  
loyalty,  
and no knowledge of  
God in the land.  
<sup>2</sup> Swearing, lying, and  
murder,  
and stealing and adultery  
break out;  
bloodshed follows  
bloodshed.  
<sup>3</sup> Therefore the land  
mourns,  
and all who live in it  
languish;  
together with the wild  
animals  
and the birds of the air,  
even the fish of the sea  
are perishing.  
<sup>4</sup> Yet let no one contend,  
and let none accuse,  
for with you is my  
contention, O priest.  
<sup>5</sup> You shall stumble by day;  
the prophet also shall  
stumble with you by  
night,  
and I will destroy your  
mother.  
<sup>6</sup> My people are destroyed  
for lack of knowledge;



because you have  
rejected knowledge,  
I reject you from being a  
priest to me.

And since you have  
forgotten the law of  
your God,  
I also will forget your  
children.

7 The more they increased,  
the more they sinned  
against me;  
they changed their glory  
into shame.

8 They feed on the sin of my  
people;  
they are greedy for their  
iniquity.

9 And it shall be like people,  
like priest;  
I will punish them for  
their ways,  
and repay them for their  
deeds.

10 They shall eat, but not be  
satisfied;  
they shall play the  
whore, but not  
multiply;  
because they have  
forsaken the LORD  
to devote themselves to  
<sup>11</sup>whoredom.

*The Idolatry of Israel*  
Wine and new wine  
take away the  
understanding.

12 My people consult a piece  
of wood,  
and their divining rod  
gives them oracles.  
For a spirit of whoredom  
has led them astray,  
and they have played the  
whore, forsaking their  
God.

13 They sacrifice on the tops  
of the mountains,  
and make offerings upon  
the hills,  
under oak, poplar, and  
terebinth,  
because their shade is  
good.

Therefore your daughters  
play the whore,  
and your daughters-in-  
law commit adultery.

14 I will not punish your  
daughters when they  
play the whore,  
nor your daughters-in-  
law when they commit  
adultery;  
for the men themselves go  
aside with whores,  
and sacrifice with temple  
prostitutes;

thus a people without understanding comes to ruin.

<sup>15</sup> Though you play the whore, O Israel, do not let Judah become guilty.

Do not enter into Gilgal, or go up to Beth-aven, and do not swear, "As the LORD lives."

<sup>16</sup> Like a stubborn heifer, Israel is stubborn; can the LORD now feed them like a lamb in a broad pasture?

<sup>17</sup> Ephraim is joined to idols—let him alone.

<sup>18</sup> When their drinking is ended, they indulge in sexual orgies; they love lewdness more than their glory.

<sup>19</sup> A wind has wrapped them in its wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their altars.

## **2 John 1:1–6** (NRSV) *Salutation*

**1** The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not only I but

also all who know the truth, <sup>2</sup> because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:

<sup>3</sup> Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, in truth and love.

### *Truth and Love*

<sup>4</sup> I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father. <sup>5</sup> But now, dear lady, I ask you, not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning, **let us love one another.** <sup>6</sup> **And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment just as you have heard it from the beginning—you must walk in it.**

## **Psalm 124:1–6** (NRSV)

### *Thanksgiving for Israel's Deliverance*

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—let Israel now say—

<sup>2</sup> if it had not been the LORD  
    who was on our side,  
    when our enemies  
    attacked us,  
<sup>3</sup> then they would have  
    swallowed us up alive,  
    when their anger was  
    kindled against us;  
<sup>4</sup> then the flood would have  
    swept us away,  
    the torrent would have  
    gone over us;  
<sup>5</sup> then over us would have  
    gone  
    the raging waters.  
<sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
    who has not given us  
    as prey to their teeth.

**Proverbs 27:12** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> The clever see danger and  
    hide;  
    but the simple go on,  
    and suffer for it.

**November  
11**



**Hosea 5:1-15** (NRSV)

*Impending Judgment  
on Israel and Judah*

**5** Hear this, O priests!  
    Give heed, O house of  
    Israel!  
Listen, O house of the  
    king!  
    For the judgment  
    pertains to you;  
for you have been a snare  
    at Mizpah,  
    and a net spread upon  
    Tabor,  
<sup>2</sup> and a pit dug deep in  
    Shittim;  
    but I will punish all of  
    them.  
<sup>3</sup> I know Ephraim,  
    and Israel is not hidden  
    from me;  
for now, O Ephraim, you  
    have played the whore;  
Israel is defiled.  
<sup>4</sup> Their deeds do not permit  
    them  
    to return to their God.  
For the spirit of whoredom  
    is within them,  
    and they do not know  
    the LORD.  
<sup>5</sup> Israel's pride testifies  
    against him;  
Ephraim stumbles in his  
    guilt;  
Judah also stumbles with  
    them.

6 With their flocks and herds  
they shall go  
to seek the LORD,  
but they will not find him;  
he has withdrawn from  
them.

7 They have dealt faithlessly  
with the LORD;  
for they have borne  
illegitimate children.  
Now the new moon shall  
devour them along  
with their fields.

8 Blow the horn in Gibeah,  
the trumpet in Ramah.  
Sound the alarm at Beth-  
aven;  
look behind you,  
Benjamin!

9 Ephraim shall become a  
desolation  
in the day of  
punishment;  
among the tribes of Israel  
I declare what is sure.

10 The princes of Judah have  
become  
like those who remove  
the landmark;  
on them I will pour out  
my wrath like water.

11 Ephraim is oppressed,  
crushed in judgment,

because he was  
determined to go after  
vanity.

12 Therefore I am like  
maggots to Ephraim,  
and like rottenness to  
the house of Judah.

13 When Ephraim saw his  
sickness,  
and Judah his wound,  
then Ephraim went to  
Assyria,  
and sent to the great  
king.  
But he is not able to cure  
you  
or heal your wound.

14 For I will be like a lion to  
Ephraim,  
and like a young lion to  
the house of Judah.  
I myself will tear and go  
away;  
I will carry off, and no  
one shall rescue.

15 I will return again to my  
place  
until they acknowledge  
their guilt and seek my  
face.  
In their distress they will  
beg my favor:

## 2 John 1:7–13 (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist!

<sup>8</sup> Be on your guard, so that you do not lose what we have worked for, but may receive a full reward. <sup>9</sup> Everyone who does not abide in the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God; whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

<sup>10</sup> Do not receive into the house or welcome anyone who comes to you and does not bring this teaching; <sup>11</sup> for to welcome is to participate in the evil deeds of such a person.

### *Final Greetings*

<sup>12</sup> Although I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink; instead I hope to come to you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

<sup>13</sup> The children of your elect sister send you their greetings.

## Psalm 124:7-8 (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

<sup>8</sup> Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.



## Proverbs 27:13 (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Take the garment of one who has given surety for a stranger; seize the pledge given as surety for foreigners.

## November 12



## Hosea 6:1 – 7:16 (NRSV)

### *A Call to Repentance*

**6** “Come, let us return to the LORD; for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up.

2 After two days he will  
revive us;  
on the third day he will  
raise us up,  
that we may live before  
him.

3 Let us know, let us press  
on to know the LORD;  
his appearing is as sure  
as the dawn;  
he will come to us like the  
showers,  
like the spring rains that  
water the earth."

*Impenitence of Israel  
and Judah*

4 What shall I do with you, O  
Ephraim?  
What shall I do with you,  
O Judah?  
Your love is like a morning  
cloud,  
like the dew that goes  
away early.

5 Therefore I have hewn  
them by the prophets,  
I have killed them by the  
words of my mouth,  
and my judgment goes  
forth as the light.

6 For I desire steadfast love  
and not sacrifice,

the knowledge of God  
rather than burnt  
offerings.

7 But at Adam they  
transgressed the  
covenant;  
there they dealt  
faithlessly with me.

8 Gilead is a city of evildoers,  
tracked with blood.

9 As robbers lie in wait for  
someone,  
so the priests are banded  
together;  
they murder on the road  
to Shechem,  
they commit a  
monstrous crime.

10 In the house of Israel I  
have seen a horrible  
thing;  
Ephraim's whoredom is  
there, Israel is defiled.

11 For you also, O Judah, a  
harvest is appointed.  
When I would restore the  
fortunes of my people,

**7** <sup>1</sup> when I would heal  
Israel,  
the corruption of  
Ephraim is revealed,  
and the wicked deeds of  
Samaria;  
for they deal falsely,  
the thief breaks in,

and the bandits raid  
outside.  
2 But they do not consider  
that I remember all their  
wickedness.  
Now their deeds surround  
them,  
they are before my face.  
3 By their wickedness they  
make the king glad,  
and the officials by their  
treachery.  
4 They are all adulterers;  
they are like a heated  
oven,  
whose baker does not  
need to stir the fire,  
from the kneading of the  
dough until it is  
leavened.  
5 On the day of our king the  
officials  
became sick with the  
heat of wine;  
he stretched out his  
hand with mockers.  
6 For they are kindled like an  
oven, their heart burns  
within them;  
all night their anger  
smolders;  
in the morning it blazes  
like a flaming fire.  
7 All of them are hot as an  
oven,

and they devour their  
rulers.  
All their kings have fallen;  
none of them calls upon  
me.  
8 Ephraim mixes himself  
with the peoples;  
Ephraim is a cake not  
turned.  
9 Foreigners devour his  
strength,  
but he does not know it;  
gray hairs are sprinkled  
upon him,  
but he does not know it.  
10 Israel's pride testifies  
against him;  
yet they do not return to  
the LORD their God,  
or seek him, for all this.

*Futile Reliance on the Nations*

11 Ephraim has become like a  
dove,  
silly and without sense;  
they call upon Egypt,  
they go to Assyria.  
12 As they go, I will cast my  
net over them;  
I will bring them down  
like birds of the air;  
I will discipline them  
according to the report  
made to their  
assembly.

13 Woe to them, for they  
have strayed from me!  
Destruction to them, for  
they have rebelled  
against me!  
I would redeem them,  
but they speak lies  
against me.

14 They do not cry to me  
from the heart,  
but they wail upon their  
beds;  
they gash themselves for  
grain and wine;  
they rebel against me.

15 It was I who trained and  
strengthened their  
arms,  
yet they plot evil against  
me.

16 They turn to that which  
does not profit;  
they have become like a  
defective bow;  
their officials shall fall by  
the sword  
because of the rage of  
their tongue.  
So much for their babbling  
in the land of Egypt.

**3 John 1:1-4** (NRSV)  
*Salutation*

**1** The elder to the beloved  
Gaius, whom I love in truth.

*Gaius Commended  
for His Hospitality*

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, I pray that all  
may go well with you and that  
you may be in good health,  
just as it is well with your soul.  
<sup>3</sup> I was overjoyed when some  
of the friends arrived and  
testified to your faithfulness to  
the truth, namely how you  
walk in the truth. <sup>4</sup> I have no  
greater joy than this, to hear  
that my children are walking in  
the truth.

**Psalm 125:1-3** (NRSV)

*The Security of God's People*  
A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> Those who trust in the  
LORD are like Mount  
Zion,  
which cannot be moved,  
but abides forever.

<sup>2</sup> As the mountains surround  
Jerusalem,  
so the LORD surrounds his  
people,  
from this time on and  
forevermore.

<sup>3</sup> For the scepter of  
wickedness shall not  
rest  
on the land allotted to  
the righteous,  
so that the righteous might  
not stretch out



their hands to do wrong.

**Proverbs 27:14** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> Whoever blesses a  
neighbor with a loud  
voice,  
rising early in the  
morning,  
will be counted as  
cursing.

**November  
13**



**Hosea 8:1 – 9:17** (NRSV)

*Israel's Apostasy*

**8** Set the trumpet to your  
lips!  
One like a vulture is over  
the house of the LORD,  
because they have broken  
my covenant,  
and transgressed my law.  
<sup>2</sup> Israel cries to me,  
“My God, we—Israel—  
know you!”  
<sup>3</sup> Israel has spurned the  
good;  
the enemy shall pursue  
him.

<sup>4</sup> They made kings, but not  
through me;  
they set up princes, but  
without my knowledge.  
With their silver and gold  
they made idols  
for their own  
destruction.  
<sup>5</sup> Your calf is rejected, O  
Samaria.  
My anger burns against  
them.  
How long will they be  
incapable of  
innocence?  
<sup>6</sup> For it is from Israel,  
an artisan made it;  
it is not God.  
The calf of Samaria  
shall be broken to pieces.  
<sup>7</sup> For they sow the wind,  
and they shall reap the  
whirlwind.  
The standing grain has no  
heads,  
it shall yield no meal;  
if it were to yield,  
foreigners would devour  
it.  
<sup>8</sup> Israel is swallowed up;  
now they are among the  
nations  
as a useless vessel.  
<sup>9</sup> For they have gone up to  
Assyria,

a wild ass wandering  
alone;  
Ephraim has bargained  
for lovers.

10 Though they bargain with  
the nations,  
I will now gather them  
up.

They shall soon writhe  
under the burden of  
kings and princes.

11 When Ephraim multiplied  
altars to expiate sin,  
they became to him  
altars for sinning.

12 Though I write for him the  
multitude of my  
instructions,  
they are regarded as a  
strange thing.

13 Though they offer choice  
sacrifices,  
though they eat flesh,  
the LORD does not accept  
them.

Now he will remember  
their iniquity,  
and punish their sins;  
they shall return to  
Egypt.

14 Israel has forgotten his  
Maker,  
and built palaces;  
and Judah has multiplied  
fortified cities;

but I will send a fire upon  
his cities,  
and it shall devour his  
strongholds.

*Punishment for Israel's Sin*

**9** Do not rejoice, O Israel!

Do not exult as other  
nations do;

for you have played the  
whore, departing from  
your God.

You have loved a  
prostitute's pay  
on all threshing floors.

2 Threshing floor and wine  
vat shall not feed  
them,  
and the new wine shall  
fail them.

3 They shall not remain in  
the land of the LORD;  
but Ephraim shall return  
to Egypt,  
and in Assyria they shall  
eat unclean food.

4 They shall not pour drink  
offerings of wine to the  
LORD,  
and their sacrifices shall  
not please him.

Such sacrifices shall be like  
mourners' bread;  
all who eat of it shall be  
defiled;

for their bread shall be for  
their hunger only;  
it shall not come to the  
house of the LORD.  
5 What will you do on the  
day of appointed  
festival,  
and on the day of the  
festival of the LORD?  
6 For even if they escape  
destruction,  
Egypt shall gather them,  
Memphis shall bury  
them.  
Nettles shall possess their  
precious things of  
silver;  
thorns shall be in their  
tents.  
7 The days of punishment  
have come,  
the days of recompense  
have come;  
Israel cries,  
“The prophet is a fool,  
the man of the spirit is  
mad!”  
Because of your great  
iniquity,  
your hostility is great.  
8 The prophet is a sentinel  
for my God over  
Ephraim,  
yet a fowler’s snare is on  
all his ways,

and hostility in the house  
of his God.  
9 They have deeply  
corrupted themselves  
as in the days of Gibeah;  
he will remember their  
iniquity,  
he will punish their sins.  
10 Like grapes in the  
wilderness,  
I found Israel.  
Like the first fruit on the fig  
tree,  
in its first season,  
I saw your ancestors.  
But they came to Baal-  
peor,  
and consecrated  
themselves to a thing  
of shame,  
and became detestable  
like the thing they  
loved.  
11 Ephraim’s glory shall fly  
away like a bird—  
no birth, no pregnancy,  
no conception!  
12 Even if they bring up  
children,  
I will bereave them until  
no one is left.  
Woe to them indeed  
when I depart from  
them!

13 Once I saw Ephraim as a  
young palm planted in  
a lovely meadow,  
but now Ephraim must  
lead out his children  
for slaughter.

14 Give them, O LORD—  
what will you give?  
Give them a miscarrying  
womb  
and dry breasts.

15 Every evil of theirs began  
at Gilgal;  
there I came to hate  
them.  
Because of the wickedness  
of their deeds  
I will drive them out of  
my house.  
I will love them no more;  
all their officials are  
rebels.

16 Ephraim is stricken,  
their root is dried up,  
they shall bear no fruit.  
Even though they give  
birth,  
I will kill the cherished  
offspring of their  
womb.

17 Because they have not  
listened to him,  
my God will reject them;

they shall become  
wanderers among the  
nations.

### 3 John 1:5-15 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Beloved, you do faithfully  
whatever you do for the  
friends, even though they are  
strangers to you; <sup>6</sup> they have  
testified to your love before  
the church. You will do well to  
send them on in a manner  
worthy of God; <sup>7</sup> for they  
began their journey for the  
sake of Christ, accepting no  
support from non-believers.  
<sup>8</sup> Therefore we ought to  
support such people, so that  
we may become co-workers  
with the truth.

#### *Diotrephes and Demetrius*

<sup>9</sup> I have written something  
to the church; but Diotrephes,  
who likes to put himself first,  
does not acknowledge our  
authority. <sup>10</sup> So if I come, I will  
call attention to what he is  
doing in spreading false  
charges against us. And not  
content with those charges, he  
refuses to welcome the  
friends, and even prevents  
those who want to do so and  
expels them from the church.

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but imitate what is good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. <sup>12</sup> Everyone has testified favorably about Demetrius, and so has the truth itself. We also testify for him, and you know that our testimony is true.

### *Final Greetings*

<sup>13</sup> I have much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink; <sup>14</sup> instead I hope to see you soon, and we will talk together face to face.

<sup>15</sup> Peace to you. The friends send you their greetings. Greet the friends there, each by name.

### **Psalms 125:4-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>4</sup> Do good, O LORD, to those who are good, and to those who are upright in their hearts.

<sup>5</sup> But those who turn aside to their own crooked ways the LORD will lead away with evildoers. Peace be upon Israel!

### **Proverbs 27:15–16 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> A continual dripping on a rainy day and a contentious wife are alike; <sup>16</sup> to restrain her is to restrain the wind or to grasp oil in the right hand.

## **November 14**



### **Hosea 10:1 – 11:12 (NRSV)**

#### *Israel's Sin and Captivity*

**10** Israel is a luxuriant vine that yields its fruit. The more his fruit increased the more altars he built; as his country improved, he improved his pillars. <sup>2</sup> Their heart is false; now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will break down their altars, and destroy their pillars. <sup>3</sup> For now they will say: "We have no king,

for we do not fear the  
LORD,  
and a king—what could  
he do for us?”  
4 They utter mere words;  
with empty oaths they  
make covenants;  
so litigation springs up like  
poisonous weeds  
in the furrows of the  
field.  
5 The inhabitants of Samaria  
tremble  
for the calf of Beth-aven.  
Its people shall mourn for  
it,  
and its idolatrous priests  
shall wail over it,  
over its glory that has  
departed from it.  
6 The thing itself shall be  
carried to Assyria  
as tribute to the great  
king.  
Ephraim shall be put to  
shame,  
and Israel shall be  
ashamed of his idol.  
7 Samaria’s king shall perish  
like a chip on the face of  
the waters.  
8 The high places of Aven,  
the sin of Israel,  
shall be destroyed.

Thorn and thistle shall  
grow up  
on their altars.  
They shall say to the  
mountains, Cover us,  
and to the hills, Fall on  
us.  
9 Since the days of Gibeah  
you have sinned, O  
Israel;  
there they have  
continued.  
Shall not war overtake  
them in Gibeah?  
10 I will come against the  
wayward people to  
punish them;  
and nations shall be  
gathered against them  
when they are punished  
for their double  
iniquity.  
11 Ephraim was a trained  
heifer  
that loved to thresh,  
and I spared her fair  
neck;  
but I will make Ephraim  
break the ground;  
Judah must plow;  
Jacob must harrow for  
himself.  
12 Sow for yourselves  
righteousness;  
reap steadfast love;

break up your fallow  
ground;

for it is time to seek the  
LORD,  
that he may come and  
rain righteousness  
upon you.

13 You have plowed  
wickedness,  
you have reaped  
injustice,  
you have eaten the fruit  
of lies.

Because you have trusted  
in your power  
and in the multitude of  
your warriors,

14 therefore the tumult of  
war shall rise against  
your people,  
and all your fortresses  
shall be destroyed,  
as Shalman destroyed  
Beth-arbel on the day  
of battle  
when mothers were  
dashed in pieces with  
their children.

15 Thus it shall be done to  
you, O Bethel,  
because of your great  
wickedness.

At dawn the king of Israel  
shall be utterly cut off.

*God's Compassion Despite  
Israel's Ingratitude*

**11** When Israel was a child, I  
loved him,  
and out of Egypt I called  
my son.

2 The more I called them,  
the more they went from  
me;  
they kept sacrificing to the  
Bals,  
and offering incense to  
idols.

3 Yet it was I who taught  
Ephraim to walk,  
I took them up in my  
arms;  
but they did not know  
that I healed them.

4 I led them with cords of  
human kindness,  
with bands of love.  
I was to them like those  
who lift infants to their  
cheeks.

I bent down to them and  
fed them.

5 They shall return to the  
land of Egypt,  
and Assyria shall be their  
king,  
because they have  
refused to return to  
me.

6 The sword rages in their  
cities,  
it consumes their oracle-  
priests,  
and devours because of  
their schemes.

7 My people are bent on  
turning away from me.  
To the Most High they  
call,  
but he does not raise  
them up at all.

8 How can I give you up,  
Ephraim?  
How can I hand you over,  
O Israel?

How can I make you like  
Admah?  
How can I treat you like  
Zeboiim?

My heart recoils within  
me;  
my compassion grows  
warm and tender.

9 I will not execute my fierce  
anger;  
I will not again destroy  
Ephraim;  
for I am God and no  
mortal,  
the Holy One in your  
midst,  
and I will not come in  
wrath.

10 They shall go after the  
LORD,  
who roars like a lion;  
when he roars,  
his children shall come  
trembling from the  
west.

11 They shall come trembling  
like birds from Egypt,  
and like doves from the  
land of Assyria;  
and I will return them to  
their homes, says the  
LORD.

12 Ephraim has surrounded  
me with lies,  
and the house of Israel  
with deceit;  
but Judah still walks with  
God,  
and is faithful to the Holy  
One.

**Jude 1:1-19** (NRSV)  
*Salutation*

**1** Jude, a servant of Jesus  
Christ and brother of James,  
To those who are called,  
who are beloved in God the  
Father and kept safe for Jesus  
Christ:

<sup>2</sup> May mercy, peace, and  
love be yours in abundance.



### *Occasion of the Letter*

<sup>3</sup> Beloved, while eagerly preparing to write to you about the salvation we share, I find it necessary to write and appeal to you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. <sup>4</sup> For certain intruders have stolen in among you, people who long ago were designated for this condemnation as ungodly, who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

### *Judgment on False Teachers*

<sup>5</sup> Now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord, who once for all saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. <sup>6</sup> And the angels who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgment of the great day. <sup>7</sup> Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality

and pursued unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

<sup>8</sup> Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones. <sup>9</sup> But when the archangel Michael contended with the devil and disputed about the body of Moses, he did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" <sup>10</sup> But these people slander whatever they do not understand, and they are destroyed by those things that, like irrational animals, they know by instinct. <sup>11</sup> Woe to them! For they go the way of Cain, and abandon themselves to Balaam's error for the sake of gain, and perish in Korah's rebellion. <sup>12</sup> These are blemishes on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves. They are waterless clouds carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted; <sup>13</sup> wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering

stars, for whom the deepest darkness has been reserved forever.

<sup>14</sup> It was also about these that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “See, the Lord is coming with ten thousands of his holy ones, <sup>15</sup> to execute judgment on all, and to convict everyone of all the deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” <sup>16</sup> These are grumblers and malcontents; they indulge their own lusts; they are bombastic in speech, flattering people to their own advantage.

*Warnings and Exhortations*

<sup>17</sup> But you, beloved, must remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; <sup>18</sup> for they said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, indulging their own ungodly lusts.” <sup>19</sup> It is these worldly people, devoid of the Spirit, who are causing divisions.

before all time and now and forever. Amen.

**Psalm 126:1-3 (NRSV)**

*A Harvest of Joy*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
- <sup>2</sup> Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.”
- <sup>3</sup> The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

**Proverbs 27:17 (NRSV)**

- <sup>17</sup> Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens the wits of another.



# November 15



**Hosea 12:1 - 14:9** (NRSV)

**12** Ephraim herds the wind,  
and pursues the east  
wind all day long;  
they multiply falsehood  
and violence;  
they make a treaty with  
Assyria,  
and oil is carried to  
Egypt.

*The Long History of Rebellion*  
(Cp Gen 25–32)

<sup>2</sup> The LORD has an  
indictment against  
Judah,  
and will punish Jacob  
according to his ways,  
and repay him according  
to his deeds.  
<sup>3</sup> In the womb he tried to  
supplant his brother,  
and in his manhood he  
strove with God.  
<sup>4</sup> He strove with the angel  
and prevailed,  
he wept and sought his  
favor;  
he met him at Bethel,  
and there he spoke with  
him.  
<sup>5</sup> The LORD the God of hosts,

the LORD is his name!  
<sup>6</sup> But as for you, return to  
your God,  
hold fast to love and  
justice,  
and wait continually for  
your God.  
<sup>7</sup> A trader, in whose hands  
are false balances,  
he loves to oppress.  
<sup>8</sup> Ephraim has said, “Ah, I am  
rich,  
I have gained wealth for  
myself;  
in all of my gain  
no offense has been  
found in me  
that would be sin.”  
<sup>9</sup> I am the LORD your God  
from the land of Egypt;  
I will make you live in tents  
again,  
as in the days of the  
appointed festival.  
<sup>10</sup> I spoke to the prophets;  
it was I who multiplied  
visions,  
and through the  
prophets I will bring  
destruction.  
<sup>11</sup> In Gilead there is iniquity,  
they shall surely come to  
nothing.  
In Gilgal they sacrifice  
bulls,

so their altars shall be  
like stone heaps  
on the furrows of the  
field.

<sup>12</sup> Jacob fled to the land of  
Aram,  
there Israel served for a  
wife,  
and for a wife he  
guarded sheep.

<sup>13</sup> By a prophet the LORD  
brought Israel up from  
Egypt,  
and by a prophet he was  
guarded.

<sup>14</sup> Ephraim has given bitter  
offense,  
so his Lord will bring his  
crimes down on him  
and pay him back for his  
insults.

*Relentless Judgment on Israel*

**13** When Ephraim spoke,  
there was trembling;  
he was exalted in Israel;  
but he incurred guilt  
through Baal and died.

<sup>2</sup> And now they keep on  
sinning  
and make a cast image  
for themselves,  
idols of silver made  
according to their  
understanding,

all of them the work of  
artisans.

“Sacrifice to these,” they  
say.

<sup>3</sup> People are kissing calves!  
Therefore they shall be like  
the morning mist  
or like the dew that goes  
away early,  
like chaff that swirls from  
the threshing floor  
or like smoke from a  
window.

<sup>4</sup> Yet I have been the LORD  
your God  
ever since the land of  
Egypt;  
you know no God but me,  
and besides me there is  
no savior.

<sup>5</sup> It was I who fed you in the  
wilderness,  
in the land of drought.

<sup>6</sup> When I fed them, they  
were satisfied;  
they were satisfied, and  
their heart was proud;  
therefore they forgot  
me.

<sup>7</sup> So I will become like a lion  
to them,  
like a leopard I will lurk  
beside the way.

8 I will fall upon them like a  
bear robbed of her  
cubs,  
and will tear open the  
covering of their heart;  
there I will devour them  
like a lion,  
as a wild animal would  
mangle them.

9 I will destroy you, O Israel;  
who can help you?

10 Where now is your king,  
that he may save you?  
Where in all your cities  
are your rulers,  
of whom you said,  
“Give me a king and  
rulers”?

11 I gave you a king in my  
anger,  
and I took him away in  
my wrath.

12 Ephraim’s iniquity is bound  
up;  
his sin is kept in store.

13 The pangs of childbirth  
come for him,  
but he is an unwise son;  
for at the proper time he  
does not present  
himself  
at the mouth of the  
womb.

14 Shall I ransom them from  
the power of Sheol?

Shall I redeem them  
from Death?

O Death, where are your  
plagues?

O Sheol, where is your  
destruction?

Compassion is hidden  
from my eyes.

15 Although he may flourish  
among rushes,  
the east wind shall come,  
a blast from the LORD,  
rising from the  
wilderness;  
and his fountain shall dry  
up,  
his spring shall be  
parched.

It shall strip his treasury  
of every precious thing.

16 Samaria shall bear her  
guilt,  
because she has rebelled  
against her God;  
they shall fall by the  
sword,  
their little ones shall be  
dashed in pieces,  
and their pregnant  
women ripped open.

*A Plea for Repentance*

**14** Return, O Israel, to the  
LORD your God,

for you have stumbled  
because of your  
iniquity.

- 2 Take words with you  
and return to the LORD;  
say to him,  
“Take away all guilt;  
accept that which is good,  
and we will offer  
the fruit of our lips.  
3 Assyria shall not save us;  
we will not ride upon  
horses;  
we will say no more, ‘Our  
God,’  
to the work of our hands.  
In you the orphan finds  
mercy.”

*Assurance of Forgiveness*

- 4 I will heal their disloyalty;  
I will love them freely,  
for my anger has turned  
from them.  
5 I will be like the dew to  
Israel;  
he shall blossom like the  
lily,  
he shall strike root like  
the forests of Lebanon.  
6 His shoots shall spread  
out;  
his beauty shall be like  
the olive tree,

and his fragrance like  
that of Lebanon.

- 7 They shall again live  
beneath my shadow,  
they shall flourish as a  
garden;  
they shall blossom like the  
vine,  
their fragrance shall be  
like the wine of  
Lebanon.  
8 O Ephraim, what have I to  
do with idols?  
It is I who answer and  
look after you.  
I am like an evergreen  
cypress;  
your faithfulness comes  
from me.  
9 Those who are wise  
understand these  
things;  
those who are discerning  
know them.  
For the ways of the LORD  
are right,  
and the upright walk in  
them,  
but transgressors  
stumble in them.

**Jude 1:20-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>20</sup> But you, beloved, build  
yourselves up on your most  
holy faith; pray in the Holy

Spirit; <sup>21</sup> keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

<sup>22</sup> And have mercy on some who are wavering; <sup>23</sup> save others by snatching them out of the fire; and have mercy on still others with fear, hating even the tunic defiled by their bodies.

### *Benediction*

<sup>24</sup> Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, <sup>25</sup> to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority,

### **Psalm 126:4-6** (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup> Restore our fortunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

<sup>5</sup> May those who sow in tears  
reap with shouts of joy.

<sup>6</sup> Those who go out weeping,  
bearing the seed for sowing,

shall come home with  
shouts of joy,  
carrying their sheaves.

### **Proverbs 27:18–20** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Anyone who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,  
and anyone who takes care of a master will be honored.

<sup>19</sup> Just as water reflects the face,  
so one human heart reflects another.

<sup>20</sup> Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,  
and human eyes are never satisfied.

## **November 16**



### **Joel 1:1 – 2:32** (NRSV)

The word of the LORD that came to Joel son of Pethuel:

#### *Lament over the Ruin of the Country (Ex 10:1–20)*

<sup>2</sup> Hear this, O elders,  
give ear, all inhabitants  
of the land!

Has such a thing happened  
in your days,  
or in the days of your  
ancestors?  
3 Tell your children of it,  
and let your children tell  
their children,  
and their children  
another generation.  
4 What the cutting locust  
left,  
the swarming locust has  
eaten.  
What the swarming locust  
left,  
the hopping locust has  
eaten,  
and what the hopping  
locust left,  
the destroying locust has  
eaten.  
5 Wake up, you drunkards,  
and weep;  
and wail, all you wine-  
drinkers,  
over the sweet wine,  
for it is cut off from your  
mouth.  
6 For a nation has invaded  
my land,  
powerful and  
innumerable;  
its teeth are lions' teeth,  
and it has the fangs of a  
lioness.

7 It has laid waste my vines,  
and splintered my fig  
trees;  
it has stripped off their  
bark and thrown it  
down;  
their branches have  
turned white.  
8 Lament like a virgin  
dressed in sackcloth  
for the husband of her  
youth.  
9 The grain offering and the  
drink offering are cut  
off  
from the house of the  
LORD.  
The priests mourn,  
the ministers of the LORD.  
10 The fields are devastated,  
the ground mourns;  
for the grain is destroyed,  
the wine dries up,  
the oil fails.  
11 Be dismayed, you farmers,  
wail, you vinedressers,  
over the wheat and the  
barley;  
for the crops of the field  
are ruined.  
12 The vine withers,  
the fig tree droops.  
Pomegranate, palm, and  
apple—



all the trees of the field  
are dried up;  
surely, joy withers away  
among the people.

*A Call to Repentance  
and Prayer*

13 Put on sackcloth and  
lament, you priests;  
wail, you ministers of the  
altar.

Come, pass the night in  
sackcloth,  
you ministers of my God!  
Grain offering and drink  
offering  
are withheld from the  
house of your God.

14 Sanctify a fast,  
call a solemn assembly.  
Gather the elders  
and all the inhabitants of  
the land  
to the house of the LORD  
your God,  
and cry out to the LORD.

15 Alas for the day!  
For the day of the LORD is  
near,  
and as destruction from  
the Almighty it comes.

16 Is not the food cut off  
before our eyes,  
joy and gladness

from the house of our  
God?

17 The seed shrivels under  
the clods,  
the storehouses are  
desolate;  
the granaries are ruined  
because the grain has  
failed.

18 How the animals groan!  
The herds of cattle  
wander about  
because there is no  
pasture for them;  
even the flocks of sheep  
are dazed.

19 To you, O LORD, I cry.  
For fire has devoured  
the pastures of the  
wilderness,  
and flames have burned  
all the trees of the field.

20 Even the wild animals cry  
to you  
because the  
watercourses are dried  
up,  
and fire has devoured  
the pastures of the  
wilderness.

**2** Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sound the alarm on my  
holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of  
the land tremble,

for the day of the LORD is  
coming, it is near—  
2 a day of darkness and  
gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick  
darkness!  
Like blackness spread upon  
the mountains  
a great and powerful  
army comes;  
their like has never been  
from of old,  
nor will be again after  
them  
in ages to come.  
3 Fire devours in front of  
them,  
and behind them a flame  
burns.  
Before them the land is  
like the garden of  
Eden,  
but after them a  
desolate wilderness,  
and nothing escapes  
them.  
4 They have the appearance  
of horses,  
and like war-horses they  
charge.  
5 As with the rumbling of  
chariots,  
they leap on the tops of  
the mountains,

like the crackling of a  
flame of fire  
devouring the stubble,  
like a powerful army  
drawn up for battle.  
6 Before them peoples are in  
anguish,  
all faces grow pale.  
7 Like warriors they charge,  
like soldiers they scale  
the wall.  
Each keeps to its own  
course,  
they do not swerve from  
their paths.  
8 They do not jostle one  
another,  
each keeps to its own  
track;  
they burst through the  
weapons  
and are not halted.  
9 They leap upon the city,  
they run upon the walls;  
they climb up into the  
houses,  
they enter through the  
windows like a thief.  
10 The earth quakes before  
them,  
the heavens tremble.  
The sun and the moon are  
darkened,  
and the stars withdraw  
their shining.

11 The LORD utters his voice  
at the head of his army;  
how vast is his host!  
Numberless are those  
who obey his  
command.  
Truly the day of the LORD is  
great;  
terrible indeed—who  
can endure it?

12 Yet even now, says the  
LORD,  
return to me with all  
your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping,  
and with mourning;  
rend your hearts and not  
your clothing.

13 Return to the LORD, your  
God,  
for he is gracious and  
merciful,  
slow to anger, and  
abounding in steadfast  
love,  
and relents from  
punishing.

14 Who knows whether he  
will not turn and  
relent,  
and leave a blessing  
behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink  
offering  
for the LORD, your God?

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
gather the people.  
Sanctify the congregation;  
assemble the aged;  
gather the children,  
even infants at the  
breast.  
Let the bridegroom leave  
his room,  
and the bride her  
canopy.

17 Between the vestibule and  
the altar  
let the priests, the  
ministers of the LORD,  
weep.  
Let them say, "Spare your  
people, O LORD,  
and do not make your  
heritage a mockery,  
a byword among the  
nations.  
Why should it be said  
among the peoples,  
'Where is their God?'"

*God's Response and Promise*  
(Acts 2:17)

18 Then the LORD became  
jealous for his land,  
and had pity on his  
people.

19 In response to his people  
the LORD said:

I am sending you  
 grain, wine, and oil,  
 and you will be satisfied;  
 and I will no more make  
 you  
 a mockery among the  
 nations.

<sup>20</sup> I will remove the northern  
 army far from you,  
 and drive it into a  
 parched and desolate  
 land,  
 its front into the eastern  
 sea,  
 and its rear into the  
 western sea;  
 its stench and foul smell  
 will rise up.  
 Surely he has done great  
 things!

<sup>21</sup> Do not fear, O soil;  
 be glad and rejoice,  
 for the LORD has done  
 great things!

<sup>22</sup> Do not fear, you animals of  
 the field,  
 for the pastures of the  
 wilderness are green;  
 the tree bears its fruit,  
 the fig tree and vine give  
 their full yield.

<sup>23</sup> O children of Zion, be glad  
 and rejoice in the LORD  
 your God;

for he has given the early  
 rain for your  
 vindication,  
 he has poured down for  
 you abundant rain,  
 the early and the later  
 rain, as before.

<sup>24</sup> The threshing floors shall  
 be full of grain,  
 the vats shall overflow  
 with wine and oil.

<sup>25</sup> I will repay you for the  
 years  
 that the swarming locust  
 has eaten,  
 the hopper, the destroyer,  
 and the cutter,  
 my great army, which I  
 sent against you.

<sup>26</sup> You shall eat in plenty and  
 be satisfied,  
 and praise the name of  
 the LORD your God,  
 who has dealt  
 wondrously with you.  
 And my people shall never  
 again be put to shame.

<sup>27</sup> You shall know that I am in  
 the midst of Israel,  
 and that I, the LORD, am  
 your God and there is  
 no other.  
 And my people shall never  
 again  
 be put to shame.

*God's Spirit Poured Out*

28 Then afterward  
I will pour out my spirit  
on all flesh;

your sons and your  
daughters shall  
prophesy,  
your old men shall  
dream dreams,  
and your young men  
shall see visions.

29 Even on the male and  
female slaves,  
in those days, I will pour  
out my spirit.

30 I will show portents in  
the heavens and on the earth,  
blood and fire and columns of  
smoke. 31 The sun shall be  
turned to darkness, and the  
moon to blood, before the  
great and terrible day of the  
LORD comes. 32 Then everyone  
who calls on the name of the  
LORD shall be saved; for in  
Mount Zion and in Jerusalem  
there shall be those who  
escape, as the LORD has said,  
and among the survivors shall  
be those whom the LORD calls.

**Revelation 1:1–8** (NRSV)

*Introduction and Salutation*

**1** The revelation of Jesus  
Christ, which God gave him to

show his servants what must  
soon take place; he made it  
known by sending his angel to  
his servant John, <sup>2</sup> who  
testified to the word of God  
and to the testimony of Jesus  
Christ, even to all that he saw.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed is the one who  
reads aloud the words of the  
prophecy, and blessed are  
those who hear and who keep  
what is written in it; for the  
time is near.

<sup>4</sup> John to the seven  
churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace  
from him who is and who was  
and who is to come, and from  
the seven spirits who are  
before his throne, <sup>5</sup> and from  
Jesus Christ, the faithful  
witness, the firstborn of the  
dead, and the ruler of the  
kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and  
freed us from our sins by his  
blood, <sup>6</sup> and made us to be a  
kingdom, priests serving his  
God and Father, to him be  
glory and dominion forever  
and ever. Amen.

<sup>7</sup> Look! He is coming with  
the clouds;  
every eye will see him,

even those who pierced  
him;  
and on his account all  
the tribes of the earth  
will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

<sup>8</sup> “I am the Alpha and the  
Omega,” says the Lord God,  
who is and who was and who  
is to come, the Almighty.

### **Psalms 127:1-2 (NRSV)**

*God's Blessings in the Home*

A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.

- <sup>1</sup> Unless the LORD builds the  
house,  
those who build it labor  
in vain.  
Unless the LORD guards the  
city,  
the guard keeps watch in  
vain.
- <sup>2</sup> It is in vain that you rise up  
early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of  
anxious toil;  
for he gives sleep to his  
beloved.

### **Proverbs 27:21-22 (NRSV)**

- <sup>21</sup> The crucible is for silver,  
and the furnace is for  
gold,  
so a person is tested by  
being praised.

- <sup>22</sup> Crush a fool in a mortar  
with a pestle  
along with crushed grain,  
but the folly will not be  
driven out.

## **November 17**



### **Joel 3:1-21 (NRSV)**

For then, in those days and at  
that time, when I restore the  
fortunes of Judah and  
Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> I will gather all the  
nations and bring them down  
to the valley of Jehoshaphat,  
and I will enter into judgment  
with them there, on account  
of my people and my heritage  
Israel, because they have  
scattered them among the  
nations. They have divided my  
land, <sup>3</sup> and cast lots for my  
people, and traded boys for  
prostitutes, and sold girls for  
wine, and drunk it down.

<sup>4</sup> What are you to me, O  
Tyre and Sidon, and all the  
regions of Philistia? Are you  
paying me back for  
something? If you are paying

me back, I will turn your deeds  
back upon your own heads  
swiftly and speedily. <sup>5</sup> For you  
have taken my silver and my  
gold, and have carried my rich  
treasures into your temples.  
<sup>6</sup> You have sold the people of  
Judah and Jerusalem to the  
Greeks, removing them far  
from their own border. <sup>7</sup> But  
now I will rouse them to leave  
the places to which you have  
sold them, and I will turn your  
deeds back upon your own  
heads. <sup>8</sup> I will sell your sons  
and your daughters into the  
hand of the people of Judah,  
and they will sell them to the  
Sabians, to a nation far away;  
for the LORD has spoken.

*Judgment in the  
Valley of Jehoshaphat  
(Cp Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3)*

<sup>9</sup> Proclaim this among the  
nations:  
Prepare war,  
stir up the warriors.  
Let all the soldiers draw  
near,  
let them come up.  
<sup>10</sup> Beat your plowshares into  
swords,  
and your pruning hooks  
into spears;

let the weakling say, "I  
am a warrior."  
<sup>11</sup> Come quickly,  
all you nations all  
around,  
gather yourselves there.  
Bring down your warriors,  
O LORD.  
<sup>12</sup> Let the nations rouse  
themselves,  
and come up to the  
valley of Jehoshaphat;  
for there I will sit to judge  
all the neighboring  
nations.  
<sup>13</sup> Put in the sickle,  
for the harvest is ripe.  
Go in, tread,  
for the wine press is full.  
The vats overflow,  
for their wickedness is  
great.  
<sup>14</sup> Multitudes, multitudes,  
in the valley of decision!  
For the day of the LORD is  
near  
in the valley of decision.  
<sup>15</sup> The sun and the moon are  
darkened,  
and the stars withdraw  
their shining.  
<sup>16</sup> The LORD roars from Zion,  
and utters his voice from  
Jerusalem,

and the heavens and the  
earth shake.

But the LORD is a refuge for  
his people,  
a stronghold for the  
people of Israel.

*The Glorious Future of Judah*

<sup>17</sup> So you shall know that I,  
the LORD your God,  
dwell in Zion, my holy  
mountain.  
And Jerusalem shall be  
holy,  
and strangers shall never  
again pass through it.

<sup>18</sup> In that day  
the mountains shall drip  
sweet wine,  
the hills shall flow with  
milk,  
and all the stream beds of  
Judah  
shall flow with water;  
a fountain shall come forth  
from the house of the  
LORD  
and water the Wadi  
Shittim.

<sup>19</sup> Egypt shall become a  
desolation  
and Edom a desolate  
wilderness,

because of the violence  
done to the people of  
Judah,  
in whose land they have  
shed innocent blood.

<sup>20</sup> But Judah shall be  
inhabited forever,  
and Jerusalem to all  
generations.

<sup>21</sup> I will avenge their blood,  
and I will not clear the  
guilty,  
for the LORD dwells in  
Zion.

**Revelation 1:9–20** (NRSV)

*A Vision of Christ*

<sup>9</sup> I, John, your brother who  
share with you in Jesus the  
persecution and the kingdom  
and the patient endurance,  
was on the island called  
Patmos because of the word  
of God and the testimony of  
Jesus. <sup>10</sup> I was in the spirit on  
the Lord's day, and I heard  
behind me a loud voice like a  
trumpet <sup>11</sup> saying, "Write in a  
book what you see and send it  
to the seven churches, to  
Ephesus, to Smyrna, to  
Pergamum, to Thyatira, to  
Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to  
Laodicea."



<sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. <sup>14</sup> His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, <sup>15</sup> his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. <sup>16</sup> In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force.

<sup>17</sup> When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, **“Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, <sup>18</sup> and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. <sup>19</sup> Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. <sup>20</sup> As for the mystery of the seven stars that**

**you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.**

### **Psalm 127:3-5 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.

<sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth.

<sup>5</sup> Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.

He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

### **Proverbs 27:23–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds;

<sup>24</sup> for riches do not last forever, nor a crown for all generations.

<sup>25</sup> When the grass is gone, and new growth appears,

and the herbage of the  
 mountains is gathered,  
 26 the lambs will provide your  
 clothing,  
 and the goats the price  
 of a field;  
 27 there will be enough goats'  
 milk for your food,  
 for the food of your  
 household and  
 nourishment for your  
 servant-girls.

and utters his voice from  
 Jerusalem;  
 the pastures of the  
 shepherds wither,  
 and the top of Carmel  
 dries up.

3 Thus says the LORD:  
 For three transgressions of  
 Damascus,  
 and for four, I will not  
 revoke the  
 punishment;  
 because they have  
 threshed Gilead  
 with threshing sledges of  
 iron.

4 So I will send a fire on the  
 house of Hazael,  
 and it shall devour the  
 strongholds of Ben-  
 hadad.

5 I will break the gate bars of  
 Damascus,  
 and cut off the  
 inhabitants from the  
 Valley of Aven,  
 and the one who holds the  
 scepter from Beth-  
 eden;  
 and the people of Aram  
 shall go into exile to  
 Kir,

says the LORD.

6 Thus says the LORD:

## November 18



### Amos 1:1–15 (NRSV)

The words of Amos, who was  
 among the shepherds of  
 Tekoa, which he saw  
 concerning Israel in the days  
 of King Uzziah of Judah and in  
 the days of King Jeroboam son  
 of Joash of Israel, two years  
 before the earthquake.

#### *Judgment on Israel's Neighbors*

2 And he said:  
 The LORD roars from Zion,

For three transgressions of  
Gaza,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because they carried into  
exile entire  
communities,  
to hand them over to  
Edom.

7 So I will send a fire on the  
wall of Gaza,  
fire that shall devour its  
strongholds.

8 I will cut off the  
inhabitants from  
Ashdod,  
and the one who holds  
the scepter from  
Ashkelon;  
I will turn my hand against  
Ekron,  
and the remnant of the  
Philistines shall perish,  
says the LORD.

9 Thus says the LORD:  
For three transgressions of  
Tyre,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because they delivered  
entire communities  
over to Edom,

and did not remember  
the covenant of  
kinship.

10 So I will send a fire on the  
wall of Tyre,  
fire that shall devour its  
strongholds.

11 Thus says the LORD:  
For three transgressions of  
Edom,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because he pursued his  
brother with the sword  
and cast off all pity;  
he maintained his anger  
perpetually,  
and kept his wrath  
forever.

12 So I will send a fire on  
Teman,  
and it shall devour the  
strongholds of Bozrah.

13 Thus says the LORD:  
For three transgressions of  
the Ammonites,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because they have ripped  
open pregnant women  
in Gilead  
in order to enlarge their  
territory.

14 So I will kindle a fire  
against the wall of  
Rabbah,  
fire that shall devour its  
strongholds,  
with shouting on the day  
of battle,  
with a storm on the day  
of the whirlwind;  
15 then their king shall go into  
exile,  
he and his officials  
together,  
says the Lord.

**Revelation 2:1–7** (NRSV)  
*The Message to Ephesus*

**2** “To the angel of the church  
in Ephesus write: These are  
the words of him who holds  
the seven stars in his right  
hand, who walks among the  
seven golden lampstands:  
2 “I know your works, your  
toil and your patient  
endurance. I know that you  
cannot tolerate evildoers; you  
have tested those who claim  
to be apostles but are not, and  
have found them to be false.  
3 I also know that you are  
enduring patiently and bearing  
up for the sake of my name,  
and that you have not grown  
weary. 4 But I have this against

you, that you have abandoned  
the love you had at first.

5 Remember then from what  
you have fallen; repent, and  
do the works you did at first. If  
not, I will come to you and  
remove your lampstand from  
its place, unless you repent.

6 Yet this is to your credit: you  
hate the works of the  
Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 Let anyone who has an ear  
listen to what the Spirit is  
saying to the churches. To  
everyone who conquers, I will  
give permission to eat from  
the tree of life that is in the  
paradise of God.

**Psalms 128:1–4** (NRSV)  
*The Happy Home of the  
Faithful*

A Song of Ascents.

1 Happy is everyone who  
fears the LORD,  
who walks in his ways.

2 You shall eat the fruit of  
the labor of your  
hands;  
you shall be happy, and  
it shall go well with  
you.

3 Your wife will be like a  
fruitful vine  
within your house;

your children will be like  
olive shoots  
around your table.

<sup>4</sup> Thus shall the man be  
blessed  
who fears the LORD.

**Proverbs 28:1 (NRSV)**

<sup>1</sup> The wicked flee when no  
one pursues,  
but the righteous are as  
bold as a lion.

**November  
19**



**Amos 2:1–3:15 (NRSV)**

**2** Thus says the LORD:  
For three transgressions of  
Moab,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because he burned to lime  
the bones of the king of  
Edom.

<sup>2</sup> So I will send a fire on  
Moab,  
and it shall devour the  
strongholds of Kerioth,

and Moab shall die amid  
uproar,  
amid shouting and the  
sound of the trumpet;  
<sup>3</sup> I will cut off the ruler from  
its midst,  
and will kill all its officials  
with him,  
says the LORD.

*Judgment on Judah*

<sup>4</sup> Thus says the LORD:  
For three transgressions of  
Judah,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because they have  
rejected the law of the  
LORD,  
and have not kept his  
statutes,  
but they have been led  
astray by the same lies  
after which their  
ancestors walked.

<sup>5</sup> So I will send a fire on  
Judah,  
and it shall devour the  
strongholds of  
Jerusalem.

*Judgment on Israel*

<sup>6</sup> Thus says the LORD:

For three transgressions of  
Israel,  
and for four, I will not  
revoke the  
punishment;  
because they sell the  
righteous for silver,  
and the needy for a pair  
of sandals—  
7 they who trample the head  
of the poor into the  
dust of the earth,  
and push the afflicted  
out of the way;  
father and son go in to the  
same girl,  
so that my holy name is  
profaned;  
8 they lay themselves down  
beside every altar  
on garments taken in  
pledge;  
and in the house of their  
God they drink  
wine bought with fines  
they imposed.  
9 Yet I destroyed the  
Amorite before them,  
whose height was like  
the height of cedars,  
and who was as strong  
as oaks;  
I destroyed his fruit above,  
and his roots beneath.

10 Also I brought you up out  
of the land of Egypt,  
and led you forty years in  
the wilderness,  
to possess the land of  
the Amorite.  
11 And I raised up some of  
your children to be  
prophets  
and some of your youths  
to be nazirites.  
Is it not indeed so, O  
people of Israel?  
says the LORD.  
12 But you made the nazirites  
drink wine,  
and commanded the  
prophets,  
saying, "You shall not  
prophesy."  
13 So, I will press you down in  
your place,  
just as a cart presses  
down  
when it is full of sheaves.  
14 Flight shall perish from the  
swift,  
and the strong shall not  
retain their strength,  
nor shall the mighty save  
their lives;  
15 those who handle the bow  
shall not stand,



<sup>10</sup> They do not know how to do right, says the LORD, those who store up violence and robbery in their strongholds.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

An adversary shall surround the land, and strip you of your defense; and your strongholds shall be plundered.

<sup>12</sup> Thus says the LORD: As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who live in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part of a bed.

<sup>13</sup> Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob, says the Lord GOD, the God of hosts:

<sup>14</sup> On the day I punish Israel for its transgressions, I will punish the altars of Bethel, and the horns of the altar shall be cut off and fall to the ground.

<sup>15</sup> I will tear down the winter house as well as the summer house;

and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall come to an end, says the LORD.

**Revelation 2:8–17 (NRSV)**

*The Message to Smyrna*

<sup>8</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of the first and the last, who was dead and came to life:

<sup>9</sup> “I know your affliction and your poverty, even though you are rich. I know the slander on the part of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. <sup>10</sup> Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. <sup>11</sup> Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Whoever conquers will not be harmed by the second death.



### *The Message to Pergamum*

<sup>12</sup> "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword:

<sup>13</sup> "I know where you are living, where Satan's throne is. Yet you are holding fast to my name, and you did not deny your faith in me even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. <sup>14</sup> But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel, so that they would eat food sacrificed to idols and practice fornication.

<sup>15</sup> So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. <sup>16</sup> Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth.

<sup>17</sup> Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white

stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.

### **Psalm 128:5-6** (NRSV)

- <sup>5</sup> The LORD bless you from Zion.  
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.
- <sup>6</sup> May you see your children's children.  
Peace be upon Israel!

### **Proverbs 28:2** (NRSV)

- <sup>2</sup> When a land rebels it has many rulers; but with an intelligent ruler there is lasting order.



## **November 20**



### **Amos 4:1–5:9** (NRSV)

- 4** Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on Mount Samaria,

who oppress the poor,  
who crush the needy,  
who say to their  
husbands, "Bring  
something to drink!"  
2 The Lord GOD has sworn by  
his holiness:  
The time is surely coming  
upon you,  
when they shall take you  
away with hooks,  
even the last of you with  
fishhooks.

3 Through breaches in the  
wall you shall leave,  
each one straight ahead;  
and you shall be flung  
out into Harmon,  
says the Lord.

4 Come to Bethel—and  
transgress;  
to Gilgal—and multiply  
transgression;  
bring your sacrifices every  
morning,  
your tithes every three  
days;

5 bring a thank offering of  
leavened bread,  
and proclaim freewill  
offerings, publish  
them;  
for so you love to do, O  
people of Israel!

says the Lord GOD.

*Israel Rejects Correction*

6 I gave you cleanness of  
teeth in all your cities,  
and lack of bread in all  
your places,  
yet you did not return to  
me,

says the LORD.

7 And I also withheld the  
rain from you  
when there were still  
three months to the  
harvest;  
I would send rain on one  
city,  
and send no rain on  
another city;  
one field would be rained  
upon,  
and the field on which it  
did not rain withered;

8 so two or three towns  
wandered to one town  
to drink water, and were  
not satisfied;  
yet you did not return to  
me,

says the Lord.

9 I struck you with blight and  
mildew;



5 but do not seek Bethel,  
and do not enter into  
Gilgal  
or cross over to Beer-  
sheba;  
for Gilgal shall surely go  
into exile,  
and Bethel shall come to  
nothing.

6 Seek the LORD and live,  
or he will break out  
against the house of  
Joseph like fire,  
and it will devour Bethel,  
with no one to quench  
it.

7 Ah, you that turn justice to  
wormwood,  
and bring righteousness  
to the ground!

8 The one who made the  
Pleiades and Orion,  
and turns deep darkness  
into the morning,  
and darkens the day into  
night,  
who calls for the waters of  
the sea,  
and pours them out on  
the surface of the  
earth,  
the LORD is his name,

9 who makes destruction  
flash out against the  
strong,  
so that destruction  
comes upon the  
fortress.

**Revelation 2:18–29 (NRSV)**

*The Message to Thyatira*

<sup>18</sup> “And to the angel of the  
church in Thyatira write: These  
are the words of the Son of  
God, who has eyes like a flame  
of fire, and whose feet are like  
burnished bronze:

<sup>19</sup> “I know your works—  
your love, faith, service, and  
patient endurance. I know that  
your last works are greater  
than the first. <sup>20</sup> But I have this  
against you: you tolerate that  
woman Jezebel, who calls  
herself a prophet and is  
teaching and beguiling my  
servants to practice  
fornication and to eat food  
sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup> I gave her  
time to repent, but she refuses  
to repent of her fornication.

<sup>22</sup> Beware, I am throwing her  
on a bed, and those who  
commit adultery with her I am  
throwing into great distress,  
unless they repent of her  
doings; <sup>23</sup> and I will strike her

children dead. And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve.<sup>24</sup> But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call ‘the deep things of Satan,’ to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden;<sup>25</sup> only hold fast to what you have until I come.<sup>26</sup> To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end, I will give authority over the nations;  
<sup>27</sup> to rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are shattered—  
<sup>28</sup> even as I also received authority from my Father. To the one who conquers I will also give the morning star.  
<sup>29</sup> Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

### **Psalm 129:1-4** (NRSV)

*Prayer for the Downfall of  
Israel's Enemies*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> “Often have they attacked me from my youth”

—let Israel now say—  
<sup>2</sup> “often have they attacked me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me.  
<sup>3</sup> The plowers plowed on my back; they made their furrows long.”  
<sup>4</sup> The LORD is righteous; he has cut the cords of the wicked.

### **Proverbs 28:3-5** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> A ruler who oppresses the poor is a beating rain that leaves no food.  
<sup>4</sup> Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law struggle against them.  
<sup>5</sup> The evil do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand it completely.

# November 21



## Amos 5:10–6:14 (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> They hate the one who  
reproves in the gate,  
and they abhor the one  
who speaks the truth.  
<sup>11</sup> Therefore because you  
trample on the poor  
and take from them  
levies of grain,  
you have built houses of  
hewn stone,  
but you shall not live in  
them;  
you have planted pleasant  
vineyards,  
but you shall not drink  
their wine.  
<sup>12</sup> For I know how many are  
your transgressions,  
and how great are your  
sins—  
you who afflict the  
righteous, who take a  
bribe,  
and push aside the  
needy in the gate.  
<sup>13</sup> Therefore the prudent will  
keep silent in such a  
time;  
for it is an evil time.  
<sup>14</sup> Seek good and not evil,  
that you may live;

and so the LORD, the God  
of hosts, will be with  
you,

just as you have said.  
<sup>15</sup> Hate evil and love good,  
and establish justice in  
the gate;  
it may be that the LORD,  
the God of hosts,  
will be gracious to the  
remnant of Joseph.  
<sup>16</sup> Therefore thus says the  
LORD, the God of hosts,  
the Lord:  
In all the squares there  
shall be wailing;  
and in all the streets they  
shall say, “Alas! alas!”  
They shall call the farmers  
to mourning,  
and those skilled in  
lamentation, to  
wailing;  
<sup>17</sup> in all the vineyards there  
shall be wailing,  
for I will pass through  
the midst of you,  
says the Lord.

### *The Day of the LORD a Dark Day*

<sup>18</sup> Alas for you who desire  
the day of the LORD!  
Why do you want the  
day of the LORD?

19 It is darkness, not light;  
as if someone fled from a  
lion,  
and was met by a bear;  
or went into the house and  
rested a hand against  
the wall,  
and was bitten by a  
snake.

20 Is not the day of the LORD  
darkness, not light,  
and gloom with no  
brightness in it?

21 I hate, I despise your  
festivals,  
and I take no delight in  
your solemn  
assemblies.

22 Even though you offer me  
your burnt offerings  
and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-  
being of your fatted  
animals  
I will not look upon.

23 Take away from me the  
noise of your songs;  
I will not listen to the  
melody of your harps.

24 But let justice roll down  
like waters,  
and righteousness like an  
ever-flowing stream.

<sup>25</sup> Did you bring to me  
sacrifices and offerings the  
forty years in the wilderness,  
O house of Israel? <sup>26</sup> You shall  
take up Sakkuth your king, and  
Kaiwan your star-god, your  
images, which you made for  
yourselves; <sup>27</sup> therefore I will  
take you into exile beyond  
Damascus, says the LORD,  
whose name is the God of  
hosts.

*Complacent Self-Indulgence  
Will Be Punished*

**6** Alas for those who are at  
ease in Zion,  
and for those who feel  
secure on Mount  
Samaria,  
the notables of the first of  
the nations,  
to whom the house of  
Israel resorts!  
2 Cross over to Calneh, and  
see;  
from there go to Hamath  
the great;  
then go down to Gath of  
the Philistines.  
Are you better than these  
kingdoms?  
Or is your territory  
greater than their  
territory,

3 O you that put far away  
the evil day,  
and bring near a reign of  
violence?  
4 Alas for those who lie on  
beds of ivory,  
and lounge on their  
couches,  
and eat lambs from the  
flock,  
and calves from the stall;  
5 who sing idle songs to the  
sound of the harp,  
and like David improvise  
on instruments of  
music;  
6 who drink wine from  
bowls,  
and anoint themselves  
with the finest oils,  
but are not grieved over  
the ruin of Joseph!  
7 Therefore they shall now  
be the first to go into  
exile,  
and the revelry of the  
loungers shall pass  
away.  
8 The Lord GOD has sworn by  
himself  
(says the LORD, the God of  
hosts):  
I abhor the pride of Jacob  
and hate his strongholds;

and I will deliver up the  
city and all that is in it.  
9 If ten people remain in  
one house, they shall die.  
10 And if a relative, one who  
burns the dead, shall take up  
the body to bring it out of the  
house, and shall say to  
someone in the innermost  
parts of the house, "Is anyone  
else with you?" the answer  
will come, "No." Then the  
relative shall say, "Hush! We  
must not mention the name of  
the LORD."  
11 See, the LORD commands,  
and the great house shall  
be shattered to bits,  
and the little house to  
pieces.  
12 Do horses run on rocks?  
Does one plow the sea  
with oxen?  
But you have turned  
justice into poison  
and the fruit of  
righteousness into  
wormwood—  
13 you who rejoice in Lo-  
debar,  
who say, "Have we not  
by our own strength  
taken Karnaim for  
ourselves?"



<sup>14</sup> Indeed, I am raising up  
against you a nation,  
O house of Israel, says  
the LORD, the God of  
hosts,  
and they shall oppress you  
from Lebo-hamath  
to the Wadi Arabah.

**Revelation 3:1–6** (NRSV)  
*The Message to Sardis*

**3** “And to the angel of the  
church in Sardis write: These  
are the words of him who has  
the seven spirits of God and  
the seven stars:

“I know your works; you  
have a name of being alive,  
but you are dead. <sup>2</sup> Wake up,  
and strengthen what remains  
and is on the point of death,  
for I have not found your  
works perfect in the sight of  
my God. <sup>3</sup> Remember then  
what you received and heard;  
obey it, and repent. If you do  
not wake up, I will come like a  
thief, and you will not know at  
what hour I will come to you.

<sup>4</sup> Yet you have still a few  
persons in Sardis who have  
not soiled their clothes; they  
will walk with me, dressed in  
white, for they are worthy. <sup>5</sup> If  
you conquer, you will be

clothed like them in white  
robes, and I will not blot your  
name out of the book of life; I  
will confess your name before  
my Father and before his  
angels. <sup>6</sup> Let anyone who has  
an ear listen to what the Spirit  
is saying to the churches.

**Psalm 129:5-8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> May all who hate Zion  
be put to shame and  
turned backward.  
<sup>6</sup> Let them be like the grass  
on the housetops  
that withers before it  
grows up,  
<sup>7</sup> with which reapers do not  
fill their hands  
or binders of sheaves  
their arms,  
<sup>8</sup> while those who pass by  
do not say,  
“The blessing of the LORD  
be upon you!  
We bless you in the  
name of the LORD!”

**Proverbs 28:6–7** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> Better to be poor and walk  
in integrity  
than to be crooked in  
one’s ways even  
though rich.

<sup>7</sup> Those who keep the law  
are wise children,  
but companions of  
gluttons shame their  
parents.

## November 22



**Amos 7:1–8:3** (NRSV)  
*Locusts, Fire, and a Plumb Line*

**7** This is what the Lord GOD  
showed me: he was forming  
locusts at the time the latter  
growth began to sprout (it was  
the latter growth after the  
king's mowings). <sup>2</sup> When they  
had finished eating the grass  
of the land, I said,

“O Lord GOD, forgive, I beg  
you!

How can Jacob stand?  
He is so small!”

<sup>3</sup> The LORD relented  
concerning this;  
“It shall not be,” said the  
LORD.

<sup>4</sup> This is what the Lord GOD  
showed me: the Lord GOD was  
calling for a shower of fire,

and it devoured the great  
deep and was eating up the  
land. <sup>5</sup> Then I said,

“O Lord GOD, cease, I beg  
you!

How can Jacob stand?  
He is so small!”

<sup>6</sup> The LORD relented  
concerning this;  
“This also shall not be,”  
said the Lord GOD.

<sup>7</sup> This is what he showed  
me: the Lord was standing  
beside a wall built with a  
plumb line, with a plumb line  
in his hand. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD said  
to me, “Amos, what do you  
see?” And I said, “A plumb  
line.” Then the Lord said,

“See, I am setting a plumb  
line

in the midst of my  
people Israel;

I will never again pass  
them by;

<sup>9</sup> the high places of Isaac  
shall be made desolate,  
and the sanctuaries of  
Israel shall be laid  
waste,  
and I will rise against the  
house of Jeroboam  
with the sword.”

*Amaziah Complains  
to the King*

<sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words.

<sup>11</sup> For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.' "

<sup>12</sup> And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; <sup>13</sup> but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

<sup>14</sup> Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, <sup>15</sup> and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

<sup>16</sup> "Now therefore hear the word of the LORD.

You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'

<sup>17</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD:

'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be parceled out by line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.' "

*The Basket of Fruit*

**8** This is what the Lord God showed me—a basket of summer fruit. <sup>2</sup> He said, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me,

"The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass them by.

<sup>3</sup> The songs of the temple shall become wailings in that day,"

says the Lord God;  
“the dead bodies shall be  
many,  
cast out in every place.  
Be silent!”

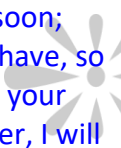
**Revelation 3:7–13** (NRSV)

*The Message to Philadelphia*

<sup>7</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:  
These are the words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens:

<sup>8</sup> “I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. <sup>9</sup> I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. <sup>10</sup> Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is

coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. <sup>11</sup> I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. <sup>12</sup> If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. <sup>13</sup> Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.



**Psalms 130:1-5** (NRSV)

*Waiting for Divine Redemption*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.  
<sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!  
<sup>3</sup> If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,  
Lord, who could stand?  
<sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with you,  
so that you may be revered.  
<sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

**Proverbs 28:8–10 (NRSV)**

- <sup>8</sup> One who augments wealth  
by exorbitant interest  
gathers it for another  
who is kind to the  
poor.
- <sup>9</sup> When one will not listen to  
the law,  
even one's prayers are  
an abomination.
- <sup>10</sup> Those who mislead the  
upright into evil ways  
will fall into pits of their  
own making,  
but the blameless will  
have a goodly  
inheritance.

**November  
23**



**Amos 8:4–9:15 (NRSV)**

- <sup>4</sup> Hear this, you that trample  
on the needy,  
and bring to ruin the  
poor of the land,
- <sup>5</sup> saying, "When will the new  
moon be over  
so that we may sell grain;

and the sabbath,  
so that we may offer  
wheat for sale?  
We will make the ephah  
small and the shekel  
great,  
and practice deceit with  
false balances,  
<sup>6</sup> buying the poor for silver  
and the needy for a pair  
of sandals,  
and selling the  
sweepings of the  
wheat."

- <sup>7</sup> The LORD has sworn by the  
pride of Jacob:  
Surely I will never forget  
any of their deeds.
- <sup>8</sup> Shall not the land tremble  
on this account,  
and everyone mourn  
who lives in it,  
and all of it rise like the  
Nile,  
and be tossed about and  
sink again, like the Nile  
of Egypt?
- <sup>9</sup> On that day, says the Lord  
GOD,  
I will make the sun go  
down at noon,  
and darken the earth in  
broad daylight.
- <sup>10</sup> I will turn your feasts into  
mourning,

and all your songs into  
lamentation;  
I will bring sackcloth on all  
loins,  
and baldness on every  
head;

I will make it like the  
mourning for an only  
son,  
and the end of it like a  
bitter day.

<sup>11</sup> The time is surely coming,  
says the Lord GOD,  
when I will send a famine  
on the land;  
not a famine of bread, or a  
thirst for water,  
but of hearing the words  
of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> They shall wander from  
sea to sea,  
and from north to east;  
they shall run to and fro,  
seeking the word of  
the LORD,  
but they shall not find it.

<sup>13</sup> In that day the beautiful  
young women and the  
young men  
shall faint for thirst.

<sup>14</sup> Those who swear by  
Ashimah of Samaria,  
and say, "As your god  
lives, O Dan,"

and, "As the way of Beer-  
sheba lives" —  
they shall fall, and never  
rise again.

### *The Destruction of Israel*

**9** I saw the LORD standing  
beside the altar, and he said:  
Strike the capitals until the  
thresholds shake,  
and shatter them on the  
heads of all the people;  
and those who are left I  
will kill with the sword;  
not one of them shall  
flee away,  
not one of them shall  
escape.

<sup>2</sup> Though they dig into  
Sheol,  
from there shall my hand  
take them;  
though they climb up to  
heaven,  
from there I will bring  
them down.

<sup>3</sup> Though they hide  
themselves on the top  
of Carmel,  
from there I will search  
out and take them;  
and though they hide from  
my sight at the bottom  
of the sea,

there I will command the  
sea-serpent, and it  
shall bite them.  
4 And though they go into  
captivity in front of  
their enemies,  
there I will command the  
sword, and it shall kill  
them;  
and I will fix my eyes on  
them  
for harm and not for  
good.  
5 The Lord, GOD of hosts,  
he who touches the earth  
and it melts,  
and all who live in it  
mourn,  
and all of it rises like the  
Nile,  
and sinks again, like the  
Nile of Egypt;  
6 who builds his upper  
chambers in the  
heavens,  
and founds his vault  
upon the earth;  
who calls for the waters of  
the sea,  
and pours them out  
upon the surface of the  
earth—  
the LORD is his name.  
7 Are you not like the  
Ethiopians to me,

O people of Israel? says  
the LORD.  
Did I not bring Israel up  
from the land of Egypt,  
and the Philistines from  
Caphtor and the  
Arameans from Kir?  
8 Shall not the land tremble  
on this account,  
and everyone mourn  
who lives in it,  
and all of it rise like the  
Nile,  
and be tossed about and  
sink again, like the Nile  
of Egypt?  
9 For lo, I will command,  
and shake the house of  
Israel among all the  
nations  
as one shakes with a sieve,  
but no pebble shall fall to  
the ground.  
10 All the sinners of my  
people shall die by the  
sword,  
who say, "Evil shall not  
overtake or meet us."  
  
*The Restoration of  
David's Kingdom  
(Cp Acts 15:16–17)*  
11 On that day I will raise up  
the booth of David that  
is fallen,  
and repair its breaches,

and raise up its ruins,  
and rebuild it as in the  
days of old;  
<sup>12</sup> in order that they may  
possess the remnant of  
Edom  
and all the nations who  
are called by my name,  
says the LORD who does  
this.

<sup>13</sup> The time is surely coming,  
says the LORD,  
when the one who plows  
shall overtake the one  
who reaps,  
and the treader of  
grapes the one who  
sows the seed;  
the mountains shall drip  
sweet wine,  
and all the hills shall flow  
with it.

<sup>14</sup> I will restore the fortunes  
of my people Israel,  
and they shall rebuild the  
ruined cities and  
inhabit them;  
they shall plant vineyards  
and drink their wine,  
and they shall make  
gardens and eat their  
fruit.

<sup>15</sup> I will plant them upon their  
land,

and they shall never  
again be plucked up  
out of the land that I  
have given them,  
says the LORD your God.

**Revelation 3:14–22 (NRSV)**

*The Message to Laodicea*

<sup>14</sup> “And to the angel of the  
church in Laodicea write: The  
words of the Amen, the  
faithful and true witness, the  
origin of God’s creation:

<sup>15</sup> “I know your works; you  
are neither cold nor hot. I wish  
that you were either cold or  
hot. <sup>16</sup> So, because you are  
lukewarm, and neither cold  
nor hot, I am about to spit you  
out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> For you  
say, ‘I am rich, I have  
prospered, and I need  
nothing.’ You do not realize  
that you are wretched,  
pitiabile, poor, blind, and  
naked. <sup>18</sup> Therefore I counsel  
you to buy from me gold  
refined by fire so that you may  
be rich; and white robes to  
clothe you and to keep the  
shame of your nakedness from  
being seen; and salve to  
anoint your eyes so that you  
may see. <sup>19</sup> I reprove and  
discipline those whom I love.



Be earnest, therefore, and repent.<sup>20</sup> Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.<sup>21</sup> To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.<sup>22</sup> Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

**Psalms 130:6-8** (NRSV)

<sup>6</sup> my soul waits for the Lord  
more than those who  
watch for the morning,  
more than those who  
watch for the morning.  
<sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD!  
For with the LORD there is  
steadfast love,  
and with him is great  
power to redeem.  
<sup>8</sup> It is he who will redeem  
Israel  
from all its iniquities.

**Proverbs 28:11** (NRSV)

<sup>11</sup> The rich is wise in self-esteem,

but an intelligent poor person sees through the pose.

**November  
24**



**Obadiah 1–14** (NRSV)

*Proud Edom Will  
Be Brought Low*

<sup>1</sup> The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom:  
We have heard a report from the LORD,  
and a messenger has been sent among the nations:

“Rise up! Let us rise against it for battle!”

<sup>2</sup> I will surely make you least among the nations; you shall be utterly despised.

<sup>3</sup> Your proud heart has deceived you, you that live in the clefts of the rock, whose dwelling is in the heights.

You say in your heart,

“Who will bring me  
down to the ground?”  
4 Though you soar aloft like  
the eagle,  
though your nest is set  
among the stars,  
from there I will bring  
you down,  
says the LORD.

*Pillage and Slaughter Will  
Repay Edom’s Cruelty*

5 If thieves came to you,  
if plunderers by night  
—how you have been  
destroyed!—  
would they not steal only  
what they wanted?  
If grape-gatherers came to  
you,  
would they not leave  
gleanings?  
6 How Esau has been  
pillaged,  
his treasures searched  
out!  
7 All your allies have  
deceived you,  
they have driven you to  
the border;  
your confederates have  
prevailed against you;  
those who ate your  
bread have set a trap  
for you—

there is no  
understanding of it.  
8 On that day, says the LORD,  
I will destroy the wise  
out of Edom,  
and understanding out of  
Mount Esau.  
9 Your warriors shall be  
shattered, O Teman,  
so that everyone from  
Mount Esau will be cut  
off.

*Edom Mistreated His Brother*

10 For the slaughter and  
violence done to your  
brother Jacob,  
shame shall cover you,  
and you shall be cut off  
forever.  
11 On the day that you stood  
aside,  
on the day that strangers  
carried off his wealth,  
and foreigners entered his  
gates  
and cast lots for  
Jerusalem,  
you too were like one of  
them.  
12 But you should not have  
gloated over your  
brother  
on the day of his  
misfortune;

you should not have  
rejoiced over the  
people of Judah  
on the day of their ruin;  
you should not have  
boasted  
on the day of distress.

<sup>13</sup> You should not have  
entered the gate of my  
people  
on the day of their  
calamity;  
you should not have joined  
in the gloating over  
Judah's disaster  
on the day of his  
calamity;  
you should not have  
looted his goods  
on the day of his  
calamity.

<sup>14</sup> You should not have stood  
at the crossings  
to cut off his fugitives;  
you should not have  
handed over his  
survivors  
on the day of distress.

**Revelation 4:1–6a** (NRSV)  
*The Heavenly Worship*  
(Isa 6:1–3)

**4** After this I looked, and  
there in heaven a door stood  
open! And the first voice,

which I had heard speaking to  
me like a trumpet, said, "Come  
up here, and I will show you  
what must take place after  
this." <sup>2</sup> At once I was in the  
spirit, and there in heaven  
stood a throne, with one  
seated on the throne! <sup>3</sup> And  
the one seated there looks like  
jasper and carnelian, and  
around the throne is a  
rainbow that looks like an  
emerald. <sup>4</sup> Around the throne  
are twenty-four thrones, and  
seated on the thrones are  
twenty-four elders, dressed in  
white robes, with golden  
crowns on their heads.  
<sup>5</sup> Coming from the throne are  
flashes of lightning, and  
rumblings and peals of  
thunder, and in front of the  
throne burn seven flaming  
torches, which are the seven  
spirits of God; <sup>6</sup> and in front of  
the throne there is something  
like a sea of glass, like crystal.

**Psalms 131:1 – 132:9** (NRSV)

*Song of Quiet Trust*

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, my heart is not  
lifted up,  
my eyes are not raised  
too high;

I do not occupy myself  
with things  
too great and too  
marvelous for me.  
2 But I have calmed and  
quieted my soul,  
like a weaned child with  
its mother;  
my soul is like the  
weaned child that is  
with me.  
3 O Israel, hope in the LORD  
from this time on and  
forevermore.

*The Eternal Dwelling  
of God in Zion*

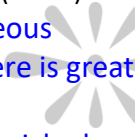
A Song of Ascents.

**132** 1 O LORD, remember in  
David's favor  
all the hardships he  
endured;  
2 how he swore to the LORD  
and vowed to the Mighty  
One of Jacob,  
3 "I will not enter my house  
or get into my bed;  
4 I will not give sleep to my  
eyes  
or slumber to my eyelids,  
5 until I find a place for the  
LORD,  
a dwelling place for the  
Mighty One of Jacob."

6 We heard of it in  
Ephrathah;  
we found it in the fields  
of Jaar.  
7 "Let us go to his dwelling  
place;  
let us worship at his  
footstool."  
8 Rise up, O LORD, and go to  
your resting place,  
you and the ark of your  
might.  
9 Let your priests be clothed  
with righteousness,  
and let your faithful  
shout for joy.

**Proverbs 28:12–13 (NRSV)**

12 When the righteous  
triumph, there is great  
glory,  
but when the wicked  
prevail, people go into  
hiding.  
13 No one who conceals  
transgressions will  
prosper,  
but one who confesses  
and forsakes them will  
obtain mercy.



# November 25



## Obadiah 15–21 (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> For the day of the LORD is  
near against all the  
nations.

As you have done, it shall  
be done to you;  
your deeds shall return  
on your own head.

<sup>16</sup> For as you have drunk on  
my holy mountain,  
all the nations around  
you shall drink;  
they shall drink and gulp  
down,  
and shall be as though  
they had never been.

### *Israel's Final Triumph*

<sup>17</sup> But on Mount Zion there  
shall be those that  
escape,  
and it shall be holy;  
and the house of Jacob  
shall take possession of  
those who  
dispossessed them.

<sup>18</sup> The house of Jacob shall be  
a fire,  
the house of Joseph a  
flame,  
and the house of Esau  
stubble;

they shall burn them and  
consume them,  
and there shall be no  
survivor of the house  
of Esau;

says the Lord.

<sup>19</sup> Those of the Negeb shall  
possess Mount Esau,  
and those of the  
Shephelah the land of  
the Philistines;  
they shall possess the land  
of Ephraim and the  
land of Samaria,  
and Benjamin shall  
possess Gilead.

<sup>20</sup> The exiles of the Israelites  
who are in Halah  
shall possess Phoenicia  
as far as Zarephath;  
and the exiles of Jerusalem  
who are in Sepharad  
shall possess the towns  
of the Negeb.

<sup>21</sup> Those who have been  
saved shall go up to  
Mount Zion  
to rule Mount Esau;  
and the kingdom shall be  
the LORD's.

## Revelation 4:6b–11 (NRSV)

<sup>6b</sup> Around the throne, and on  
each side of the throne, are

four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: <sup>7</sup> the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. <sup>8</sup> And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,

“Holy, holy, holy,  
the Lord God the Almighty,  
who was and is and is to  
come.”

<sup>9</sup> And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

<sup>11</sup> “You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and  
honor and power,  
for you created all things,

and by your will they  
existed and were  
created.”

**Psalm 132:10-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>10</sup> For your servant David’s  
sake  
do not turn away the  
face of your anointed  
one.

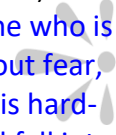
<sup>11</sup> The LORD swore to David a  
sure oath  
from which he will not  
turn back:

“One of the sons of your  
body  
I will set on your throne.

<sup>12</sup> If your sons keep my  
covenant  
and my decrees that I  
shall teach them,  
their sons also,  
forevermore,  
shall sit on your throne.”

**Proverbs 28:14 (NRSV)**

<sup>14</sup> Happy is the one who is  
never without fear,  
but one who is hard-  
hearted will fall into  
calamity.



# November 26



## Jonah 1:1–2:10 (NRSV) *Jonah Tries to Run Away from God*

**1** Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me.” <sup>3</sup>But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. <sup>5</sup>Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast

asleep. <sup>6</sup>The captain came and said to him, “What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought so that we do not perish.”

<sup>7</sup>The sailors said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. <sup>8</sup>Then they said to him, “Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” <sup>9</sup>“I am a Hebrew,” he replied. “I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” <sup>10</sup>Then the men were even more afraid, and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them so.

<sup>11</sup>Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?” For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous.

<sup>12</sup>He said to them, “Pick me up

and throw me into the sea;  
then the sea will quiet down  
for you; for I know it is  
because of me that this great  
storm has come upon you.”

<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless the men  
rowed hard to bring the ship  
back to land, but they could  
not, for the sea grew more  
and more stormy against  
them. <sup>14</sup> Then they cried out to  
the LORD, “Please, O LORD, we  
pray, do not let us perish on  
account of this man’s life. Do  
not make us guilty of innocent  
blood; for you, O LORD, have  
done as it pleased you.” <sup>15</sup> So  
they picked Jonah up and  
threw him into the sea; and  
the sea ceased from its raging.  
<sup>16</sup> Then the men feared the  
LORD even more, and they  
offered a sacrifice to the LORD  
and made vows.

<sup>17</sup> But the LORD provided a  
large fish to swallow up Jonah;  
and Jonah was in the belly of  
the fish three days and three  
nights.

*A Psalm of Thanksgiving*

**2** Then Jonah prayed to the  
LORD his God from the belly of  
the fish, <sup>2</sup> saying,

“I called to the LORD out of  
my distress,  
and he answered me;  
out of the belly of Sheol I  
cried,  
and you heard my voice.

<sup>3</sup> You cast me into the deep,  
into the heart of the  
seas,  
and the flood  
surrounded me;  
all your waves and your  
billows  
passed over me.

<sup>4</sup> Then I said, ‘I am driven  
away  
from your sight;  
how shall I look again  
upon your holy temple?’

<sup>5</sup> The waters closed in over  
me;  
the deep surrounded  
me;

weeds were wrapped  
around my head  
<sup>6</sup> at the roots of the  
mountains.

I went down to the land  
whose bars closed upon  
me forever;  
yet you brought up my life  
from the Pit,  
O LORD my God.

<sup>7</sup> As my life was ebbing  
away,



I remembered the LORD;  
and my prayer came to  
you,  
into your holy temple.  
8 Those who worship vain  
idols  
forsake their true loyalty.  
9 But I with the voice of  
thanksgiving  
will sacrifice to you;  
what I have vowed I will  
pay.  
Deliverance belongs to  
the LORD!"  
10 Then the LORD spoke to the  
fish, and it spewed Jonah out  
upon the dry land.

### **Revelation 5:1–8 (NRSV)**

#### *The Scroll and the Lamb*

**5** Then I [John] saw in the  
right hand of the one seated  
on the throne a scroll written  
on the inside and on the back,  
sealed with seven seals; <sup>2</sup> and I  
saw a mighty angel  
proclaiming with a loud voice,  
"Who is worthy to open the  
scroll and break its seals?"  
<sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on  
earth or under the earth was  
able to open the scroll or to  
look into it. <sup>4</sup> And I began to  
weep bitterly because no one  
was found worthy to open the

scroll or to look into it. <sup>5</sup> Then  
one of the elders said to me,  
"Do not weep. See, the Lion of  
the tribe of Judah, the Root of  
David, has conquered, so that  
he can open the scroll and its  
seven seals."

<sup>6</sup> Then I saw between the  
throne and the four living  
creatures and among the  
elders a Lamb standing as if it  
had been slaughtered, having  
seven horns and seven eyes,  
which are the seven spirits of  
God sent out into all the earth.  
<sup>7</sup> He went and took the scroll  
from the right hand of the one  
who was seated on the  
throne. <sup>8</sup> When he had taken  
the scroll, the four living  
creatures and the twenty-four  
elders fell before the Lamb,  
each holding a harp and  
golden bowls full of incense,  
which are the prayers of the  
saints.

### **Psalm 132:13-18 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> For the LORD has chosen  
Zion;  
he has desired it for his  
habitation:  
<sup>14</sup> "This is my resting place  
forever;

here I will reside, for I  
have desired it.

- 15 I will abundantly bless its  
provisions;  
I will satisfy its poor with  
bread.
- 16 Its priests I will clothe with  
salvation,  
and its faithful will shout  
for joy.
- 17 There I will cause a horn to  
sprout up for David;  
I have prepared a lamp  
for my anointed one.
- 18 His enemies I will clothe  
with disgrace,  
but on him, his crown  
will gleam.”

**Proverbs 28:15–16** (NRSV)

- 15 Like a roaring lion or a  
charging bear  
is a wicked ruler over a  
poor people.
- 16 A ruler who lacks  
understanding is a  
cruel oppressor;  
but one who hates  
unjust gain will enjoy a  
long life.

## November 27



**Jonah 3:1–4:11** (NRSV)

*Conversion of Nineveh*

**3** The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” <sup>3</sup> So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. <sup>4</sup> Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” <sup>5</sup> And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

<sup>6</sup> When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

<sup>7</sup> Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human being or

animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. <sup>8</sup> Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. <sup>9</sup> Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.”

<sup>10</sup> When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

### *Jonah's Anger*

**4** But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup> He prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. <sup>3</sup> And now, O LORD,

please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” <sup>4</sup> And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” <sup>5</sup> Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. <sup>7</sup> But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. <sup>8</sup> When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

### *Jonah Is Reproved*

<sup>9</sup> But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.”

<sup>10</sup> Then the LORD said, “You are

concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. <sup>11</sup> And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?”

**Revelation 5:9–14** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> They [*the four living creatures and the elders*] sing a new song:

“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; <sup>10</sup> you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.”

<sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and

the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup> singing with full voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

<sup>13</sup> Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing,

“To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

<sup>14</sup> And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the elders fell down and worshiped.

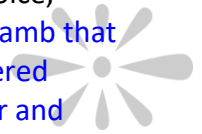
**Psalm 133:1-2** (NRSV)

*The Blessedness of Unity*

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

<sup>2</sup> It is like the precious oil on the head,



running down upon the  
beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down over the  
collar of his robes.

**Proverbs 28:17–18** (NRSV)

- <sup>17</sup> If someone is burdened  
with the blood of  
another,  
let that killer be a  
fugitive until death;  
let no one offer  
assistance.
- <sup>18</sup> One who walks in integrity  
will be safe,  
but whoever follows  
crooked ways will fall  
into the Pit.

## November 28



**Micah 1:1–2:13** (NRSV)

The word of the LORD that  
came to Micah of Moresheth  
in the days of Kings Jotham,  
Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah,  
which he saw concerning  
Samaria and Jerusalem.

*Judgment Pronounced  
against Samaria*

- <sup>2</sup> Hear, you peoples, all of  
you;  
listen, O earth, and all  
that is in it;  
and let the Lord GOD be a  
witness against you,  
the Lord from his holy  
temple.
- <sup>3</sup> For lo, the LORD is coming  
out of his place,  
and will come down and  
tread upon the high  
places of the earth.
- <sup>4</sup> Then the mountains will  
melt under him  
and the valleys will burst  
open,  
like wax near the fire,  
like waters poured down  
a steep place.
- <sup>5</sup> All this is for the  
transgression of Jacob  
and for the sins of the  
house of Israel.  
What is the transgression  
of Jacob?  
Is it not Samaria  
And what is the high place  
of Judah?  
Is it not Jerusalem?
- <sup>6</sup> Therefore I will make  
Samaria a heap in the  
open country,

a place for planting  
vineyards.

I will pour down her stones  
into the valley,  
and uncover her  
foundations.

7 All her images shall be  
beaten to pieces,  
all her wages shall be  
burned with fire,  
and all her idols I will lay  
waste;  
for as the wages of a  
prostitute she gathered  
them,  
and as the wages of a  
prostitute they shall  
again be used.

*The Doom of the  
Cities of Judah*

8 For this I will lament and  
wail;  
I will go barefoot and  
naked;  
I will make lamentation  
like the jackals,  
and mourning like the  
ostriches.  
9 For her wound is incurable.  
It has come to Judah;  
it has reached to the gate  
of my people,  
to Jerusalem.  
10 Tell it not in Gath,

weep not at all;  
in Beth-leaphrah  
roll yourselves in the  
dust.

11 Pass on your way,  
inhabitants of Shaphir,  
in nakedness and shame;  
the inhabitants of Zaanan  
do not come forth;  
Beth-ezel is wailing  
and shall remove its  
support from you.

12 For the inhabitants of  
Maroth  
wait anxiously for good,  
yet disaster has come  
down from the LORD  
to the gate of Jerusalem.

13 Harness the steeds to the  
chariots,  
inhabitants of Lachish;  
it was the beginning of sin  
to daughter Zion,  
for in you were found  
the transgressions of  
Israel.

14 Therefore you shall give  
parting gifts  
to Moresheth-gath;  
the houses of Achzib shall  
be a deception  
to the kings of Israel.

15 I will again bring a  
conqueror upon you,  
inhabitants of Mareshah;

the glory of Israel  
shall come to Adullam.

16 Make yourselves bald and  
cut off your hair  
for your pampered  
children;  
make yourselves as bald as  
the eagle,  
for they have gone from  
you into exile.

*Social Evils Denounced*

**2** Alas for those who devise  
wickedness  
and evil deeds on their  
beds!  
When the morning dawns,  
they perform it,  
because it is in their  
power.  
2 They covet fields, and seize  
them;  
houses, and take them  
away;  
they oppress householder  
and house,  
people and their  
inheritance.  
3 Therefore thus says the  
LORD:  
Now, I am devising against  
this family an evil  
from which you cannot  
remove your necks;

and you shall not walk  
haughtily,  
for it will be an evil time.  
4 On that day they shall take  
up a taunt song against  
you,  
and wail with bitter  
lamentation,  
and say, "We are utterly  
ruined;  
the LORD alters the  
inheritance of my  
people;  
how he removes it from  
me!  
Among our captors he  
parcels out our fields."  
5 Therefore you will have no  
one to cast the line by  
lot  
in the assembly of the  
LORD.  
6 "Do not preach"—thus  
they preach—  
"one should not preach  
of such things;  
disgrace will not  
overtake us."  
7 Should this be said, O  
house of Jacob?  
Is the LORD's patience  
exhausted?  
Are these his doings?  
Do not my words do good

to one who walks  
uprightly?  
8 But you rise up against my  
people as an enemy;  
you strip the robe from  
the peaceful,  
from those who pass by  
trustingly  
with no thought of war.  
9 The women of my people  
you drive out  
from their pleasant  
houses;  
from their young children  
you take away  
my glory forever.  
10 Arise and go;  
for this is no place to  
rest,  
because of uncleanness  
that destroys  
with a grievous  
destruction.  
11 If someone were to go  
about uttering empty  
falsehoods,  
saying, "I will preach to  
you of wine and strong  
drink,"  
such a one would be the  
preacher for this  
people!

*A Promise for the  
Remnant of Israel*

12 I will surely gather all of  
you, O Jacob,  
I will gather the survivors  
of Israel;  
I will set them together  
like sheep in a fold,  
like a flock in its pasture;  
it will resound with  
people.  
13 The one who breaks out  
will go up before them;  
they will break through  
and pass the gate,  
going out by it.  
Their king will pass on  
before them,  
the LORD at their head.

**Revelation 6:1–8 (NRSV)**  
*The Seven Seals*

**6** Then I saw the Lamb open  
one of the seven seals, and I  
heard one of the four living  
creatures call out, as with a  
voice of thunder, "Come!" <sup>2</sup> I  
looked, and there was a white  
horse! Its rider had a bow; a  
crown was given to him, and  
he came out conquering and  
to conquer.  
<sup>3</sup> When he opened the  
second seal, I heard the  
second living creature call out,  
"Come!" <sup>4</sup> And out came  
another horse, bright red; its



rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another; and he was given a great sword.

<sup>5</sup> When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature call out, “Come!” I looked, and there was a black horse! Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand, <sup>6</sup> and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a day’s pay, and three quarts of barley for a day’s pay, but do not damage the olive oil and the wine!”

<sup>7</sup> When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature call out, “Come!” <sup>8</sup> I looked and there was a pale green horse! Its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed with him; they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth.

**Psalms 133:3** (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon,

which falls on the mountains of Zion.

For there the LORD ordained his blessing, life forevermore.

**Proverbs 28:19–20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread, but one who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.

<sup>20</sup> **The faithful will abound with blessings, but one who is in a hurry to be rich will not go unpunished.**

**November 29**



**Micah 3:1–4:13** (NRSV)

*Wicked Rulers and Prophets*

**3** And I said:

Listen, you heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel!

Should you not know justice?—

2 you who hate the good  
and love the evil,  
who tear the skin off my  
people,  
and the flesh off their  
bones;  
3 who eat the flesh of my  
people,  
flay their skin off them,  
break their bones in  
pieces,  
and chop them up like  
meat in a kettle,  
like flesh in a caldron.  
4 Then they will cry to the  
LORD,  
but he will not answer  
them;  
he will hide his face from  
them at that time,  
because they have acted  
wickedly.  
5 Thus says the LORD  
concerning the  
prophets  
who lead my people  
astray,  
who cry "Peace"  
when they have  
something to eat,  
but declare war against  
those  
who put nothing into  
their mouths.

6 Therefore it shall be night  
to you, without vision,  
and darkness to you,  
without revelation.  
The sun shall go down  
upon the prophets,  
and the day shall be  
black over them;  
7 the seers shall be  
disgraced,  
and the diviners put to  
shame;  
they shall all cover their  
lips,  
for there is no answer  
from God.  
8 But as for me, I am filled  
with power,  
with the spirit of the  
LORD,  
and with justice and  
might,  
to declare to Jacob his  
transgression  
and to Israel his sin.  
9 Hear this, you rulers of the  
house of Jacob  
and chiefs of the house  
of Israel,  
who abhor justice  
and pervert all equity,  
10 who build Zion with blood  
and Jerusalem with  
wrong!

11 Its rulers give judgment for  
a bribe,  
its priests teach for a  
price,  
its prophets give oracles  
for money;  
yet they lean upon the  
LORD and say,  
“Surely the LORD is with  
us!  
No harm shall come  
upon us.”

12 Therefore because of you  
Zion shall be plowed as a  
field;  
Jerusalem shall become a  
heap of ruins,  
and the mountain of the  
house a wooded  
height.

*Peace and Security  
through Obedience  
(Cp Isa 2:2–4)*

**4** In days to come  
the mountain of the  
LORD’s house  
shall be established as the  
highest of the  
mountains,  
and shall be raised up  
above the hills.  
Peoples shall stream to it,  
2 and many nations shall  
come and say:

“Come, let us go up to the  
mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God  
of Jacob;  
that he may teach us his  
ways  
and that we may walk in  
his paths.”  
For out of Zion shall go  
forth instruction,  
and the word of the LORD  
from Jerusalem.

3 He shall judge between  
many peoples,  
and shall arbitrate  
between strong  
nations far away;  
they shall beat their  
swords into  
plowshares,  
and their spears into  
pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up  
sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn  
war any more;  
4 but they shall all sit under  
their own vines and  
under their own fig  
trees,  
and no one shall make  
them afraid;  
for the mouth of the  
LORD of hosts has  
spoken.

5 For all the peoples walk,  
each in the name of its  
god,  
but we will walk in the  
name of the LORD our  
God  
forever and ever.

*Restoration Promised  
after Exile*

6 In that day, says the LORD,  
I will assemble the lame  
and gather those who have  
been driven away,  
and those whom I have  
afflicted.

7 The lame I will make the  
remnant,  
and those who were cast  
off, a strong nation;  
and the LORD will reign  
over them in Mount  
Zion  
now and forevermore.

8 And you, O tower of the  
flock,  
hill of daughter Zion,  
to you it shall come,  
the former dominion  
shall come,  
the sovereignty of  
daughter Jerusalem.

9 Now why do you cry  
aloud?  
Is there no king in you?

Has your counselor  
perished,  
that pangs have seized  
you like a woman in  
labor?

10 Writhe and groan, O  
daughter Zion,  
like a woman in labor;  
for now you shall go forth  
from the city  
and camp in the open  
country;  
you shall go to Babylon.

There you shall be  
rescued,  
there the LORD will  
redeem you  
from the hands of your  
enemies.

11 Now many nations  
are assembled against  
you,  
saying, "Let her be  
profaned,  
and let our eyes gaze  
upon Zion."

12 But they do not know  
the thoughts of the LORD;  
they do not understand his  
plan,  
that he has gathered  
them as sheaves to the  
threshing floor.

13 Arise and thresh,  
O daughter Zion,

for I will make your horn  
iron  
and your hoofs bronze;  
you shall beat in pieces  
many peoples,  
and shall devote their  
gain to the LORD,  
their wealth to the Lord  
of the whole earth.

**Revelation 6:9–17** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given; <sup>10</sup> they cried out with a loud voice, “Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?” <sup>11</sup> They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters, who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed.

<sup>12</sup> When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth,

the full moon became like blood, <sup>13</sup> and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. <sup>14</sup> The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

<sup>15</sup> Then the kings of the earth and the magnates and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, <sup>16</sup> calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; <sup>17</sup> for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

**Psalms 134:1 – 135:4** (NRSV)

*Praise in the Night*

A Song of Ascents.

- <sup>1</sup> Come, bless the LORD, all  
you servants of the  
LORD,  
who stand by night in the  
house of the LORD!
- <sup>2</sup> Lift up your hands to the  
holy place,  
and bless the LORD.



<sup>3</sup> May the LORD, maker of  
heaven and earth,  
bless you from Zion.

*Praise for God's  
Goodness and Might*

**135**<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Praise the name of the  
LORD;  
give praise, O servants of  
the LORD,  
<sup>2</sup> you that stand in the  
house of the LORD,  
in the courts of the  
house of our God.  
<sup>3</sup> Praise the LORD, for the  
LORD is good;  
sing to his name, for he  
is gracious.  
<sup>4</sup> For the LORD has chosen  
Jacob for himself,  
Israel as his own  
possession.

**Proverbs 28:21–22** (NRSV)

<sup>21</sup> To show partiality is not  
good—  
yet for a piece of bread a  
person may do wrong.  
<sup>22</sup> The miser is in a hurry to  
get rich  
and does not know that  
loss is sure to come.

## November 30



**Micah 5:1–6:8** (NRSV)

**5** Now you are walled  
around with a wall;  
siege is laid against us;  
with a rod they strike the  
ruler of Israel  
upon the cheek.

*The Ruler from Bethlehem*

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of  
Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little  
clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth  
for me  
one who is to rule in  
Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.  
<sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give  
them up until the time  
when she who is in labor  
has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred  
shall return  
to the people of Israel.  
<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and  
feed his flock in the  
strength of the LORD,

in the majesty of the  
name of the LORD his  
God.

And they shall live secure,  
for now he shall be  
great

5 to the ends of the earth;  
and he shall be the one of  
peace.

If the Assyrians come  
into our land  
and tread upon our soil,  
we will raise against them  
seven shepherds  
and eight installed as  
rulers.

6 They shall rule the land of  
Assyria with the sword,  
and the land of Nimrod  
with the drawn sword;  
they shall rescue us from  
the Assyrians  
if they come into our  
land  
or tread within our  
border.

*The Future Role  
of the Remnant*

7 Then the remnant of  
Jacob,  
surrounded by many  
peoples,  
shall be like dew from the  
LORD,

like showers on the  
grass,  
which do not depend upon  
people  
or wait for any mortal.

8 And among the nations the  
remnant of Jacob,  
surrounded by many  
peoples,  
shall be like a lion among  
the animals of the  
forest,  
like a young lion among  
the flocks of sheep,  
which, when it goes  
through, treads down  
and tears in pieces, with  
no one to deliver.

9 Your hand shall be lifted  
up over your  
adversaries,  
and all your enemies  
shall be cut off.

10 In that day, says the LORD,  
I will cut off your horses  
from among you  
and will destroy your  
chariots;

11 and I will cut off the cities  
of your land  
and throw down all your  
strongholds;

12 and I will cut off sorceries  
from your hand,

and you shall have no  
more soothsayers;  
13 and I will cut off your  
images  
and your pillars from  
among you,  
and you shall bow down  
no more  
to the work of your  
hands;  
14 and I will uproot your  
sacred poles from  
among you  
and destroy your towns.  
15 And in anger and wrath I  
will execute vengeance  
on the nations that did  
not obey.

*God Challenges Israel*

**6** Hear what the LORD says:  
Rise, plead your case  
before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear  
your voice.  
2 Hear, you mountains, the  
controversy of the  
LORD,  
and you enduring  
foundations of the  
earth;  
for the LORD has a  
controversy with his  
people,

and he will contend with  
Israel.  
3 “O my people, what have I  
done to you?  
In what have I wearied  
you? Answer me!  
4 For I brought you up from  
the land of Egypt,  
and redeemed you from  
the house of slavery;  
and I sent before you  
Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.  
5 O my people, remember  
now what King Balak of  
Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor  
answered him,  
and what happened from  
Shittim to Gilgal,  
that you may know the  
saving acts of the  
LORD.”

*What God Requires*  
(Cp Am 5:24)

6 “With what shall I come  
before the LORD,  
and bow myself before  
God on high?  
Shall I come before him  
with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?  
7 Will the LORD be pleased  
with thousands of  
rams,



with ten thousands of  
rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for  
my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for  
the sin of my soul?"

<sup>8</sup> He has told you, O mortal,  
what is good;  
and what does the LORD  
require of you  
but to do justice, and to  
love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with  
your God?

**Revelation 7:1–8** (NRSV)

*The 144,000 of Israel Sealed*

**7** After this I saw four angels  
standing at the four corners of  
the earth, holding back the  
four winds of the earth so that  
no wind could blow on earth  
or sea or against any tree. <sup>2</sup> I  
saw another angel ascending  
from the rising of the sun,  
having the seal of the living  
God, and he called with a loud  
voice to the four angels who  
had been given power to  
damage earth and sea,  
<sup>3</sup> saying, "Do not damage the  
earth or the sea or the trees,  
until we have marked the  
servants of our God with a seal  
on their foreheads."

<sup>4</sup> And I heard the number  
of those who were sealed, one  
hundred forty-four thousand,  
sealed out of every tribe of the  
people of Israel:

<sup>5</sup> From the tribe of Judah  
twelve thousand  
sealed,  
from the tribe of Reuben  
twelve thousand,  
from the tribe of Gad  
twelve thousand,  
<sup>6</sup> from the tribe of Asher  
twelve thousand,  
from the tribe of  
Naphtali twelve  
thousand,  
from the tribe of  
Manasseh twelve  
thousand,  
<sup>7</sup> from the tribe of Simeon  
twelve thousand,  
from the tribe of Levi  
twelve thousand,  
from the tribe of Issachar  
twelve thousand,  
<sup>8</sup> from the tribe of Zebulun  
twelve thousand,  
from the tribe of Joseph  
twelve thousand,  
from the tribe of  
Benjamin twelve  
thousand sealed.

**Psalms 135:5-12 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> For I know that the LORD is  
great;  
our Lord is above all  
gods.

<sup>6</sup> Whatever the LORD pleases  
he does,  
in heaven and on earth,  
in the seas and all deeps.

<sup>7</sup> He it is who makes the  
clouds rise at the end  
of the earth;  
he makes lightnings for  
the rain  
and brings out the wind  
from his storehouses.

<sup>8</sup> He it was who struck down  
the firstborn of Egypt,  
both human beings and  
animals;

<sup>9</sup> he sent signs and wonders  
into your midst, O Egypt,  
against Pharaoh and all  
his servants.

<sup>10</sup> He struck down many  
nations  
and killed mighty kings—

<sup>11</sup> Sihon, king of the  
Amorites,  
and Og, king of Bashan,  
and all the kingdoms of  
Canaan—

<sup>12</sup> and gave their land as a  
heritage,

a heritage to his people  
Israel.

**Proverbs 28:23–24 (NRSV)**

<sup>23</sup> Whoever rebukes a person  
will afterward find  
more favor  
than one who flatters  
with the tongue.

<sup>24</sup> Anyone who robs father or  
mother  
and says, “That is no  
crime,”  
is partner to a thug.

## December 1



**Micah 6:9–7:20 (NRSV)**

*Cheating and Violence  
to Be Punished*

<sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD cries  
to the city  
(it is sound wisdom to  
fear your name):  
Hear, O tribe and assembly  
of the city!

<sup>10</sup> Can I forget the  
treasures of  
wickedness in the  
house of the wicked,

and the scant measure  
that is accursed?  
11 Can I tolerate wicked  
scales  
and a bag of dishonest  
weights?  
12 Your wealthy are full of  
violence;  
your inhabitants speak  
lies,  
with tongues of deceit in  
their mouths.  
13 Therefore I have begun to  
strike you down,  
making you desolate  
because of your sins.  
14 You shall eat, but not be  
satisfied,  
and there shall be a  
gnawing hunger within  
you;  
you shall put away, but not  
save,  
and what you save, I will  
hand over to the  
sword.  
15 You shall sow, but not  
reap;  
you shall tread olives,  
but not anoint  
yourselves with oil;  
you shall tread grapes,  
but not drink wine.  
16 For you have kept the  
statutes of Omri

and all the works of the  
house of Ahab,  
and you have followed  
their counsels.  
Therefore I will make you a  
desolation, and your  
inhabitants an object  
of hissing;  
so you shall bear the  
scorn of my people.

*The Total Corruption  
of the People*

**7** Woe is me! For I have  
become like one who,  
after the summer fruit  
has been gathered,  
after the vintage has  
been gleaned,  
finds no cluster to eat;  
there is no first-ripe fig  
for which I hunger.  
2 The faithful have  
disappeared from the  
land,  
and there is no one left  
who is upright;  
they all lie in wait for  
blood,  
and they hunt each other  
with nets.  
3 Their hands are skilled to  
do evil;  
the official and the judge  
ask for a bribe,

and the powerful dictate  
what they desire;  
thus they pervert justice.  
4 The best of them is like a  
brier,  
the most upright of them  
a thorn hedge.  
The day of their sentinels,  
of their punishment,  
has come;  
now their confusion is at  
hand.  
5 Put no trust in a friend,  
have no confidence in a  
loved one;  
guard the doors of your  
mouth  
from her who lies in your  
embrace;  
6 for the son treats the  
father with contempt,  
the daughter rises up  
against her mother,  
the daughter-in-law  
against her mother-in-  
law;  
your enemies are  
members of your own  
household.  
7 But as for me, I will look to  
the LORD,  
I will wait for the God of  
my salvation;  
my God will hear me.

*Penitence and Trust in God*

8 Do not rejoice over me, O  
my enemy;  
when I fall, I shall rise;  
when I sit in darkness,  
the LORD will be a light to  
me.  
9 I must bear the indignation  
of the LORD,  
because I have sinned  
against him,  
until he takes my side  
and executes judgment  
for me.  
He will bring me out to the  
light;  
I shall see his vindication.  
10 Then my enemy will see,  
and shame will cover her  
who said to me,  
“Where is the LORD your  
God?”  
My eyes will see her  
downfall;  
now she will be trodden  
down  
like the mire of the  
streets.

*A Prophecy of Restoration*

11 A day for the building of  
your walls!  
In that day the boundary  
shall be far extended.

12 In that day they will come  
to you  
from Assyria to Egypt,  
and from Egypt to the  
River,  
from sea to sea and from  
mountain to mountain.

13 But the earth will be  
desolate  
because of its  
inhabitants,  
for the fruit of their  
doings.

14 Shepherd your people with  
your staff,  
the flock that belongs to  
you,  
which lives alone in a  
forest  
in the midst of a garden  
land;  
let them feed in Bashan  
and Gilead  
as in the days of old.

15 As in the days when you  
came out of the land of  
Egypt,  
show us marvelous  
things.

16 The nations shall see and  
be ashamed  
of all their might;  
they shall lay their hands  
on their mouths;  
their ears shall be deaf;

17 they shall lick dust like a  
snake,  
like the crawling things  
of the earth;  
they shall come trembling  
out of their fortresses;  
they shall turn in dread  
to the LORD our God,  
and they shall stand in  
fear of you.

*God's Compassion and  
Steadfast Love*

18 Who is a God like you,  
pardoning iniquity  
and passing over the  
transgression  
of the remnant of your  
possession?

He does not retain his  
anger forever,  
because he delights in  
showing clemency.

19 He will again have  
compassion upon us;  
he will tread our  
iniquities under foot.  
You will cast all our sins  
into the depths of the  
sea.

20 You will show faithfulness  
to Jacob  
and unswerving loyalty  
to Abraham,

as you have sworn to our  
ancestors  
from the days of old.

**Revelation 7:9–17** (NRSV)

*The Multitude from  
Every Nation*

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

“Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

<sup>11</sup> And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> singing,

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might

be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?”

<sup>14</sup> I said to him, “Sir, you are the one that knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

<sup>16</sup> They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them,

<sup>17</sup> nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,

and God will wipe away  
every tear from their  
eyes.”

**Psalms 135:13-21** (NRSV)

- <sup>13</sup> Your name, O LORD,  
endures forever,  
your renown, O LORD,  
throughout all ages.  
<sup>14</sup> For the LORD will vindicate  
his people,  
and have compassion on  
his servants.  
<sup>15</sup> The idols of the nations are  
silver and gold,  
the work of human  
hands.  
<sup>16</sup> They have mouths, but  
they do not speak;  
they have eyes, but they  
do not see;  
<sup>17</sup> they have ears, but they  
do not hear,  
and there is no breath in  
their mouths.  
<sup>18</sup> Those who make them  
and all who trust them  
shall become like them.  
<sup>19</sup> O house of Israel, bless the  
LORD!  
O house of Aaron, bless  
the LORD!  
<sup>20</sup> O house of Levi, bless the  
LORD!

You that fear the LORD,  
bless the LORD!

- <sup>21</sup> Blessed be the LORD from  
Zion,  
he who resides in  
Jerusalem.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 28:25-26** (NRSV)

- <sup>25</sup> The greedy person stirs up  
strife,  
but whoever trusts in the  
LORD will be enriched.  
<sup>26</sup> Those who trust in their  
own wits are fools;  
but those who walk in  
wisdom come through  
safely.

**December**  
**2**



**Nahum 1:1-2:13** (NRSV)

An oracle concerning Nineveh.  
The book of the vision of  
Nahum of Elkosh.

*The Consuming Wrath of God*

- <sup>2</sup> A jealous and avenging  
God is the LORD,

the LORD is avenging and  
wrathful;  
the LORD takes vengeance  
on his adversaries  
and rages against his  
enemies.  
3 The LORD is slow to anger  
but great in power,  
and the LORD will by no  
means clear the guilty.  
His way is in whirlwind and  
storm,  
and the clouds are the  
dust of his feet.  
4 He rebukes the sea and  
makes it dry,  
and he dries up all the  
rivers;  
Bashan and Carmel wither,  
and the bloom of  
Lebanon fades.  
5 The mountains quake  
before him,  
and the hills melt;  
the earth heaves before  
him,  
the world and all who  
live in it.  
6 Who can stand before his  
indignation?  
Who can endure the  
heat of his anger?  
His wrath is poured out  
like fire,

and by him the rocks are  
broken in pieces.  
7 The LORD is good,  
a stronghold in a day of  
trouble;  
he protects those who  
take refuge in him,  
even in a rushing flood.  
8 He will make a full end of  
his adversaries,  
and will pursue his  
enemies into darkness.  
9 Why do you plot against  
the LORD?  
He will make an end;  
no adversary will rise up  
twice.  
10 Like thorns they are  
entangled,  
like drunkards they are  
drunk;  
they are consumed like  
dry straw.  
11 From you one has gone  
out  
who plots evil against  
the LORD,  
one who counsels  
wickedness.  
*Good News for Judah*  
12 Thus says the LORD,  
“Though they are at full  
strength and many,



they will be cut off and  
pass away.

Though I have afflicted  
you,

I will afflict you no more.

13 And now I will break off his  
yoke from you  
and snap the bonds that  
bind you.”

14 The LORD has commanded  
concerning you:

“Your name shall be  
perpetuated no longer;  
from the house of your  
gods I will cut off  
the carved image and  
the cast image.

I will make your grave, for  
you are worthless.”

15 Look! On the mountains  
the feet of one  
who brings good tidings,  
who proclaims peace!  
Celebrate your festivals, O  
Judah,  
fulfill your vows,  
for never again shall the  
wicked invade you;  
they are utterly cut off.

*The Destruction of  
the Wicked City*

**2** A shatterer has come up  
against you.  
Guard the ramparts;

watch the road;  
gird your loins;  
collect all your strength.

2 (For the LORD is restoring  
the majesty of Jacob,  
as well as the majesty of  
Israel,  
though ravagers have  
ravaged them  
and ruined their  
branches.)

3 The shields of his warriors  
are red;  
his soldiers are clothed in  
crimson.

The metal on the chariots  
flashes  
on the day when he  
musters them;  
the chargers prance.

4 The chariots race madly  
through the streets,  
they rush to and fro  
through the squares;  
their appearance is like  
torches,  
they dart like lightning.

5 He calls his officers;  
they stumble as they  
come forward;  
they hasten to the wall,  
and the mantelet is set  
up.

6 The river gates are  
opened,

the palace trembles.  
7 It is decreed that the city  
be exiled,  
its slave women led  
away,  
moaning like doves  
and beating their  
breasts.  
8 Nineveh is like a pool  
whose waters run away.  
“Halt! Halt!”—  
but no one turns back.  
9 “Plunder the silver,  
plunder the gold!  
There is no end of  
treasure!  
An abundance of every  
precious thing!”  
10 Devastation, desolation,  
and destruction!  
Hearts faint and knees  
tremble,  
all loins quake,  
all faces grow pale!  
11 What became of the lions’  
den,  
the cave of the young  
lions,  
where the lion goes,  
and the lion’s cubs, with  
no one to disturb  
them?  
12 The lion has torn enough  
for his whelps

and strangled prey for  
his lionesses;  
he has filled his caves with  
prey  
and his dens with torn  
flesh.

<sup>13</sup> See, I am against you,  
says the LORD of hosts, and I  
will burn your chariots in  
smoke, and the sword shall  
devour your young lions; I will  
cut off your prey from the  
earth, and the voice of your  
messengers shall be heard no  
more.

### **Revelation 8:1–5 (NRSV)**

#### *The Seventh Seal and the Golden Censer*

**8** When the Lamb opened the  
seventh seal, there was silence  
in heaven for about half an  
hour. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the seven  
angels who stand before God,  
and seven trumpets were  
given to them.

<sup>3</sup> Another angel with a  
golden censer came and stood  
at the altar; he was given a  
great quantity of incense to  
offer with the prayers of all  
the saints on the golden altar  
that is before the throne.

<sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the  
incense, with the prayers of

the saints, rose before God  
from the hand of the angel.

<sup>5</sup> Then the angel took the  
censer and filled it with fire  
from the altar and threw it on  
the earth; and there were  
peals of thunder, rumblings,  
flashes of lightning, and an  
earthquake.

**Psalm 136:1-12 (NRSV)**

*God's Work in Creation and in  
History*

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> O give thanks to the God  
of gods,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

<sup>3</sup> O give thanks to the Lord  
of lords,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>4</sup> who alone does great  
wonders,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>5</sup> who by understanding  
made the heavens,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>6</sup> who spread out the earth  
on the waters,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>7</sup> who made the great lights,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>8</sup> the sun to rule over the  
day,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>9</sup> the moon and stars to rule  
over the night,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>10</sup> who struck Egypt through  
their firstborn,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>11</sup> and brought Israel out  
from among them,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

<sup>12</sup> with a strong hand and an  
outstretched arm,

for his steadfast love  
endures forever;

**Proverbs 28:27-28 (NRSV)**

<sup>27</sup> Whoever gives to the poor  
will lack nothing,  
but one who turns a  
blind eye will get many  
a curse.

<sup>28</sup> When the wicked prevail,  
people go into hiding;

but when they perish,  
the righteous increase.

## December 3



**Nahum 3:1–19** (NRSV)  
*Ruin Imminent and Inevitable*

**3** Ah! City of bloodshed,  
utterly deceitful, full of  
booty—  
no end to the plunder!  
<sup>2</sup> The crack of whip and  
rumble of wheel,  
galloping horse and  
bounding chariot!  
<sup>3</sup> Horsemen charging,  
flashing sword and  
glittering spear,  
piles of dead,  
heaps of corpses,  
dead bodies without end—  
they stumble over the  
bodies!  
<sup>4</sup> Because of the countless  
debaucheries of the  
prostitute,  
gracefully alluring,  
mistress of sorcery,

who enslaves nations  
through her  
debaucheries,  
and peoples through her  
sorcery,

<sup>5</sup> I am against you,  
says the LORD of hosts,  
and will lift up your skirts  
over your face;  
and I will let nations look  
on your nakedness  
and kingdoms on your  
shame.

<sup>6</sup> I will throw filth at you  
and treat you with  
contempt,  
and make you a  
spectacle.

<sup>7</sup> Then all who see you will  
shrink from you and  
say,  
“Nineveh is devastated;  
who will bemoan her?”  
Where shall I seek  
comforters for you?

<sup>8</sup> Are you better than  
Thebes  
that sat by the Nile,  
with water around her,  
her rampart a sea,  
water her wall?

<sup>9</sup> Ethiopia was her strength,  
Egypt too, and that  
without limit;

Put and the Libyans were  
her helpers.  
10 Yet she became an exile,  
she went into captivity;  
even her infants were  
dashed in pieces  
at the head of every  
street;  
lots were cast for her  
nobles,  
all her dignitaries were  
bound in fetters.  
11 You also will be drunken,  
you will go into hiding;  
you will seek  
a refuge from the  
enemy.  
12 All your fortresses are like  
fig trees  
with first-ripe figs—  
if shaken they fall  
into the mouth of the  
eater.  
13 Look at your troops:  
they are women in your  
midst.  
The gates of your land  
are wide open to your  
foes;  
fire has devoured the  
bars of your gates.  
14 Draw water for the siege,  
strengthen your forts;  
trample the clay,  
tread the mortar,

take hold of the brick  
mold!  
15 There the fire will devour  
you,  
the sword will cut you  
off.  
It will devour you like the  
locust.  
Multiply yourselves like  
the locust,  
multiply like the  
grasshopper!  
16 You increased your  
merchants  
more than the stars of  
the heavens.  
The locust sheds its skin  
and flies away.  
17 Your guards are like  
grasshoppers,  
your scribes like swarms  
of locusts  
settling on the fences  
on a cold day—  
when the sun rises, they fly  
away;  
no one knows where  
they have gone.  
18 Your shepherds are asleep,  
O king of Assyria;  
your nobles slumber.  
Your people are scattered  
on the mountains  
with no one to gather  
them.

<sup>19</sup> There is no assuaging your hurt,  
your wound is mortal.  
All who hear the news  
about you  
clap their hands over you.  
For who has ever escaped  
your endless cruelty?

**Revelation 8:6–13** (NRSV)

*The Seven Trumpets*

<sup>6</sup> Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them.

<sup>7</sup> The first angel blew his trumpet, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were hurled to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

<sup>8</sup> The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea. <sup>9</sup> A third of the sea became blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

<sup>10</sup> The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a

torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. <sup>11</sup> The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many died from the water, because it was made bitter.

<sup>12</sup> The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise the night.

<sup>13</sup> Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"

**Psalms 136:13-26** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> who divided the Red Sea in two,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;  
<sup>14</sup> and made Israel pass through the midst of it,  
for his steadfast love endures forever;

15 but overthrew Pharaoh  
and his army in the Red  
Sea,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
16 who led his people  
through the  
wilderness,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
17 who struck down great  
kings,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
18 and killed famous kings,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
19 Sihon, king of the  
Amorites,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
20 and Og, king of Bashan,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
21 and gave their land as a  
heritage,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever;  
22 a heritage to his servant  
Israel,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

23 **It is he who remembered  
us in our low estate,**

**for his steadfast love  
endures forever;**

24 **and rescued us from our  
foes,**

**for his steadfast love  
endures forever;**

25 who gives food to all flesh,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

26 O give thanks to the God  
of heaven,  
for his steadfast love  
endures forever.

#### **Proverbs 29:1 (NRSV)**

1 One who is often  
reproved, yet remains  
stubborn,  
will suddenly be broken  
beyond healing.

## **December 4**



Habakkuk 1:1–2:11 (NRSV)

The oracle that the prophet  
Habakkuk saw.

*The Prophet's Complaint*

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry  
for help,  
and you will not listen?

Or cry to you "Violence!"  
and you will not save?  
3 Why do you make me see  
wrongdoing  
and look at trouble?  
Destruction and violence  
are before me;  
strife and contention  
arise.  
4 So the law becomes slack  
and justice never  
prevails.  
The wicked surround the  
righteous—  
therefore judgment  
comes forth perverted.  
5 Look at the nations, and  
see!  
Be astonished! Be  
astounded!  
For a work is being done in  
your days  
that you would not  
believe if you were  
told.  
6 For I am rousing the  
Chaldeans,  
that fierce and  
impetuous nation,  
who march through the  
breadth of the earth  
to seize dwellings not  
their own.  
7 Dread and fearsome are  
they;

their justice and dignity  
proceed from  
themselves.  
8 Their horses are swifter  
than leopards,  
more menacing than  
wolves at dusk;  
their horses charge.  
Their horsemen come  
from far away;  
they fly like an eagle  
swift to devour.  
9 They all come for violence,  
with faces pressing  
forward;  
they gather captives like  
sand.  
10 At kings they scoff,  
and of rulers they make  
sport.  
They laugh at every  
fortress,  
and heap up earth to  
take it.  
11 Then they sweep by like  
the wind;  
they transgress and  
become guilty;  
their own might is their  
god!  
12 Are you not from of old,  
O LORD my God, my Holy  
One?  
You shall not die.



O LORD, you have marked  
them for judgment;  
and you, O Rock, have  
established them for  
punishment.

- 13 Your eyes are too pure to  
behold evil,  
and you cannot look on  
wrongdoing;  
why do you look on the  
treacherous,  
and are silent when the  
wicked swallow  
those more righteous  
than they?
- 14 You have made people like  
the fish of the sea,  
like crawling things that  
have no ruler.
- 15 The enemy brings all of  
them up with a hook;  
he drags them out with  
his net,  
he gathers them in his  
seine;  
so he rejoices and exults.
- 16 Therefore he sacrifices to  
his net  
and makes offerings to  
his seine;  
for by them his portion is  
lavish,  
and his food is rich.
- 17 Is he then to keep on  
emptying his net,

and destroying nations  
without mercy?

*God's Reply to the  
Prophet's Complaint*

- 2** I will stand at my  
watchpost,  
and station myself on the  
rampart;  
I will keep watch to see  
what he will say to me,  
and what he will answer  
concerning my  
complaint.
- 2 Then the LORD answered  
me and said:  
Write the vision;  
make it plain on tablets,  
so that a runner may  
read it.
- 3 For there is still a vision for  
the appointed time;  
it speaks of the end, and  
does not lie.  
If it seems to tarry, wait for  
it;  
it will surely come, it will  
not delay.
- 4 Look at the proud!  
Their spirit is not right in  
them,  
but the righteous live by  
their faith.
- 5 Moreover, wealth is  
treacherous;

the arrogant do not  
endure.

They open their throats  
wide as Sheol;  
like Death they never  
have enough.

They gather all nations for  
themselves,  
and collect all peoples as  
their own.

*The Woes of the Wicked*

<sup>6</sup> Shall not everyone taunt  
such people and, with mocking  
riddles, say about them,

“Alas for you who heap up  
what is not your own!”  
How long will you load  
yourselves with goods  
taken in pledge?

<sup>7</sup> Will not your own  
creditors suddenly rise,  
and those who make you  
tremble wake up?  
Then you will be booty  
for them.

<sup>8</sup> Because you have  
plundered many  
nations,  
all that survive of the  
peoples shall plunder  
you—  
because of human  
bloodshed, and  
violence to the earth,

to cities and all who live  
in them.

<sup>9</sup> “Alas for you who get evil  
gain for your houses,  
setting your nest on high  
to be safe from the reach  
of harm!”

<sup>10</sup> You have devised shame  
for your house  
by cutting off many  
peoples;  
you have forfeited your  
life.

<sup>11</sup> The very stones will cry out  
from the wall,  
and the plaster will  
respond from the  
woodwork.

**Revelation 9:1–12** (NRSV)

And the fifth angel blew his  
trumpet, and I saw a star that  
had fallen from heaven to  
earth, and he was given the  
key to the shaft of the  
bottomless pit; <sup>2</sup> he opened  
the shaft of the bottomless  
pit, and from the shaft rose  
smoke like the smoke of a  
great furnace, and the sun and  
the air were darkened with  
the smoke from the shaft.

<sup>3</sup> Then from the smoke came  
locusts on the earth, and they  
were given authority like the

authority of scorpions of the earth. <sup>4</sup> They were told not to damage the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> They were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings someone. <sup>6</sup> And in those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them.

<sup>7</sup> In appearance the locusts were like horses equipped for battle. On their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, <sup>8</sup> their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; <sup>9</sup> they had scales like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. <sup>10</sup> They have tails like scorpions, with stingers, and in their tails is their power to harm people for five months. <sup>11</sup> They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in

Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

<sup>12</sup> The first woe has passed. There are still two woes to come.

**Psalm 137:1-4** (NRSV)

*Lament over the Destruction of Jerusalem*

- <sup>1</sup> By the rivers of Babylon—  
there we sat down and  
there we wept  
when we remembered  
Zion.
- <sup>2</sup> On the willows there  
we hung up our harps.
- <sup>3</sup> For there our captors  
asked us for songs,  
and our tormentors asked  
for mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs  
of Zion!”
- <sup>4</sup> How could we sing the  
LORD's song  
in a foreign land?

**Proverbs 29:2-4** (NRSV)

- <sup>2</sup> When the righteous are in  
authority, the people  
rejoice;  
but when the wicked  
rule, the people groan.
- <sup>3</sup> **A child who loves wisdom  
makes a parent glad,**

but to keep company  
with prostitutes is to  
squander one's  
substance.

4 By justice a king gives  
stability to the land,  
but one who makes  
heavy exactions ruins  
it.

## December 5



### **Habakkuk 2:12–3:19 (NRSV)**

12 “Alas for you who build a  
town by bloodshed,  
and found a city on  
iniquity!”

13 Is it not from the LORD of  
hosts  
that peoples labor only  
to feed the flames,  
and nations weary  
themselves for  
nothing?

14 But the earth will be filled  
with the knowledge of  
the glory of the LORD,  
as the waters cover the  
sea.

15 “Alas for you who make  
your neighbors drink,  
pouring out your wrath  
until they are drunk,  
in order to gaze on their  
nakedness!”

16 You will be sated with  
contempt instead of  
glory.

Drink, you yourself, and  
stagger!

The cup in the LORD's right  
hand

will come around to you,  
and shame will come  
upon your glory!

17 For the violence done to  
Lebanon will  
overwhelm you;  
the destruction of the  
animals will terrify  
you—

because of human  
bloodshed and  
violence to the earth,  
to cities and all who live  
in them.

18 What use is an idol  
once its maker has  
shaped it—  
a cast image, a teacher  
of lies?

For its maker trusts in  
what has been made,

though the product is  
only an idol that  
cannot speak!

19 Alas for you who say to the  
wood, "Wake up!"  
to silent stone, "Rouse  
yourself!"

Can it teach?

See, it is gold and silver  
plated,  
and there is no breath in  
it at all.

20 But the LORD is in his holy  
temple;  
let all the earth keep  
silence before him!

**3** A prayer of the prophet  
Habakkuk according to  
Shigionoth.

*The Prophet's Prayer*

2 O LORD, I have heard of  
your renown,  
and I stand in awe, O  
LORD, of your work.  
In our own time revive it;  
in our own time make it  
known;  
in wrath may you  
remember mercy.

3 God came from Teman,  
the Holy One from  
Mount Paran. *Selah*  
His glory covered the  
heavens,

and the earth was full of  
his praise.

4 The brightness was like the  
sun;  
rays came forth from his  
hand,  
where his power lay  
hidden.

5 Before him went  
pestilence,  
and plague followed  
close behind.

6 He stopped and shook the  
earth;  
he looked and made the  
nations tremble.

The eternal mountains  
were shattered;  
along his ancient  
pathways  
the everlasting hills sank  
low.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan  
under affliction;  
the tent-curtains of the  
land of Midian  
trembled.

8 Was your wrath against  
the rivers, O LORD?  
Or your anger against  
the rivers,  
or your rage against the  
sea,  
when you drove your  
horses,

9 your chariots to victory?  
You brandished your  
naked bow,  
sated were the arrows at  
your command.

*Selah*

You split the earth with  
rivers.

10 The mountains saw you,  
and writhed;  
a torrent of water swept  
by;

the deep gave forth its  
voice.

The sun raised high its  
hands;

11 the moon stood still in its  
exalted place,  
at the light of your  
arrows speeding by,  
at the gleam of your  
flashing spear.

12 In fury you trod the earth,  
in anger you trampled  
nations.

13 You came forth to save  
your people,  
to save your anointed.  
You crushed the head of  
the wicked house,  
laying it bare from  
foundation to roof.

*Selah*

14 You pierced with their own  
arrows the head of his  
warriors,  
who came like a  
whirlwind to scatter us,  
gloating as if ready to  
devour the poor who  
were in hiding.

15 You trampled the sea with  
your horses,  
churning the mighty  
waters.

16 I hear, and I tremble  
within;  
my lips quiver at the  
sound.

Rottenness enters into my  
bones,  
and my steps tremble  
beneath me.

I wait quietly for the day of  
calamity  
to come upon the people  
who attack us.

*Trust and Joy in the  
Midst of Trouble*

17 Though the fig tree does  
not blossom,  
and no fruit is on the  
vines;  
though the produce of the  
olive fails  
and the fields yield no  
food;

though the flock is cut off  
from the fold  
and there is no herd in  
the stalls,  
<sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the  
LORD;  
I will exult in the God of  
my salvation.  
<sup>19</sup> GOD, the Lord, is my  
strength;  
he makes my feet like  
the feet of a deer,  
and makes me tread  
upon the heights.  
To the leader: with  
stringed instruments.

**Revelation 9:13–21** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> Then the sixth angel  
blew his trumpet, and I heard  
a voice from the four horns of  
the golden altar before God,  
<sup>14</sup> saying to the sixth angel  
who had the trumpet,  
“Release the four angels who  
are bound at the great river  
Euphrates.” <sup>15</sup> So the four  
angels were released, who had  
been held ready for the hour,  
the day, the month, and the  
year, to kill a third of  
humankind. <sup>16</sup> The number of  
the troops of cavalry was two  
hundred million; I heard their  
number. <sup>17</sup> And this was how I

saw the horses in my vision:  
the riders wore breastplates  
the color of fire and of  
sapphire and of sulfur; the  
heads of the horses were like  
lions’ heads, and fire and  
smoke and sulfur came out of  
their mouths. <sup>18</sup> By these three  
plagues a third of humankind  
was killed, by the fire and  
smoke and sulfur coming out  
of their mouths. <sup>19</sup> For the  
power of the horses is in their  
mouths and in their tails; their  
tails are like serpents, having  
heads; and with them they  
inflict harm.

<sup>20</sup> The rest of humankind,  
who were not killed by these  
plagues, did not repent of the  
works of their hands or give up  
worshiping demons and idols  
of gold and silver and bronze  
and stone and wood, which  
cannot see or hear or walk.  
<sup>21</sup> And they did not repent of  
their murders or their  
sorceries or their fornication  
or their thefts.

**Psalms 137:5-9** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> If I forget you, O  
Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither!

6 Let my tongue cling to the  
 roof of my mouth,  
 if I do not remember  
 you,  
 if I do not set Jerusalem  
 above my highest joy.  
 7 Remember, O LORD,  
 against the Edomites  
 the day of Jerusalem's  
 fall,  
 how they said, "Tear it  
 down! Tear it down!  
 Down to its  
 foundations!"  
 8 O daughter Babylon, you  
 devastator!  
 Happy shall they be who  
 pay you back  
 what you have done to  
 us!  
 9 Happy shall they be who  
 take your little ones  
 and dash them against  
 the rock!

**Proverbs 29:5–8 (NRSV)**

5 Whoever flatters a  
 neighbor  
 is spreading a net for the  
 neighbor's feet.  
 6 In the transgression of the  
 evil there is a snare,  
 but the righteous sing  
 and rejoice.

7 The righteous know the  
 rights of the poor;  
 the wicked have no such  
 understanding.  
 8 Scoffers set a city aflame,  
 but the wise turn away  
 wrath.



**December**

**6**



**Zephaniah 1:1–2:15 (NRSV)**

The word of the LORD that  
 came to Zephaniah son of  
 Cushi son of Gedaliah son of  
 Amariah son of Hezekiah, in  
 the days of King Josiah son of  
 Amon of Judah.

*The Coming*

*Judgment on Judah*

2 I will utterly sweep away  
 everything  
 from the face of the  
 earth, says the LORD.  
 3 I will sweep away humans  
 and animals;  
 I will sweep away the  
 birds of the air  
 and the fish of the sea.



I will make the wicked  
stumble.  
I will cut off humanity  
from the face of the  
earth, says the LORD.  
4 I will stretch out my hand  
against Judah,  
and against all the  
inhabitants of  
Jerusalem;  
and I will cut off from this  
place every remnant of  
Baal  
and the name of the  
idolatrous priests;  
5 those who bow down on  
the roofs  
to the host of the  
heavens;  
those who bow down and  
swear to the LORD,  
but also swear by  
Milcom;  
6 those who have turned  
back from following  
the LORD,  
who have not sought the  
LORD or inquired of  
him.  
7 Be silent before the Lord  
GOD!  
For the day of the LORD is  
at hand;  
the LORD has prepared a  
sacrifice,

he has consecrated his  
guests.  
8 And on the day of the  
LORD's sacrifice  
I will punish the officials  
and the king's sons  
and all who dress  
themselves in foreign  
attire.  
9 On that day I will punish  
all who leap over the  
threshold,  
who fill their master's  
house  
with violence and fraud.  
10 On that day, says the LORD,  
a cry will be heard from  
the Fish Gate,  
a wail from the Second  
Quarter,  
a loud crash from the  
hills.  
11 The inhabitants of the  
Mortar wail,  
for all the traders have  
perished;  
all who weigh out silver  
are cut off.  
12 At that time I will search  
Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the  
people  
who rest complacently on  
their dregs,

those who say in their hearts,  
"The LORD will not do good,  
nor will he do harm."

- 13 Their wealth shall be plundered,  
and their houses laid waste.  
Though they build houses,  
they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards,  
they shall not drink wine from them.

*The Great Day of the LORD*  
(Cp Am 5:18–20)

- 14 The great day of the LORD is near,  
near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,  
the warrior cries aloud there.  
15 That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of ruin and devastation,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,

- 16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.  
17 I will bring such distress upon people  
that they shall walk like the blind;  
because they have sinned against the LORD,  
their blood shall be poured out like dust,  
and their flesh like dung.  
18 Neither their silver nor their gold  
will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath;  
in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed;  
for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

*Judgment on Israel's Enemies*

- 2** Gather together, gather,  
O shameless nation,  
2 before you are driven away  
like the drifting chaff,

before there comes upon  
you  
the fierce anger of the  
LORD,  
before there comes upon  
you  
the day of the LORD's  
wrath.

<sup>3</sup> Seek the LORD, all you  
humble of the land,  
who do his commands;  
seek righteousness, seek  
humility;  
perhaps you may be  
hidden  
on the day of the LORD's  
wrath.

<sup>4</sup> For Gaza shall be deserted,  
and Ashkelon shall  
become a desolation;  
Ashdod's people shall be  
driven out at noon,  
and Ekron shall be  
uprooted.

<sup>5</sup> Ah, inhabitants of the  
seacoast,  
you nation of the  
Cherethites!  
The word of the LORD is  
against you,  
O Canaan, land of the  
Philistines;  
and I will destroy you  
until no inhabitant is  
left.

<sup>6</sup> And you, O seacoast, shall  
be pastures,  
meadows for shepherds  
and folds for flocks.

<sup>7</sup> The seacoast shall become  
the possession  
of the remnant of the  
house of Judah,  
on which they shall  
pasture,  
and in the houses of  
Ashkelon  
they shall lie down at  
evening.

For the LORD their God will  
be mindful of them  
and restore their  
fortunes.

<sup>8</sup> I have heard the taunts of  
Moab  
and the revilings of the  
Ammonites,  
how they have taunted my  
people  
and made boasts against  
their territory.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, as I live, says  
the LORD of hosts,  
the God of Israel,  
Moab shall become like  
Sodom  
and the Ammonites like  
Gomorrah,  
a land possessed by nettles  
and salt pits,

and a waste forever.  
The remnant of my people  
shall plunder them,  
and the survivors of my  
nation shall possess  
them.  
10 This shall be their lot in  
return for their pride,  
because they scoffed and  
boasted  
against the people of the  
LORD of hosts.  
11 The LORD will be terrible  
against them;  
he will shrivel all the  
gods of the earth,  
and to him shall bow  
down,  
each in its place,  
all the coasts and islands  
of the nations.  
12 You also, O Ethiopians,  
shall be killed by my  
sword.  
13 And he will stretch out his  
hand against the north,  
and destroy Assyria;  
and he will make Nineveh  
a desolation,  
a dry waste like the  
desert.  
14 Herds shall lie down in it,  
every wild animal;  
the desert owl and the  
screech owl

shall lodge on its  
capitals;  
the owl shall hoot at the  
window,  
the raven croak on the  
threshold;  
for its cedar work will be  
laid bare.  
15 Is this the exultant city  
that lived secure,  
that said to itself,  
“I am, and there is no  
one else”?  
What a desolation it has  
become,  
a lair for wild animals!  
Everyone who passes by it  
hisses and shakes the  
fist.

**Revelation 10:1–7** (NRSV)

*The Angel with the Little Scroll*

**10** And I saw another mighty  
angel coming down from  
heaven, wrapped in a cloud,  
with a rainbow over his head;  
his face was like the sun, and  
his legs like pillars of fire. <sup>2</sup> He  
held a little scroll open in his  
hand. Setting his right foot on  
the sea and his left foot on the  
land, <sup>3</sup> he gave a great shout,  
like a lion roaring. And when  
he shouted, the seven  
thunders sounded. <sup>4</sup> And when

the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down."

<sup>5</sup> Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and the land

raised his right hand to heaven

<sup>6</sup> and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it: "There will be no more delay, <sup>7x</sup> but in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled, as he announced to his servants the prophets."

**Psalm 138:1-6** (NRSV)

*Thanksgiving and Praise*  
Of David.

<sup>1</sup> I give you thanks, O LORD,  
with my whole heart;  
before the gods I sing  
your praise;

<sup>2</sup> **I bow down toward your  
holy temple**

<sup>x</sup> See 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

**and give thanks to your  
name for your  
steadfast love and your  
faithfulness;  
for you have exalted  
your name and your  
word  
above everything.**

<sup>3</sup> On the day I called, you  
answered me,  
you increased my  
strength of soul.

<sup>4</sup> All the kings of the earth  
shall praise you, O  
LORD,  
for they have heard the  
words of your mouth.

<sup>5</sup> They shall sing of the ways  
of the LORD,  
for great is the glory of  
the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> For though the LORD is  
high, he regards the  
lowly;  
but the haughty he  
perceives from far  
away.

**Proverbs 29:9–11** (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> If the wise go to law with  
fools,  
there is ranting and  
ridicule without relief.

<sup>10</sup> The bloodthirsty hate the  
blameless,

and they seek the life of  
the upright.

- <sup>11</sup> A fool gives full vent to  
anger,  
but the wise quietly  
holds it back.

## December 7



**Zephaniah 3:1–20** (NRSV)  
*The Wickedness of Jerusalem*

- 3** Ah, soiled, defiled,  
oppressing city!  
<sup>2</sup> It has listened to no voice;  
it has accepted no  
correction.  
It has not trusted in the  
LORD;  
it has not drawn near to  
its God.  
<sup>3</sup> The officials within it  
are roaring lions;  
its judges are evening  
wolves  
that leave nothing until  
the morning.  
<sup>4</sup> Its prophets are reckless,  
faithless persons;

its priests have profaned  
what is sacred,  
they have done violence  
to the law.

- <sup>5</sup> The LORD within it is  
righteous;  
he does no wrong.  
Every morning he renders  
his judgment,  
each dawn without fail;  
but the unjust knows no  
shame.

- <sup>6</sup> I have cut off nations;  
their battlements are in  
ruins;  
I have laid waste their  
streets  
so that no one walks in  
them;  
their cities have been  
made desolate,  
without people, without  
inhabitants.

- <sup>7</sup> I said, "Surely the city will  
fear me,  
it will accept correction;  
it will not lose sight  
of all that I have brought  
upon it."  
But they were the more  
eager  
to make all their deeds  
corrupt.

*Punishment and Conversion*

*of the Nations*

(Cp Gen 11:1–9; Acts 2:1–11)

- 8 Therefore wait for me,  
says the LORD,  
for the day when I arise  
as a witness.  
For my decision is to  
gather nations,  
to assemble kingdoms,  
to pour out upon them my  
indignation,  
all the heat of my anger;  
for in the fire of my  
passion  
all the earth shall be  
consumed.
- 9 At that time I will change  
the speech of the  
peoples  
to a pure speech,  
that all of them may call  
on the name of the  
LORD  
and serve him with one  
accord.
- 10 From beyond the rivers of  
Ethiopia  
my suppliants, my  
scattered ones,  
shall bring my offering.
- 11 On that day you shall not  
be put to shame  
because of all the deeds  
by which you have  
rebelled against me;

- for then I will remove from  
your midst  
your proudly exultant  
ones,  
and you shall no longer be  
haughty  
in my holy mountain.
- 12 For I will leave in the midst  
of you  
a people humble and  
lowly.  
They shall seek refuge in  
the name of the LORD—
- 13 the remnant of Israel;  
they shall do no wrong  
and utter no lies,  
nor shall a deceitful tongue  
be found in their  
mouths.  
Then they will pasture and  
lie down,  
and no one shall make  
them afraid.

*A Song of Joy*

- 14 Sing aloud, O daughter  
Zion;  
shout, O Israel!  
Rejoice and exult with all  
your heart,  
O daughter Jerusalem!
- 15 The LORD has taken away  
the judgments against  
you,

he has turned away your  
enemies.  
The king of Israel, the LORD,  
is in your midst;  
you shall fear disaster no  
more.  
16 On that day it shall be said  
to Jerusalem:  
Do not fear, O Zion;  
do not let your hands  
grow weak.  
17 The LORD, your God, is in  
your midst,  
a warrior who gives  
victory;  
he will rejoice over you  
with gladness,  
he will renew you in his  
love;  
he will exult over you with  
loud singing  
18 as on a day of festival.  
I will remove disaster from  
you,  
so that you will not bear  
reproach for it.  
19 I will deal with all your  
oppressors  
at that time.  
And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their  
shame into praise  
and renown in all the  
earth.

20 At that time I will bring you  
home,  
at the time when I gather  
you;  
for I will make you  
renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of  
the earth,  
when I restore your  
fortunes  
before your eyes, says  
the LORD.

**Revelation 10:8–11 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> Then the voice that I had  
heard from heaven spoke to  
me again, saying, “Go, take  
the scroll that is open in the  
hand of the angel who is  
standing on the sea and on the  
land.” <sup>9</sup> So I went to the angel  
and told him to give me the  
little scroll; and he said to me,  
“Take it, and eat; it will be  
bitter to your stomach, but  
sweet as honey in your  
mouth.” <sup>10</sup> So I took the little  
scroll from the hand of the  
angel and ate it; it was sweet  
as honey in my mouth, but  
when I had eaten it, my  
stomach was made bitter.  
<sup>11</sup> Then they said to me,  
“You must prophesy again  
about many peoples and



nations and languages and kings.”

**Psalm 138:7-8** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Though I walk in the midst of trouble,  
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;  
you stretch out your hand,  
and your right hand delivers me.

<sup>8</sup> **The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;  
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.  
Do not forsake the work of your hands.**

**Proverbs 29:12–14** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> If a ruler listens to falsehood,  
all his officials will be wicked.

<sup>13</sup> The poor and the oppressor have this in common:  
the LORD gives light to the eyes of both.

<sup>14</sup> If a king judges the poor with equity,  
his throne will be established forever.

## December 8



**Haggai 1:1–15** (NRSV)

*The Command to Rebuild the Temple*  
(Ezra 5:1)

**1** In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest:  
<sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD’s house. <sup>3</sup> Then the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: <sup>4</sup> Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins? <sup>5</sup> Now therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider how you have fared. <sup>6</sup> You have sown much, and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and you that earn wages earn wages to put them into a bag with holes.

<sup>7</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider how you have fared. <sup>8</sup> Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored, says the LORD. <sup>9</sup> You have looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? says the LORD of hosts. Because my house lies in ruins, while all of you hurry off to your own houses.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. <sup>11</sup> And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and animals, and on all their labors.

<sup>12</sup> Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of the prophet Haggai, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared the LORD. <sup>13</sup> Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke

to the people with the LORD's message, saying, I am with you, says the LORD. <sup>14</sup> And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, <sup>15</sup> on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month.

#### **Revelation 11:1–14** (NRSV)

##### *The Two Witnesses*

**11** Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, "Come and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, <sup>2</sup> but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months. <sup>3</sup> And I will grant my two witnesses authority to prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days, wearing sackcloth."

<sup>4</sup> These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands

that stand before the Lord of the earth.<sup>5</sup> And if anyone wants to harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes; anyone who wants to harm them must be killed in this manner.<sup>6</sup> They have authority to shut the sky, so that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have authority over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire.

<sup>7</sup>When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them,<sup>8</sup> and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that is prophetically called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.<sup>9</sup> For three and a half days members of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb;<sup>10</sup> and the inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and celebrate and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been

a torment to the inhabitants of the earth.

<sup>11</sup>But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and those who saw them were terrified.<sup>12</sup> Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watched them.<sup>13</sup> At that moment there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

<sup>14</sup>The second woe has passed. The third woe is coming very soon.

### **Psalms 139:1-12 (NRSV)**


#### *The Inescapable God*

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

- <sup>1</sup> O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
- <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.
- <sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down,

and are acquainted with  
all my ways.

4 Even before a word is on  
my tongue,  
O LORD, you know it  
completely.



5 You hem me in, behind  
and before,  
and lay your hand upon  
me.

6 Such knowledge is too  
wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot  
attain it.

7 Where can I go from your  
spirit?  
Or where can I flee from  
your presence?

8 If I ascend to heaven, you  
are there;  
if I make my bed in  
Sheol, you are there.

9 If I take the wings of the  
morning  
and settle at the farthest  
limits of the sea,

10 even there your hand shall  
lead me,  
and your right hand shall  
hold me fast.

11 If I say, "Surely the  
darkness shall cover  
me,  
and the light around me  
become night,"

12 even the darkness is not  
dark to you;  
the night is as bright as  
the day,  
for darkness is as light to  
you.

**Proverbs 29:15–17 (NRSV)**

15 The rod and reproof give  
wisdom,  
but a mother is disgraced  
by a neglected child.

16 When the wicked are in  
authority,  
transgression  
increases,  
but the righteous will  
look upon their  
downfall.

17 Discipline your children,  
and they will give you  
rest;  
they will give delight to  
your heart.

# December 9



**Haggai 2:1–23** (NRSV)  
*The Future Glory of the Temple*

**2** In the second year of King Darius, <sup>1</sup>in the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: <sup>2</sup>Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, and say, <sup>3</sup>Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? <sup>4</sup>Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the LORD; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the LORD; work, for I am with you, says the LORD of hosts, <sup>5</sup>according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. <sup>6</sup>For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I

will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; <sup>7</sup>and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>8</sup>The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>9</sup>The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the LORD of hosts.

### *A Rebuke and a Promise*

<sup>10</sup>On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: <sup>11</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: Ask the priests for a ruling: <sup>12</sup>If one carries consecrated meat in the fold of one's garment, and with the fold touches bread, or stew, or wine, or oil, or any kind of food, does it become holy? The priests answered, "No." <sup>13</sup>Then Haggai said, "If one who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?" The priests

answered, “Yes, it becomes unclean.” <sup>14</sup> Haggai then said, So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, says the LORD; and so with every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean. <sup>15</sup> But now, consider what will come to pass from this day on. Before a stone was placed upon a stone in the LORD’s temple, <sup>16</sup> how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. <sup>17</sup> I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and mildew and hail; yet you did not return to me, says the LORD. <sup>18</sup> Consider from this day on, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid, consider: <sup>19</sup> Is there any seed left in the barn? Do the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still yield nothing? From this day on I will bless you.

*God’s Promise to Zerubbabel*

<sup>20</sup> The word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month: <sup>21</sup> Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, <sup>22</sup> and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders; and the horses and their riders shall fall, every one by the sword of a comrade. <sup>23</sup> On that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, son of Shealtiel, says the LORD, and make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you, says the LORD of hosts.

**Revelation 11:15–19** (NRSV)

*The Seventh Trumpet*

<sup>15</sup> Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever.”

<sup>16</sup> Then the twenty-four  
elders who sit on their thrones  
before God fell on their faces  
and worshiped God, <sup>17</sup> singing,  
“We give you thanks, Lord  
God Almighty,  
who are and who were,  
for you have taken your  
great power  
and begun to reign.

<sup>18</sup> The nations raged,  
but your wrath has  
come,  
and the time for judging  
the dead,  
for rewarding your  
servants, the prophets  
and saints and all who  
fear your name,  
both small and great,  
and for destroying those  
who destroy the  
earth.”

<sup>19</sup> Then God’s temple in  
heaven was opened, and the  
ark of his covenant was seen  
within his temple; and there  
were flashes of lightning,  
rumblings, peals of thunder,  
an earthquake, and heavy hail.

**Psalms 139:13-24 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed  
my inward parts;

you knit me together in  
my mother’s womb.

<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am  
fearfully and  
wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your  
works;

that I know very well.

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not  
hidden from you,  
when I was being made in  
secret,  
intricately woven in the  
depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my  
unformed substance.  
In your book were written  
all the days that were  
formed for me,  
when none of them as  
yet existed.

<sup>17</sup> How weighty to me are  
your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of  
them!

<sup>18</sup> I try to count them—they  
are more than the  
sand;  
I come to the end—I am  
still with you.

<sup>19</sup> O that you would kill the  
wicked, O God,  
and that the bloodthirsty  
would depart from  
me—

<sup>20</sup> those who speak of you  
maliciously,  
and lift themselves up  
against you for evil!  
<sup>21</sup> Do I not hate those who  
hate you, O LORD?  
And do I not loathe those  
who rise up against  
you?  
<sup>22</sup> I hate them with perfect  
hatred;  
I count them my  
enemies.  
<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and  
know my heart;  
test me and know my  
thoughts.  
<sup>24</sup> See if there is any wicked  
way in me,  
and lead me in the way  
everlasting.

**Proverbs 29:18** (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> Where there is no  
prophecy, the people  
cast off restraint,  
but happy are those who  
keep the law.

## December 10



**Zechariah 1:1–13** (NRSV)

*Israel Urged to Repent*

**1** In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, saying:  
<sup>2</sup> The LORD was very angry with your ancestors. <sup>3</sup> Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.  
<sup>4</sup> Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.” But they did not hear or heed me, says the LORD. <sup>5</sup> Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? <sup>6</sup> But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your ancestors? So they repented and said, “The LORD of hosts has dealt with us according to our ways and



deeds, just as he planned to do.”

*First Vision: The Horsemen*

<sup>7</sup> On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo; and Zechariah said, <sup>8</sup> In the night I saw a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. <sup>9</sup> Then I said, “What are these, my lord?” The angel who talked with me said to me, “I will show you what they are.” <sup>10</sup> So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, “They are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth.” <sup>11</sup> Then they spoke to the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, “We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace.” <sup>12</sup> Then the angel of the LORD said, “O LORD of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from

Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?” <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me.

**Revelation 12:1–9** (NRSV)

*The Woman and the Dragon*

**12** A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. <sup>2</sup> She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. <sup>3</sup> Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. <sup>4</sup> His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. <sup>5</sup> And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. But her child was snatched away and taken to

God and to his throne; <sup>6</sup> and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, so that there she can be nourished for one thousand two hundred sixty days.

*Michael Defeats the Dragon*

<sup>7</sup> And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, <sup>8</sup> but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. <sup>9</sup> The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

**Psalm 140:1-8** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance  
from Enemies*

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Deliver me, O LORD, from evildoers;  
protect me from those who are violent,  
<sup>2</sup> who plan evil things in their minds

and stir up wars continually.

<sup>3</sup> They make their tongue sharp as a snake's, and under their lips is the venom of vipers.

*Selah*

<sup>4</sup> Guard me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; protect me from the violent who have planned my downfall.

<sup>5</sup> The arrogant have hidden a trap for me, and with cords they have spread a net, along the road they have set snares for me.

*Selah*

<sup>6</sup> I say to the LORD, "You are my God; give ear, O LORD, to the voice of my supplications."

<sup>7</sup> O LORD, my Lord, my strong deliverer, you have covered my head in the day of battle.

<sup>8</sup> Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked; do not further their evil plot. *Selah*



**Proverbs 29:19–20** (NRSV)

<sup>19</sup> By mere words servants  
are not disciplined,  
for though they  
understand, they will  
not give heed.

<sup>20</sup> Do you see someone who  
is hasty in speech?

There is more hope for a  
fool than for anyone  
like that.

**December  
11**



**Zechariah 1:14–21** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> So the angel who talked with  
me said to me, Proclaim this  
message: Thus says the LORD  
of hosts; I am very jealous for  
Jerusalem and for Zion. <sup>15</sup> And  
I am extremely angry with the  
nations that are at ease; for  
while I was only a little angry,  
they made the disaster worse.

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, thus says the  
LORD, I have returned to  
Jerusalem with compassion;  
my house shall be built in it,  
says the LORD of hosts, and the  
measuring line shall be

stretched out over Jerusalem.

<sup>17</sup> Proclaim further: Thus says  
the LORD of hosts: My cities  
shall again overflow with  
prosperity; the LORD will again  
comfort Zion and again choose  
Jerusalem.

*Second Vision: The Horns  
and the Smiths*

<sup>18</sup> And I looked up and saw  
four horns. <sup>19</sup> I asked the angel  
who talked with me, “What  
are these?” And he answered  
me, “These are the horns that  
have scattered Judah, Israel,  
and Jerusalem.” <sup>20</sup> Then the  
LORD showed me four  
blacksmiths. <sup>21</sup> And I asked,  
“What are they coming to  
do?” He answered, “These are  
the horns that scattered  
Judah, so that no head could  
be raised; but these have  
come to terrify them, to strike  
down the horns of the nations  
that lifted up their horns  
against the land of Judah to  
scatter its people.”

**Revelation 12:10–17** (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice  
in heaven, proclaiming,

“Now have come the  
salvation and the  
power  
and the kingdom of our  
God  
and the authority of his  
Messiah,  
for the accuser of our  
comrades has been  
thrown down,  
who accuses them day  
and night before our  
God.

<sup>11</sup> But they have conquered  
him by the blood of the  
Lamb  
and by the word of their  
testimony,  
for they did not cling to life  
even in the face of  
death.

<sup>12</sup> Rejoice then, you heavens  
and those who dwell in  
them!  
But woe to the earth and  
the sea,  
for the devil has come  
down to you  
with great wrath,  
because he knows that  
his time is short!”

*The Dragon Fights  
Again on Earth*

<sup>13</sup> So when the dragon saw  
that he had been thrown  
down to the earth, he pursued  
the woman who had given  
birth to the male child. <sup>14</sup> But  
the woman was given the two  
wings of the great eagle, so  
that she could fly from the  
serpent into the wilderness, to  
her place where she is  
nourished for a time, and  
times, and half a time. <sup>15</sup> Then  
from his mouth the serpent  
poured water like a river after  
the woman, to sweep her  
away with the flood. <sup>16</sup> But the  
earth came to the help of the  
woman; it opened its mouth  
and swallowed the river that  
the dragon had poured from  
his mouth. <sup>17</sup> Then the dragon  
was angry with the woman,  
and went off to make war on  
the rest of her children, those  
who keep the commandments  
of God and hold the testimony  
of Jesus.

**Psalm 140:9-13 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> Those who surround me  
lift up their heads;  
let the mischief of their  
lips overwhelm them!  
<sup>10</sup> Let burning coals fall on  
them!

Let them be flung into  
pits, no more to rise!

- <sup>11</sup> Do not let the slanderer be  
established in the land;  
let evil speedily hunt  
down the violent!

<sup>12</sup> I know that the LORD  
maintains the cause of  
the needy,  
and executes justice for  
the poor.

- <sup>13</sup> Surely the righteous shall  
give thanks to your  
name;  
the upright shall live in  
your presence.

**Proverbs 29:21–22 (NRSV)**

- <sup>21</sup> A slave pampered from  
childhood  
will come to a bad end.  
<sup>22</sup> One given to anger stirs up  
strife,  
and the hothead causes  
much transgression.

**December  
12**



**Zechariah 2:1–13 (NRSV)**  
*Third Vision: The Man*

*with a Measuring Line*

**2** I looked up and saw a man  
with a measuring line in his  
hand. <sup>2</sup> Then I asked, “Where  
are you going?” He answered  
me, “To measure Jerusalem,  
to see what is its width and  
what is its length.” <sup>3</sup> Then the  
angel who talked with me  
came forward, and another  
angel came forward to meet  
him, <sup>4</sup> and said to him, “Run,  
say to that young man:  
Jerusalem shall be inhabited  
like villages without walls,  
because of the multitude of  
people and animals in it. <sup>5</sup> For I  
will be a wall of fire all around  
it, says the LORD, and I will be  
the glory within it.”

*Interlude: An Appeal  
to the Exiles*

<sup>6</sup> Up, up! Flee from the  
land of the north, says the  
LORD; for I have spread you  
abroad like the four winds of  
heaven, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup> Up!  
Escape to Zion, you that live  
with daughter Babylon. <sup>8</sup> For  
thus said the LORD of hosts  
(after his glory sent me)  
regarding the nations that  
plundered you: Truly, one who  
touches you touches the apple

of my eye. <sup>9</sup> See now, I am going to raise my hand against them, and they shall become plunder for their own slaves. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me.

<sup>10</sup> Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the LORD. <sup>11</sup> Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD on that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in your midst. And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. <sup>12</sup> The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> Be silent, all people, before the LORD; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

**Revelation 12:18–13:10** (NRSV)

*The First Beast*

<sup>18</sup> Then the dragon took his stand on the sand of the seashore. **13** <sup>1</sup> And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads; and on its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names.

<sup>2</sup> And the beast that I saw was

like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority. <sup>3</sup> One of its heads seemed to have received a death-blow, but its mortal wound had been healed. In amazement the whole earth followed the beast. <sup>4</sup> They worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

<sup>5</sup> The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup> It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. <sup>7</sup> Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. It was given authority over every tribe and people and language and nation, <sup>8</sup> and all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been

written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered.

<sup>9</sup> Let anyone who has an ear listen:

<sup>10</sup> If you are to be taken captive,  
into captivity you go;  
if you kill with the sword,  
with the sword you must be killed.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

### **Psalm 141:1-2** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Preservation from Evil*

A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> I call upon you, O LORD;  
come quickly to me;  
give ear to my voice  
when I call to you.  
<sup>2</sup> Let my prayer be counted  
as incense before you,  
and the lifting up of my  
hands as an evening  
sacrifice.

### **Proverbs 29:23** (NRSV)

<sup>23</sup> A person's pride will bring humiliation,  
but one who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.

## **December 13**



### **Zechariah 3:1–10** (NRSV)

*Fourth Vision:  
Joshua and Satan*

**3** Then he showed me the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?" <sup>3</sup> Now Joshua was dressed with filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup> The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." And to him he said, "See, I have taken your guilt away from you, and I will clothe you with festal apparel." <sup>5</sup> And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with the apparel; and the angel of the LORD was standing by.

<sup>6</sup> Then the angel of the LORD assured Joshua, saying

<sup>7</sup> “Thus says the LORD of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. <sup>8</sup> Now listen, Joshua, high priest, you and your colleagues who sit before you! For they are an omen of things to come: I am going to bring my servant the Branch. <sup>9</sup> For on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day. <sup>10</sup> On that day, says the LORD of hosts, you shall invite each other to come under your vine and fig tree.”

**Revelation 13:11–18 (NRSV)**

*The Second Beast*

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw another beast that rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. <sup>12</sup> It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound

had been healed. <sup>13</sup> It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of all; <sup>14</sup> and by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived; <sup>15</sup> and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. <sup>16</sup> Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, <sup>17</sup> so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. <sup>18</sup> This calls for wisdom: let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred sixty-six.



**Psalms 141:3-10 (NRSV)**

<sup>3</sup> Set a guard over my  
mouth, O LORD;  
keep watch over the  
door of my lips.  
<sup>4</sup> Do not turn my heart to  
any evil,  
to busy myself with  
wicked deeds  
in company with those  
who work iniquity;  
do not let me eat of their  
delicacies.  
<sup>5</sup> Let the righteous strike  
me;  
let the faithful correct  
me.  
Never let the oil of the  
wicked anoint my  
head,  
for my prayer is  
continually against  
their wicked deeds.  
<sup>6</sup> When they are given over  
to those who shall  
condemn them,  
then they shall learn that  
my words were  
pleasant.  
<sup>7</sup> Like a rock that one breaks  
apart and shatters on  
the land,  
so shall their bones be  
strewn at the mouth of  
Sheol.

<sup>8</sup> But my eyes are turned  
toward you, O God, my  
Lord;  
in you I seek refuge; do  
not leave me  
defenseless.  
<sup>9</sup> Keep me from the trap  
that they have laid for  
me,  
and from the snares of  
evildoers.  
<sup>10</sup> Let the wicked fall into  
their own nets,  
while I alone escape.

**Proverbs 29:24-25 (NRSV)**

<sup>24</sup> To be a partner of a thief is  
to hate one's own life;  
one hears the victim's  
curse, but discloses  
nothing.  
<sup>25</sup> The fear of others lays a  
snare,  
but one who trusts in the  
LORD is secure.



# December 14



## **Zechariah 4:1–14** (NRSV)

### *Fifth Vision: The Lampstand and Olive Trees*

**4** The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as one is wakened from sleep. <sup>2</sup> He said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it; there are seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. <sup>3</sup> And by it there are two olive trees, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.” <sup>4</sup> I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?” <sup>5</sup> Then the angel who talked with me answered me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” <sup>6</sup> He said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>7</sup> What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall

bring out the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’ ”

<sup>8</sup> Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>9</sup> “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. <sup>10</sup> For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.

“These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth.”

<sup>11</sup> Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?” <sup>12</sup> And a second time I said to him, “What are these two branches of the olive trees, which pour out the oil through the two golden pipes?” <sup>13</sup> He said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” <sup>14</sup> Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

**Revelation 14:1–12** (NRSV)

*The Lamb and the 144,000*

**14** Then I looked, and there was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion! And with him were one hundred forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. <sup>2</sup> And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, <sup>3</sup> and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who have been redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup> It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins; these follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They have been redeemed from humankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, <sup>5</sup> and in their mouth no lie was found; they are blameless.

*The Messages of the  
Three Angels*

<sup>6</sup> Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation and tribe and language and people. <sup>7</sup> He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

<sup>8</sup> Then another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

<sup>9</sup> Then another angel, a third, followed them, crying with a loud voice, “Those who worship the beast and its image, and receive a mark on their foreheads or on their hands, <sup>10</sup> they will also drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, and they will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. <sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship

the beast and its image and for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”

<sup>12</sup> Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus.

**Psalms 142:1-3a** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from Persecutors*

A Maskil of David. When he was in the cave. A Prayer.

- <sup>1</sup> With my voice I cry to the LORD;  
with my voice I make supplication to the LORD.
- <sup>2</sup> I pour out my complaint before him;  
I tell my trouble before him.
- <sup>3</sup> When my spirit is faint,  
you know my way.

**Proverbs 29:26-27** (NRSV)

- <sup>26</sup> Many seek the favor of a ruler,  
but it is from the LORD that one gets justice.
- <sup>27</sup> The unjust are an abomination to the righteous,

but the upright are an abomination to the wicked.

**December 15**



**Zechariah 5:1-11** (NRSV)

*Sixth Vision: The Flying Scroll*

**5** Again I looked up and saw a flying scroll. <sup>2</sup> And he said to me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.” <sup>3</sup> Then he said to me, “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land; for everyone who steals shall be cut off according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cut off according to the writing on the other side. <sup>4</sup> I have sent it out, says the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name; and it shall abide in that

house and consume it, both timber and stones.”

*Seventh Vision: The Woman in a Basket*

<sup>5</sup> Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, “Look up and see what this is that is coming out.” <sup>6</sup> I said, “What is it?” He said, “This is a basket coming out.” And he said, “This is their iniquity in all the land.” <sup>7</sup> Then a leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! <sup>8</sup> And he said, “This is Wickedness.” So he thrust her back into the basket, and pressed the leaden weight down on its mouth. <sup>9</sup> Then I looked up and saw two women coming forward. The wind was in their wings; they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and sky. <sup>10</sup> Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they taking the basket?” <sup>11</sup> He said to me, “To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it; and when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.”

**Revelation 14:13–20** (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.”

*Reaping the Earth’s Harvest*

<sup>14</sup> Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like the Son of Man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand! <sup>15</sup> Another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to the one who sat on the cloud, “Use your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” <sup>16</sup> So the one who sat on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. <sup>17</sup> Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. <sup>18</sup> Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the

sharp sickle, "Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." <sup>19</sup> So the angel swung his sickle over the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and he threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. <sup>20</sup> And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse's bridle, for a distance of about two hundred miles.

**Psalms 142:3b-7** (NRSV)

In the path where I walk  
they have hidden a trap  
for me.  
<sup>4</sup> Look on my right hand and  
see—  
there is no one who  
takes notice of me;  
no refuge remains to me;  
no one cares for me.  
<sup>5</sup> I cry to you, O LORD;  
I say, "You are my  
refuge,  
my portion in the land of  
the living."  
<sup>6</sup> Give heed to my cry,  
for I am brought very  
low.

Save me from my  
persecutors,  
for they are too strong  
for me.  
<sup>7</sup> Bring me out of prison,  
so that I may give thanks  
to your name.  
The righteous will  
surround me,  
for you will deal  
bountifully with me.

**Proverbs 30:1-4** (NRSV)

*Sayings of Agur*

<sup>1</sup> The words of Agur son  
of Jakeh. An oracle.  
Thus says the man: I am  
weary, O God,  
I am weary, O God. How  
can I prevail?  
<sup>2</sup> Surely I am too stupid to  
be human;  
I do not have human  
understanding.  
<sup>3</sup> I have not learned wisdom,  
nor have I knowledge of  
the holy ones.  
<sup>4</sup> Who has ascended to  
heaven and come  
down?  
Who has gathered the  
wind in the hollow of  
the hand?  
Who has wrapped up the  
waters in a garment?

Who has established all  
the ends of the earth?  
What is the person's  
name?  
And what is the name of  
the person's child?  
Surely you know!

chariot with the black horses  
goes toward the north  
country, the white ones go  
toward the west country, and  
the dappled ones go toward  
the south country.”<sup>7</sup> When  
the steeds came out, they  
were impatient to get off and  
patrol the earth. And he said,  
“Go, patrol the earth.” So they  
patrolled the earth.<sup>8</sup> Then he  
cried out to me, “Lo, those  
who go toward the north  
country have set my spirit at  
rest in the north country.”

## December 16



### **Zechariah 6:1–15** (NRSV)

#### *Eighth Vision: Four Chariots*

**6** And again I looked up and saw four chariots coming out from between two mountains—mountains of bronze.<sup>2</sup> The first chariot had red horses, the second chariot black horses,<sup>3</sup> the third chariot white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled gray horses.<sup>4</sup> Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”<sup>5</sup> The angel answered me, “These are the four winds of heaven going out, after presenting themselves before the LORD of all the earth.<sup>6</sup> The

#### *The Coronation of the Branch*

<sup>9</sup>The word of the LORD came to me:<sup>10</sup> Collect silver and gold from the exiles— from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah—who have arrived from Babylon; and go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.<sup>11</sup> Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak;<sup>12</sup> say to him: Thus says the LORD of hosts: Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.<sup>13</sup> It is he that shall build

the temple of the LORD; he shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. There shall be a priest by his throne, with peaceful understanding between the two of them. <sup>14</sup> And the crown shall be in the care of Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Josiah son of Zephaniah, as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> Those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the LORD; and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

**Revelation 15:1–4** (NRSV)  
*The Angels with the Seven Last Plagues*

**15** Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and amazing: seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended.


<sup>2</sup> And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its

name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. <sup>3</sup> And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:

“Great and amazing are your deeds,  
Lord God the Almighty!  
Just and true are your ways,  
King of the nations!

<sup>4</sup> Lord, who will not fear and glorify your name?

*For you alone are holy.  
All nations will come  
and worship before you,  
for your judgments have  
been revealed.”*



**Psalm 143:1-6** (NRSV)

*Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies*

A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness; answer me in your righteousness.

<sup>2</sup> Do not enter into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you.



<sup>3</sup> For the enemy has  
pursued me,  
crushing my life to the  
ground,  
making me sit in  
darkness like those  
long dead.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore my spirit faints  
within me;  
my heart within me is  
appalled.

<sup>5</sup> I remember the days of  
old,  
I think about all your  
deeds,  
I meditate on the works  
of your hands.

<sup>6</sup> I stretch out my hands to  
you;  
my soul thirsts for you  
like a parched land.  
*Selah*

**Proverbs 30:5–6** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> Every word of God proves  
true;  
he is a shield to those  
who take refuge in  
him.

<sup>6</sup> Do not add to his words,  
or else he will rebuke  
you, and you will be  
found a liar.

**December  
17**



**Zechariah 7:1–14** (NRSV)  
*Hypocritical Fasting  
Condemned*

**7** In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev. <sup>2</sup> Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and their men, to entreat the favor of the LORD, <sup>3</sup> and to ask the priests of the house of the LORD of hosts and the prophets, “Should I mourn and practice abstinence in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?” <sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me: <sup>5</sup> Say to all the people of the land and the priests: When you fasted and lamented in the fifth month and in the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted? <sup>6</sup> And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink only for yourselves? <sup>7</sup> Were not these the words that the LORD proclaimed by the former

prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, along with the towns around it, and when the Negeb and the Shephelah were inhabited?

*Punishment for Rejecting  
God's Demands*

<sup>8</sup> The word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying:  
<sup>9</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; <sup>10</sup> do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. <sup>11</sup> But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears in order not to hear. <sup>12</sup> They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. <sup>13</sup> Just as, when I called, they would not hear, so, when they called, I would not hear, says the LORD of hosts, <sup>14</sup> and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the

nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and a pleasant land was made desolate.

**Revelation 15:5–8** (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> After this I looked, and the temple of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, <sup>6</sup> and out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues, robed in pure bright linen, with golden sashes across their chests. <sup>7</sup> Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever; <sup>8</sup> and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended.

**Psalms 143:7–12** (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Answer me quickly, O LORD;  
my spirit fails.  
Do not hide your face from me,

or I shall be like those  
who go down to the  
Pit.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear of your  
steadfast love in the  
morning,  
for in you I put my trust.  
Teach me the way I should  
go,  
for to you I lift up my  
soul.

<sup>9</sup> Save me, O LORD, from my  
enemies;  
I have fled to you for  
refuge.

<sup>10</sup> Teach me to do your will,  
for you are my God.  
Let your good spirit lead  
me  
on a level path.

<sup>11</sup> For your name's sake, O  
LORD, preserve my life.  
In your righteousness  
bring me out of  
trouble.

<sup>12</sup> In your steadfast love cut  
off my enemies,  
and destroy all my  
adversaries,  
for I am your servant.

### Proverbs 30:7–9 (NRSV)

<sup>7</sup> Two things I ask of you;  
do not deny them to me  
before I die:

<sup>8</sup> Remove far from me  
falsehood and lying;  
<sup>y</sup>give me neither poverty  
nor riches;  
feed me with the food  
that I need,  
<sup>9</sup> or I shall be full, and deny  
you,  
and say, "Who is the  
LORD?"  
or I shall be poor, and  
steal,  
and profane the name of  
my God.

## December 18



### Zechariah 8:1–13 (NRSV)

*God's Promises to Zion*

**8** The word of the LORD of  
hosts came to me, saying:  
<sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: I  
am jealous for Zion with great  
jealousy, and I am jealous for  
her with great wrath. <sup>3</sup> Thus  
says the LORD: I will return to  
Zion, and will dwell in the

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<sup>y</sup> See Philippians 4:11-13

midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts shall be called the holy mountain. <sup>4</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. <sup>5</sup> And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.

<sup>6</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Even though it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in these days, should it also seem impossible to me, says the LORD of hosts?

<sup>7</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; <sup>8</sup> and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.

<sup>9</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Let your hands be strong—you that have recently been hearing these words from the mouths of the prophets who were present when the foundation was laid for the rebuilding of the

temple, the house of the LORD of hosts. <sup>10</sup> For before those days there were no wages for people or for animals, nor was there any safety from the foe for those who went out or came in, and I set them all against one other. <sup>11</sup> But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>12</sup> For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, the ground shall give its produce, and the skies shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. <sup>13</sup> Just as you have been a cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.

### **Revelation 16:1–11 (NRSV)**

#### *The Bowls of God's Wrath*

**16** Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”

<sup>2</sup> So the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth, and a foul and painful

sore came on those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image.

<sup>3</sup> The second angel poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing in the sea died.

<sup>4</sup> The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. <sup>5</sup> And I heard the angel of the waters say,

“You are just, O Holy One, who are and were, for you have judged these things;

<sup>6</sup> because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, you have given them blood to drink.

It is what they deserve!”

<sup>7</sup> And I heard the altar respond,

“Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, your judgments are true and just!”

<sup>8</sup> The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire; <sup>9</sup> they were scorched by the fierce heat, but they cursed the name of God, who

had authority over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory.

<sup>10</sup> The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness; people gnawed their tongues in agony, <sup>11</sup> and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and they did not repent of their deeds.

**Psalm 144:1-8 (NRSV)**

*Prayer for National  
Deliverance and Security  
Of David.*

<sup>1</sup> Blessed be the LORD, my rock,  
who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle;

<sup>2</sup> my rock and my fortress,  
my stronghold and my deliverer,

my shield, in whom I take refuge,  
who subdues the peoples under me.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, what are human beings that you regard them,  
or mortals that you think of them?

<sup>4</sup> They are like a breath;

their days are like a  
passing shadow.

5 Bow your heavens, O LORD,  
and come down;  
touch the mountains so  
that they smoke.

6 Make the lightning flash  
and scatter them;  
send out your arrows  
and rout them.

7 *Stretch out your hand  
from on high;  
set me free and rescue  
me from the mighty  
waters,  
from the hand of aliens,*

8 *whose mouths speak lies,  
and whose right hands  
are false.*

### **Proverbs 30:10** (NRSV)

10 Do not slander a servant to  
a master,  
or the servant will curse  
you, and you will be  
held guilty.

## **December 19**



### **Zechariah 8:14–23** (NRSV)

<sup>14</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the LORD of hosts, <sup>15</sup> so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid. <sup>16</sup> These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace, <sup>17</sup> do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the LORD.

### *Joyful Fasting*

<sup>18</sup> The word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying:  
<sup>19</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be seasons of joy and gladness, and cheerful festivals for the house of Judah: therefore love truth and peace.

*Many Peoples  
Drawn to Jerusalem*

<sup>20</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, the inhabitants of many cities; <sup>21</sup> the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Come, let us go to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going." <sup>22</sup> Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the LORD. <sup>23</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of every language shall take hold of a Jew, grasping his garment and saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

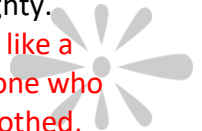
**Revelation 16:12–21** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> The sixth angel poured his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings from the east. <sup>13</sup> And I saw three foul spirits like frogs coming from the mouth of the dragon, from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet. <sup>14</sup> These are demonic

spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty.

<sup>15</sup> ("See, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and is clothed, not going about naked and exposed to shame.") <sup>16</sup> And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Harmagedon.

<sup>17</sup> The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" <sup>18</sup> And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a violent earthquake, such as had not occurred since people were upon the earth, so violent was that earthquake. <sup>19</sup> The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. God remembered great Babylon and gave her the wine-cup of the fury of his wrath. <sup>20</sup> And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found; <sup>21</sup> and huge hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds,



dropped from heaven on  
people, until they cursed God  
for the plague of the hail, so  
fearful was that plague.

**Psalms 144:9-15 (NRSV)**

9 I will sing a new song to  
you, O God;  
upon a ten-stringed harp  
I will play to you,  
10 the one who gives victory  
to kings,  
who rescues his servant  
David.  
11 Rescue me from the cruel  
sword,  
and deliver me from the  
hand of aliens,  
whose mouths speak lies,  
and whose right hands  
are false.  
12 May our sons in their  
youth  
be like plants full grown,  
our daughters like corner  
pillars,  
cut for the building of a  
palace.  
13 May our barns be filled,  
with produce of every  
kind;  
may our sheep increase by  
thousands,  
by tens of thousands in  
our fields,

14 and may our cattle be  
heavy with young.  
May there be no breach in  
the walls, no exile,  
and no cry of distress in  
our streets.  
15 Happy are the people to  
whom such blessings  
fall;  
happy are the people  
whose God is the LORD.

**Proverbs 30:11-14 (NRSV)**

11 There are those who curse  
their fathers  
and do not bless their  
mothers.  
12 There are those who are  
pure in their own eyes  
yet are not cleansed of  
their filthiness.  
13 There are those—how  
lofty are their eyes,  
how high their eyelids  
lift!—  
14 there are those whose  
teeth are swords,  
whose teeth are knives,  
to devour the poor from  
off the earth,  
the needy from among  
mortals.



# December 20



## Zechariah 9:1–8 (NRSV)

*Judgment on Israel's Enemies*

**9**

An Oracle.

The word of the LORD is  
against the land of  
Hadrach  
and will rest upon  
Damascus.

For to the LORD belongs the  
capital of Aram,  
as do all the tribes of  
Israel;

<sup>2</sup>

Hamath also, which  
borders on it,  
Tyre and Sidon, though  
they are very wise.

<sup>3</sup>

Tyre has built itself a  
rampart,  
and heaped up silver like  
dust,  
and gold like the dirt of  
the streets.

<sup>4</sup>

But now, the Lord will strip  
it of its possessions  
and hurl its wealth into  
the sea,  
and it shall be devoured  
by fire.

<sup>5</sup>

Ashkelon shall see it and  
be afraid;

Gaza too, and shall  
writhe in anguish;  
Ekron also, because its  
hopes are withered.  
The king shall perish from  
Gaza;

Ashkelon shall be  
uninhabited;

<sup>6</sup>

a mongrel people shall  
settle in Ashdod,  
and I will make an end of  
the pride of Philistia.

<sup>7</sup>

I will take away its blood  
from its mouth,  
and its abominations  
from between its  
teeth;

it too shall be a remnant  
for our God;

it shall be like a clan in  
Judah,  
and Ekron shall be like  
the Jebusites.

<sup>8</sup>

Then I will encamp at my  
house as a guard,  
so that no one shall  
march to and fro;  
no oppressor shall again  
overrun them,  
for now I have seen with  
my own eyes.

**Revelation 17:1–8** (NRSV)

*The Great Whore  
and the Beast*

**17** Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great whore who is seated on many waters, <sup>2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth have become drunk.” <sup>3</sup> So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup> The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication; <sup>5</sup> and on her forehead was written a name, a mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth’s abominations.” <sup>6</sup> And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints

and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus.

When I saw her, I was greatly amazed. <sup>7</sup> But the angel said to me, “Why are you so amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. <sup>8</sup> The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to ascend from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the inhabitants of the earth, whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be amazed when they see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

**Psalm 145:1-7** (NRSV)

*The Greatness and the  
Goodness of God*  
Praise. Of David.

- 1 I will extol you, my God  
and King,  
and bless your name  
forever and ever.
- 2 Every day I will bless you,  
and praise your name  
forever and ever.
- 3 Great is the LORD, and  
greatly to be praised;  
his greatness is  
unsearchable.



- 4 One generation shall laud  
your works to another,  
and shall declare your  
mighty acts.
- 5 On the glorious splendor  
of your majesty,  
and on your wondrous  
works, I will meditate.
- 6 The might of your  
awesome deeds shall  
be proclaimed,  
and I will declare your  
greatness.
- 7 They shall celebrate the  
fame of your abundant  
goodness,  
and shall sing aloud of  
your righteousness.

**Proverbs 30:15–16** (NRSV)

- 15 The leech has two  
daughters;  
“Give, give,” they cry.  
Three things are never  
satisfied;  
four never say,  
“Enough”:
- 16 Sheol, the barren womb,  
the earth ever thirsty for  
water,  
and the fire that never  
says, “Enough.”

## December 21



**Zechariah 9:9–17** (NRSV)

*The Coming Ruler  
of God's People  
(Mt 21:5; Jn 12:14–15)*

- 9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter  
Zion!  
Shout aloud, O daughter  
Jerusalem!  
Lo, your king comes to  
you;  
triumphant and  
victorious is he,  
humble and riding on a  
donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a  
donkey.
- 10 He will cut off the chariot  
from Ephraim  
and the war-horse from  
Jerusalem;  
and the battle bow shall be  
cut off,  
and he shall command  
peace to the nations;  
his dominion shall be from  
sea to sea,  
and from the River to the  
ends of the earth.
- 11 As for you also, because of  
the blood of my  
covenant with you,

I will set your prisoners  
free from the waterless  
pit.  
12 Return to your stronghold,  
O prisoners of hope;  
today I declare that I will  
restore to you double.  
13 For I have bent Judah as  
my bow;  
I have made Ephraim its  
arrow.  
I will arouse your sons, O  
Zion,  
against your sons, O  
Greece,  
and wield you like a  
warrior's sword.  
14 Then the LORD will appear  
over them,  
and his arrow go forth  
like lightning;  
the Lord GOD will sound  
the trumpet  
and march forth in the  
whirlwinds of the  
south.  
15 The LORD of hosts will  
protect them,  
and they shall devour  
and tread down the  
slingers;  
they shall drink their blood  
like wine,  
and be full like a bowl,

drenched like the  
corners of the altar.  
16 On that day the LORD their  
God will save them  
for they are the flock of  
his people;  
for like the jewels of a  
crown  
they shall shine on his  
land.  
17 For what goodness and  
beauty are his!  
Grain shall make the  
young men flourish,  
and new wine the young  
women.

**Revelation 17:9–18 (NRSV)**

<sup>9</sup> "This calls for a mind that  
has wisdom: the seven heads  
are seven mountains on which  
the woman is seated; also,  
they are seven kings, <sup>10</sup> of  
whom five have fallen, one is  
living, and the other has not  
yet come; and when he  
comes, he must remain only a  
little while. <sup>11</sup> As for the beast  
that was and is not, it is an  
eighth but it belongs to the  
seven, and it goes to  
destruction. <sup>12</sup> And the ten  
horns that you saw are ten  
kings who have not yet  
received a kingdom, but they

are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. <sup>13</sup> These are united in yielding their power and authority to the beast; <sup>14</sup> they will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

<sup>15</sup> And he said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the whore is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. <sup>16</sup> And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the whore; they will make her desolate and naked; they will devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. <sup>17</sup> For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. <sup>18</sup> The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”

**Psalms 145:8-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.

<sup>10</sup> All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your faithful shall bless you.

<sup>11</sup> They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, and tell of your power,

<sup>12</sup> to make known to all people your mighty deeds,

and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

<sup>13</sup> Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

The LORD is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds.

<sup>14</sup> The LORD upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down.

<sup>15</sup> The eyes of all look to you,

and you give them their  
 food in due season.

<sup>16</sup> You open your hand,  
 satisfying the desire of  
 every living thing.

<sup>17</sup> The LORD is just in all his  
 ways,  
 and kind in all his doings.

<sup>18</sup> The LORD is near to all who  
 call on him,  
 to all who call on him in  
 truth.

<sup>19</sup> He fulfills the desire of all  
 who fear him;  
 he also hears their cry,  
 and saves them.

<sup>20</sup> The LORD watches over all  
 who love him,  
 but all the wicked he will  
 destroy.

<sup>21</sup> My mouth will speak the  
 praise of the LORD,  
 and all flesh will bless his  
 holy name forever and  
 ever.

**Proverbs 30:17** (NRSV)

<sup>17</sup> The eye that mocks a  
 father  
 and scorns to obey a  
 mother  
 will be pecked out by the  
 ravens of the valley  
 and eaten by the  
 vultures.

**December**  
**22**



**Zechariah 10:1–12** (NRSV)

*Restoration of Judah and Israel*

**10** Ask rain from the LORD  
 in the season of the  
 spring rain,  
 from the LORD who makes  
 the storm clouds,  
 who gives showers of  
 rain to you,  
 the vegetation in the  
 field to everyone.

<sup>2</sup> For the teraphim utter  
 nonsense,  
 and the diviners see lies;  
 the dreamers tell false  
 dreams,  
 and give empty  
 consolation.  
 Therefore the people  
 wander like sheep;  
 they suffer for lack of a  
 shepherd.

<sup>3</sup> My anger is hot against the  
 shepherds,  
 and I will punish the  
 leaders;  
 for the LORD of hosts cares  
 for his flock, the house  
 of Judah,  
 and will make them like  
 his proud war-horse.

4 Out of them shall come  
the cornerstone,  
out of them the tent peg,  
out of them the battle  
bow,  
out of them every  
commander.

5 Together they shall be like  
warriors in battle,  
trampling the foe in the  
mud of the streets;  
they shall fight, for the  
LORD is with them,  
and they shall put to  
shame the riders on  
horses.

6 I will strengthen the house  
of Judah,  
and I will save the house  
of Joseph.

I will bring them back  
because I have  
compassion on them,  
and they shall be as  
though I had not  
rejected them;  
for I am the LORD their  
God and I will answer  
them.

7 Then the people of  
Ephraim shall become  
like warriors,  
and their hearts shall be  
glad as with wine.

Their children shall see it  
and rejoice,  
their hearts shall exult in  
the LORD.

8 I will signal for them and  
gather them in,  
for I have redeemed  
them,  
and they shall be as  
numerous as they were  
before.

9 Though I scattered them  
among the nations,  
yet in far countries they  
shall remember me,  
and they shall rear their  
children and return.

10 I will bring them home  
from the land of Egypt,  
and gather them from  
Assyria;

I will bring them to the  
land of Gilead and to  
Lebanon,  
until there is no room for  
them.

11 They shall pass through  
the sea of distress,  
and the waves of the sea  
shall be struck down,  
and all the depths of the  
Nile dried up.

The pride of Assyria shall  
be laid low,

and the scepter of Egypt  
shall depart.

<sup>12</sup> I will make them strong in  
the LORD,  
and they shall walk in his  
name,  
says the LORD.

**Revelation 18:1–10** (NRSV)

*The Fall of Babylon*

**18** After this I saw another  
angel coming down from  
heaven, having great  
authority; and the earth was  
made bright with his splendor.

<sup>2</sup> He called out with a mighty  
voice,

“Fallen, fallen is Babylon  
the great!

It has become a dwelling  
place of demons,  
a haunt of every foul spirit,  
a haunt of every foul  
bird,  
a haunt of every foul and  
hateful beast.

<sup>3</sup> For all the nations have  
drunk  
of the wine of the wrath  
of her fornication,  
and the kings of the earth  
have committed  
fornication with her,  
and the merchants of the  
earth have grown rich

from the power of her  
luxury.”

<sup>4</sup> Then I heard another  
voice from heaven saying,

“Come out of her, my  
people,

so that you do not take  
part in her sins,

and so that you do not  
share in her plagues;

<sup>5</sup> for her sins are heaped  
high as heaven,

and God has  
remembered her  
iniquities.

<sup>6</sup> Render to her as she  
herself has rendered,  
and repay her double for  
her deeds;  
mix a double draught for  
her in the cup she  
mixed.

<sup>7</sup> As she glorified herself and  
lived luxuriously,  
so give her a like  
measure of torment  
and grief.

Since in her heart she says,  
‘I rule as a queen;

I am no widow,  
and I will never see  
grief,’

<sup>8</sup> therefore her plagues will  
come in a single day—



pestilence and mourning  
and famine—  
and she will be burned  
with fire;  
for mighty is the Lord  
God who judges her.”

<sup>9</sup> And the kings of the  
earth, who committed  
fornication and lived in luxury  
with her, will weep and wail  
over her when they see the  
smoke of her burning; <sup>10</sup> they  
will stand far off, in fear of her  
torment, and say,  
“Alas, alas, the great city,  
Babylon, the mighty city!  
For in one hour your  
judgment has come.”

**Psalms 146:1-2 (NRSV)**

*Praise for God's Help*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD, O my soul!  
<sup>2</sup> I will praise the LORD as  
long as I live;  
I will sing praises to my  
God all my life long.

**Proverbs 30:18-20 (NRSV)**

<sup>18</sup> Three things are too  
wonderful for me;  
four I do not understand:  
<sup>19</sup> the way of an eagle in the  
sky,

the way of a snake on a  
rock,  
the way of a ship on the  
high seas,  
and the way of a man  
with a girl.

<sup>20</sup> This is the way of an  
adulteress:  
she eats, and wipes her  
mouth,  
and says, “I have done  
no wrong.”

**December  
23**



**Zechariah 11:1-17 (NRSV)**

Open your doors, O Lebanon,  
so that fire may devour  
your cedars!  
<sup>2</sup> Wail, O cypress, for the  
cedar has fallen,  
for the glorious trees are  
ruined!  
Wail, oaks of Bashan,  
for the thick forest has  
been felled!  
<sup>3</sup> Listen, the wail of the  
shepherds,  
for their glory is  
despoiled!

Listen, the roar of the  
lions,  
for the thickets of the  
Jordan are destroyed!

*Two Kinds of Shepherds*

<sup>4</sup> Thus said the LORD my  
God: Be a shepherd of the  
flock doomed to slaughter.  
<sup>5</sup> Those who buy them kill  
them and go unpunished; and  
those who sell them say,  
“Blessed be the LORD, for I  
have become rich”; and their  
own shepherds have no pity  
on them. <sup>6</sup> For I will no longer  
have pity on the inhabitants of  
the earth, says the LORD. I will  
cause them, every one, to fall  
each into the hand of a  
neighbor, and each into the  
hand of the king; and they  
shall devastate the earth, and I  
will deliver no one from their  
hand.

<sup>7</sup> So, on behalf of the sheep  
merchants, I became the  
shepherd of the flock doomed  
to slaughter. I took two staffs;  
one I named Favor, the other I  
named Unity, and I tended the  
sheep. <sup>8</sup> In one month I  
disposed of the three  
shepherds, for I had become  
impatient with them, and they

also detested me. <sup>9</sup> So I said, “I  
will not be your shepherd.  
What is to die, let it die; what  
is to be destroyed, let it be  
destroyed; and let those that  
are left devour the flesh of  
one another!” <sup>10</sup> I took my  
staff Favor and broke it,  
annulling the covenant that I  
had made with all the peoples.  
<sup>11</sup> So it was annulled on that  
day, and the sheep merchants,  
who were watching me, knew  
that it was the word of the  
LORD. <sup>12</sup> I then said to them, “If  
it seems right to you, give me  
my wages; but if not, keep  
them.” So they weighed out as  
my wages thirty shekels of  
silver. <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to  
me, “Throw it into the  
treasury”—this lordly price at  
which I was valued by them.  
So I took the thirty shekels of  
silver and threw them into the  
treasury in the house of the  
LORD. <sup>14</sup> Then I broke my  
second staff Unity, annulling  
the family ties between Judah  
and Israel.

<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to  
me: Take once more the  
implements of a worthless  
shepherd. <sup>16</sup> For I am now  
raising up in the land a

shepherd who does not care for the perishing, or seek the wandering, or heal the maimed, or nourish the healthy, but devours the flesh of the fat ones, tearing off even their hoofs.

<sup>17</sup> Oh, my worthless shepherd,  
who deserts the flock!  
May the sword strike his arm  
and his right eye!  
Let his arm be completely withered,  
his right eye utterly blinded!

**Revelation 18:11–24 (NRSV)**

<sup>11</sup> And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, <sup>12</sup> cargo of gold, silver, jewels and pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, all articles of ivory, all articles of costly wood, bronze, iron, and marble, <sup>13</sup> cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, choice flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, slaves— and human lives.

<sup>14</sup> “The fruit for which your soul longed  
has gone from you,  
and all your dainties and your splendor  
are lost to you,  
never to be found again!”

<sup>15</sup> The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,

<sup>16</sup> “Alas, alas, the great city,  
clothed in fine linen,  
in purple and scarlet,  
adorned with gold,  
with jewels, and with pearls!

<sup>17</sup> For in one hour all this wealth has been laid waste!”

And all shipmasters and seafarers, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off <sup>18</sup> and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

“What city was like the great city?”

<sup>19</sup> And they threw dust on their heads, as they wept and mourned, crying out,

“Alas, alas, the great city,

where all who had ships  
at sea  
grew rich by her wealth!  
For in one hour she has  
been laid waste.  
20 Rejoice over her, O  
heaven,  
you saints and apostles  
and prophets!  
For God has given  
judgment for you  
against her.”

21 Then a mighty angel  
took up a stone like a great  
millstone and threw it into the  
sea, saying,

“With such violence  
Babylon the great city  
will be thrown down,  
and will be found no  
more;

22 and the sound of harpists  
and minstrels and of  
flutists and trumpeters  
will be heard in you no  
more;

and an artisan of any trade  
will be found in you no  
more;

and the sound of the  
millstone  
will be heard in you no  
more;

23 and the light of a lamp

will shine in you no  
more;  
and the voice of  
bridegroom and bride  
will be heard in you no  
more;  
for your merchants were  
the magnates of the  
earth,  
and all nations were  
deceived by your  
sorcery.

24 And in you was found the  
blood of prophets and  
of saints,  
and of all who have been  
slaughtered on earth.”

#### **Psalm 146:3-10 (NRSV)**

3 Do not put your trust in  
princes,  
in mortals, in whom  
there is no help.

4 When their breath  
departs, they return to  
the earth;  
on that very day their  
plans perish.

5 Happy are those whose  
help is the God of  
Jacob,  
whose hope is in the  
LORD their God,

6 who made heaven and  
earth,

the sea, and all that is in  
them;  
who keeps faith forever;  
7 who executes justice for  
the oppressed;  
who gives food to the  
hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners  
free;

8 the LORD opens the eyes  
of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who  
are bowed down;  
the LORD loves the  
righteous.

9 The LORD watches over the  
strangers;  
he upholds the orphan  
and the widow,  
but the way of the  
wicked he brings to  
ruin.

10 The LORD will reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, for all  
generations.

Praise the LORD!

### **Proverbs 30:21–23** (NRSV)

21 Under three things the  
earth trembles;  
under four it cannot bear  
up:

22 a slave when he becomes  
king,

and a fool when gluttoned  
with food;

23 an unloved woman when  
she gets a husband,  
and a maid when she  
succeeds her mistress.

## **December 24**



### **Zechariah 12:1–14** (NRSV) *Jerusalem's Victory*

## **12** An Oracle.

The word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus says the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the human spirit within: <sup>2</sup>See, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling for all the surrounding peoples; it will be against Judah also in the siege against Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it shall grievously hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth shall come together against it. <sup>4</sup>On

that day, says the LORD, I will strike every horse with panic, and its rider with madness. But on the house of Judah I will keep a watchful eye, when I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.<sup>5</sup> Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, "The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through the LORD of hosts, their God."

<sup>6</sup> On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot on a pile of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem.

<sup>7</sup> And the LORD will give victory to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over that of Judah.<sup>8</sup> On that day the LORD will shield the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD,

at their head.<sup>9</sup> And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

*Mourning for the Pierced One*

<sup>10</sup> And I will pour out a spirit of compassion and supplication on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that, when they look on the one whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.<sup>11</sup> On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.<sup>12</sup> The land shall mourn, each family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;<sup>13</sup> the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves;<sup>14</sup> and all the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves.

**Revelation 19:1–10** (NRSV)

*The Rejoicing in Heaven*

**19** After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying,

“Hallelujah!

Salvation and glory and power to our God,

<sup>2</sup> for his judgments are true and just;

he has judged the great whore

who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

<sup>3</sup> Once more they said, “Hallelujah!

The smoke goes up from her forever and ever.”

<sup>4</sup> And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying,

“Amen. Hallelujah!”

<sup>5</sup> And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, and all who fear him, small and great.”

<sup>6</sup> Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out,

“Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

<sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready;

<sup>8</sup> to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure” —

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

<sup>9</sup> And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” <sup>10</sup> Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus.

Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

**Psalms 147:1-11 (NRSV)**

*Praise for God's Care for Jerusalem*

1 Praise the LORD!  
How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.

2 The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel.

3 He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds.

4 He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.

5 Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

6 The LORD lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;

make melody to our God on the lyre.

8 He covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, makes grass grow on the hills.

9 He gives to the animals their food, and to the young ravens when they cry.

10 His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;

11 but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.

**Proverbs 30:24-28 (NRSV)**

24 Four things on earth are small, yet they are exceedingly wise:

25 the ants are a people without strength, yet they provide their food in the summer;

26 the badgers are a people without power, yet they make their homes in the rocks;



<sup>27</sup> the locusts have no king,  
yet all of them march in  
rank;  
<sup>28</sup> the lizard can be grasped  
in the hand,  
yet it is found in kings'  
palaces.

## December 25



### **Zechariah 13:1–9** (NRSV)

On that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

#### *Idolatry Cut Off*

<sup>2</sup> On that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more; and also I will remove from the land the prophets and the unclean spirit. <sup>3</sup> And if any prophets appear again, their fathers and mothers who bore them will say to them, “You shall not live, for you speak

lies in the name of the LORD”; and their fathers and their mothers who bore them shall pierce them through when they prophesy. <sup>4</sup> On that day the prophets will be ashamed, every one, of their visions when they prophesy; they will not put on a hairy mantle in order to deceive, <sup>5</sup> but each of them will say, “I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the soil; for the land has been my possession since my youth.” <sup>6</sup> And if anyone asks them, “What are these wounds on your chest?” the answer will be “The wounds I received in the house of my friends.”

#### *The Shepherd Struck, the Flock Scattered*

<sup>7</sup> “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,  
against the man who is my associate,”  
says the LORD of hosts.  
Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered;  
I will turn my hand against the little ones.  
<sup>8</sup> In the whole land, says the LORD,


two-thirds shall be cut  
off and perish,  
and one-third shall be  
left alive.

<sup>9</sup> And I will put this third into  
the fire,  
refine them as one  
refines silver,  
and test them as gold is  
tested.

They will call on my name,  
and I will answer them.  
I will say, "They are my  
people";  
and they will say, "The  
LORD is our God."

**Revelation 19:11–21 (NRSV)**

*The Rider on the White Horse*



<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven  
opened, and there was a white  
horse! Its rider is called  
Faithful and True, and in  
righteousness he judges and  
makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like  
a flame of fire, and on his head  
are many diadems; and he has  
a name inscribed that no one  
knows but himself. <sup>13</sup> He is  
clothed in a robe dipped in  
blood, and his name is called  
The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the  
armies of heaven, wearing fine  
linen, white and pure, were  
following him on white horses.

<sup>15</sup> From his mouth comes a  
sharp sword with which to  
strike down the nations, and  
he will rule them with a rod of  
iron; he will tread the wine  
press of the fury of the wrath  
of God the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his  
robe and on his thigh he has a  
name inscribed, "King of kings  
and Lord of lords."

*The Beast and Its  
Armies Defeated*

<sup>17</sup> Then I saw an angel  
standing in the sun, and with a  
loud voice he called to all the  
birds that fly in midheaven,  
"Come, gather for the great  
supper of God, <sup>18</sup> to eat the  
flesh of kings, the flesh of  
captains, the flesh of the  
mighty, the flesh of horses and  
their riders—flesh of all, both  
free and slave, both small and  
great." <sup>19</sup> Then I saw the beast  
and the kings of the earth with  
their armies gathered to make  
war against the rider on the  
horse and against his army.  
<sup>20</sup> And the beast was captured,  
and with it the false prophet  
who had performed in its  
presence the signs by which  
he deceived those who had  
received the mark of the beast

and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.

<sup>21</sup> And the rest were killed by the sword of the rider on the horse, the sword that came from his mouth; and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

**Psalms 147:12-20** (NRSV)

<sup>12</sup> Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!  
Praise your God, O Zion!  
<sup>13</sup> For he strengthens the bars of your gates;  
he blesses your children within you.  
<sup>14</sup> He grants peace within your borders;  
he fills you with the finest of wheat.  
<sup>15</sup> He sends out his command to the earth;  
his word runs swiftly.  
<sup>16</sup> He gives snow like wool;  
he scatters frost like ashes.  
<sup>17</sup> He hurls down hail like crumbs—  
who can stand before his cold?  
<sup>18</sup> He sends out his word, and melts them;

he makes his wind blow,  
and the waters flow.

<sup>19</sup> He declares his word to Jacob,  
his statutes and ordinances to Israel.

<sup>20</sup> He has not dealt thus with any other nation;  
they do not know his ordinances.

Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 30:29-31** (NRSV)

<sup>29</sup> Three things are stately in their stride;  
four are stately in their gait:  
<sup>30</sup> the lion, which is mightiest among wild animals  
and does not turn back before any;  
<sup>31</sup> the strutting rooster, the he-goat,  
and a king striding before his people.

# December 26



## Zechariah 14:1–11 (NRSV)

### *Future Warfare and Final Victory*

(Cp Ezek 38–39; Mk 13; Rev 20–22)

**14** See, a day is coming for the LORD, when the plunder taken from you will be divided in your midst. <sup>2</sup> For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses looted and the women raped; half the city shall go into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. <sup>4</sup> On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward. <sup>5</sup> And you shall flee by the valley of the LORD's mountain, for the valley between the mountains shall reach to Azal;

and you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

<sup>6</sup> On that day there shall not be either cold or frost.

<sup>7</sup> And there shall be continuous day (it is known to the LORD), not day and not night, for at evening time there shall be light.

<sup>8</sup> On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter.

<sup>9</sup> And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one.

<sup>10</sup> The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. <sup>11</sup> And it shall be inhabited, for never again shall it be doomed to destruction;

Jerusalem shall abide in security.

**Revelation 20:1–10** (NRSV)

*The Thousand Years*

**20** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. <sup>2</sup> He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, <sup>3</sup> and threw him into the pit, and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be let out for a little while.

<sup>4</sup> Then I saw thrones, and those seated on them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were

ended.) This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him a thousand years.

*Satan's Doom*

*(Cp Ezek 38–39)*

<sup>7</sup> When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup> and will come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, in order to gather them for battle; they are as numerous as the sands of the sea. <sup>9</sup> They marched up over the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from heaven and consumed them. <sup>10</sup> And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

**Psalms 148:1-4** (NRSV)

*Praise for God's  
Universal Glory*

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD from the  
heavens;  
praise him in the heights!
- <sup>2</sup> Praise him, all his angels;  
praise him, all his host!
- <sup>3</sup> Praise him, sun and moon;  
praise him, all you  
shining stars!
- <sup>4</sup> Praise him, you highest  
heavens,  
and you waters above  
the heavens!

**Proverbs 30:32** (NRSV)

- <sup>32</sup> If you have been foolish,  
exalting yourself,  
or if you have been  
devising evil,  
put your hand on your  
mouth.

**December  
27**



**Zechariah 14:12–21** (NRSV)

- <sup>12</sup> This shall be the plague  
with which the LORD will strike

all the peoples that wage war  
against Jerusalem: their flesh  
shall rot while they are still on  
their feet; their eyes shall rot  
in their sockets, and their  
tongues shall rot in their  
mouths. <sup>13</sup> On that day a great  
panic from the LORD shall fall  
on them, so that each will  
seize the hand of a neighbor,  
and the hand of the one will  
be raised against the hand of  
the other; <sup>14</sup> even Judah will  
fight at Jerusalem. And the  
wealth of all the surrounding  
nations shall be collected—  
gold, silver, and garments in  
great abundance. <sup>15</sup> And a  
plague like this plague shall fall  
on the horses, the mules, the  
camels, the donkeys, and  
whatever animals may be in  
those camps.

<sup>16</sup> Then all who survive of  
the nations that have come  
against Jerusalem shall go up  
year after year to worship the  
King, the LORD of hosts, and to  
keep the festival of booths.  
<sup>17</sup> If any of the families of the  
earth do not go up to  
Jerusalem to worship the King,  
the LORD of hosts, there will be  
no rain upon them. <sup>18</sup> And if  
the family of Egypt do not go

up and present themselves, then on them shall come the plague that the LORD inflicts on the nations that do not go up to keep the festival of booths.

<sup>19</sup> Such shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to keep the festival of booths.

<sup>20</sup> On that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "Holy to the LORD." And the cooking pots in the house of the LORD shall be as holy as the bowls in front of the altar; <sup>21</sup> and every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be sacred to the LORD of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and use them to boil the flesh of the sacrifice. And there shall no longer be traders in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.

**Revelation 20:11–15 (NRSV)**

*The Dead Are Judged*

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and the one who sat on it; the earth and the heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them.

<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the

throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books. <sup>13</sup> And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to what they had done. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; <sup>15</sup> and anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

**Psalms 148:5–14 (NRSV)**

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
for he commanded and they were created.

<sup>6</sup> He established them forever and ever;  
he fixed their bounds,  
which cannot be passed.

<sup>7</sup> Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you sea monsters and all  
deeps,

<sup>8</sup> fire and hail, snow and  
frost,

stormy wind fulfilling his  
command!

- <sup>9</sup> Mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars!  
<sup>10</sup> Wild animals and all cattle,  
creeping things and  
flying birds!  
<sup>11</sup> Kings of the earth and all  
peoples,  
princes and all rulers of  
the earth!  
<sup>12</sup> Young men and women  
alike,  
old and young together!  
<sup>13</sup> Let them praise the name  
of the LORD,  
for his name alone is  
exalted;  
his glory is above earth  
and heaven.  
<sup>14</sup> He has raised up a horn for  
his people,  
praise for all his faithful,  
for the people of Israel  
who are close to him.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 30:33** (NRSV)

- <sup>33</sup> For as pressing milk  
produces curds,  
and pressing the nose  
produces blood,  
so pressing anger  
produces strife.

## December 28



**Malachi 1:1–14** (NRSV)

An oracle. The word of the  
LORD to Israel by Malachi.

*Israel Preferred to Edom*

<sup>2</sup> I have loved you, says the  
LORD. But you say, “How have  
you loved us?” Is not Esau  
Jacob’s brother? says the LORD.  
Yet I have loved Jacob <sup>3</sup> but I  
have hated Esau; I have made  
his hill country a desolation  
and his heritage a desert for  
jackals. <sup>4</sup> If Edom says, “We are  
shattered but we will rebuild  
the ruins,” the LORD of hosts  
says: They may build, but I will  
tear down, until they are  
called the wicked country, the  
people with whom the LORD is  
angry forever. <sup>5</sup> Your own eyes  
shall see this, and you shall  
say, “Great is the LORD beyond  
the borders of Israel!”

*Corruption of the Priesthood*

<sup>6</sup> A son honors his father,  
and servants their master. If  
then I am a father, where is  
the honor due me? And if I am  
a master, where is the respect  
due me? says the LORD of



hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. You say, "How have we despised your name?" <sup>7</sup> By offering polluted food on my altar. And you say, "How have we polluted it?" By thinking that the LORD's table may be despised. <sup>8</sup> When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not wrong? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not wrong? Try presenting that to your governor; will he be pleased with you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. <sup>9</sup> And now implore the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. The fault is yours. Will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts. <sup>10</sup> Oh, that someone among you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hands. <sup>11</sup> For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says

the LORD of hosts. <sup>12</sup> But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and the food for it may be despised. <sup>13</sup> "What a weariness this is," you say, and you sniff at me, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD. <sup>14</sup> Cursed be the cheat who has a male in the flock and vows to give it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished; for I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name is revered among the nations.

**Revelation 21:1–14** (NRSV)  
*The New Heaven  
and the New Earth*

**21** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is  
among mortals.

He will dwell with them as  
their God;

they will be his peoples,  
and God himself will be  
with them;

<sup>4</sup> he will wipe every tear  
from their eyes.

Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and  
pain will be no more,  
for the first things have  
passed away.”

<sup>5</sup> And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” <sup>6</sup> Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. <sup>7</sup> Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. <sup>8</sup> But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the lake that

burns with fire and sulfur,  
which is the second death.”

*Vision of the New Jerusalem*  
(Cp Ezek 48:30–35)

<sup>9</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

<sup>10</sup> And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

<sup>11</sup> It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal. <sup>12</sup> It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites; <sup>13</sup> on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. <sup>14</sup> And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

**Psalms 149:1** (NRSV)

*Praise for God's  
Goodness to Israel*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Sing to the LORD a new  
song,  
his praise in the  
assembly of the  
faithful.

**Proverbs 31:1–7** (NRSV)

*The Teaching of  
King Lemuel's Mother*

<sup>1</sup> The words of King  
Lemuel. An oracle that his  
mother taught him:  
<sup>2</sup> No, my son! No, son of my  
womb!  
No, son of my vows!  
<sup>3</sup> Do not give your strength  
to women,  
your ways to those who  
destroy kings.  
<sup>4</sup> It is not for kings, O  
Lemuel,  
it is not for kings to drink  
wine,  
or for rulers to desire  
strong drink;  
<sup>5</sup> or else they will drink and  
forget what has been  
decreed,  
and will pervert the  
rights of all the  
afflicted.

<sup>6</sup> Give strong drink to one  
who is perishing,  
and wine to those in  
bitter distress;  
<sup>7</sup> let them drink and forget  
their poverty,  
and remember their  
misery no more.

## December 29



**Malachi 2:1–17** (NRSV)

And now, O priests, this  
command is for you. <sup>2</sup> If you  
will not listen, if you will not  
lay it to heart to give glory to  
my name, says the LORD of  
hosts, then I will send the  
curse on you and I will curse  
your blessings; indeed I have  
already cursed them, because  
you do not lay it to heart. <sup>3</sup> I  
will rebuke your offspring, and  
spread dung on your faces, the  
dung of your offerings, and I  
will put you out of my  
presence.

<sup>4</sup> Know, then, that I have  
sent this command to you,  
that my covenant with Levi

may hold, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>5</sup> My covenant with him was a covenant of life and well-being, which I gave him; this called for reverence, and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. <sup>6</sup> True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in integrity and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. <sup>7</sup> For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. <sup>8</sup> But you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts, <sup>9</sup> and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you have not kept my ways but have shown partiality in your instruction.

*The Covenant  
Profaned by Judah*

<sup>10</sup> Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we

faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors? <sup>11</sup> Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob anyone who does this—any to witness or answer, or to bring an offering to the LORD of hosts.

<sup>13</sup> And this you do as well: You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor at your hand.

<sup>14</sup> You ask, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was a witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

<sup>15</sup> Did not one God make her? Both flesh and spirit are his. And what does the one God desire? Godly offspring. So look to yourselves, and do not let anyone be faithless to the wife of his youth. <sup>16</sup> For I hate

divorce, says the LORD, the God of Israel, and covering one's garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So take heed to yourselves and do not be faithless.

<sup>17</sup> You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, "How have we wearied him?" By saying, "All who do evil are good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is the God of justice?"

**Revelation 21:15–27 (NRSV)**

<sup>15</sup> The angel who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. <sup>16</sup> The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width; and he measured the city with his rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. <sup>17</sup> He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits by human measurement, which the angel was using. <sup>18</sup> The wall is built of jasper, while the city is pure gold, clear as glass. <sup>19</sup> The foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the

second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, <sup>20</sup> the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

<sup>21</sup> And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, each of the gates is a single pearl, and the street of the city is pure gold, transparent as glass.

<sup>22</sup> I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. <sup>25</sup> Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. <sup>26</sup> People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. <sup>27</sup> But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.



**Psalm 149:2-9** (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel be glad in its  
Maker;  
let the children of Zion  
rejoice in their King.  
<sup>3</sup> Let them praise his name  
with dancing,  
making melody to him  
with tambourine and  
lyre.  
<sup>4</sup> For the LORD takes  
pleasure in his people;  
he adorns the humble  
with victory.  
<sup>5</sup> Let the faithful exult in  
glory;  
let them sing for joy on  
their couches.  
<sup>6</sup> Let the high praises of God  
be in their throats  
and two-edged swords in  
their hands,  
<sup>7</sup> to execute vengeance on  
the nations  
and punishment on the  
peoples,  
<sup>8</sup> to bind their kings with  
fetters  
and their nobles with  
chains of iron,  
<sup>9</sup> to execute on them the  
judgment decreed.  
This is glory for all his  
faithful ones.  
Praise the LORD!

**Proverbs 31:8–9** (NRSV)

<sup>8</sup> Speak out for those who  
cannot speak,  
for the rights of all the  
destitute.  
<sup>9</sup> Speak out, judge  
righteously,  
defend the rights of the  
poor and needy.

**December  
30**



**Malachi 3:1–18** (NRSV)

*The Coming Messenger*

**3** See, I am sending my  
messenger to prepare the way  
before me, and the Lord  
whom you seek will suddenly  
come to his temple. The  
messenger of the covenant in  
whom you delight—indeed, he  
is coming, says the LORD of  
hosts. <sup>2</sup> But who can endure  
the day of his coming, and  
who can stand when he  
appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire  
and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup> he will

sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

<sup>5</sup> Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>6</sup> For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished. <sup>7</sup> Ever since the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, "How shall we return?"

### *Do Not Rob God*

<sup>8</sup> Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, "How are we robbing you?" In your tithes and offerings! <sup>9</sup> You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me—the whole nation of you! <sup>10</sup> Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. <sup>11</sup> I will rebuke the locust for you, so that it will not destroy the produce of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not be barren, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>12</sup> Then all nations will count you happy, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>13</sup> You have spoken harsh words against me, says the LORD. Yet you say, "How have we spoken against you?"

<sup>14</sup> You have said, "It is vain to serve God. What do we profit by keeping his command or by going about as mourners before the LORD of hosts?"

<sup>15</sup> Now we count the arrogant happy; evildoers not only prosper, but when they put God to the test they escape.”

*The Reward of the Faithful*

<sup>16</sup> Then those who revered the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD took note and listened, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who revered the LORD and thought on his name. <sup>17</sup> They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as parents spare their children who serve them.

<sup>18</sup> Then once more you shall see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

**Revelation 22:1–7** (NRSV)

*The River of Life*

**22** Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the

tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

<sup>3</sup> Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; <sup>4</sup> they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

<sup>6</sup> And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.”

<sup>7</sup> “See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

**Psalms 150:1-5** (NRSV)

*Praise for God’s Surpassing Greatness*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Praise God in his sanctuary;



praise him in his mighty  
firmament!  
2 Praise him for his mighty  
deeds;  
praise him according to  
his surpassing  
greatness!  
3 Praise him with trumpet  
sound;  
praise him with lute and  
harp!  
4 Praise him with  
tambourine and dance;  
praise him with strings  
and pipe!  
5 Praise him with clanging  
cymbals;  
praise him with loud  
clashing cymbals!

**Proverbs 31:10–24** (NRSV)

*Ode to a Capable Wife*

10 A capable wife who can  
find?  
She is far more precious  
than jewels.  
11 The heart of her husband  
trusts in her,  
and he will have no lack  
of gain.  
12 She does him good, and  
not harm,  
all the days of her life.  
13 She seeks wool and flax,

and works with willing  
hands.  
14 She is like the ships of the  
merchant,  
she brings her food from  
far away.  
15 She rises while it is still  
night  
and provides food for  
her household  
and tasks for her  
servant-girls.  
16 She considers a field and  
buys it;  
with the fruit of her  
hands she plants a  
vineyard.  
17 She girds herself with  
strength,  
and makes her arms  
strong.  
18 She perceives that her  
merchandise is  
profitable.  
Her lamp does not go out  
at night.  
19 She puts her hands to the  
distaff,  
and her hands hold the  
spindle.  
20 She opens her hand to the  
poor,  
and reaches out her  
hands to the needy.

- 21 She is not afraid for her household when it snows,  
for all her household are clothed in crimson.
- 22 She makes herself coverings;  
her clothing is fine linen and purple.
- 23 Her husband is known in the city gates,  
taking his seat among the elders of the land.
- 24 She makes linen garments and sells them;  
she supplies the merchant with sashes.

## December 31



### Malachi 4:1–6 (NRSV)

*The Great Day of the LORD*

**4** See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root

nor branch. <sup>2</sup> But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. <sup>3</sup> And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>4</sup> Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

<sup>5</sup> Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup> He will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents, so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse.

### Revelation 22:8–21 (NRSV)

*Epilogue and Benediction*

<sup>8</sup> I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant

with you and your comrades the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

<sup>10</sup> And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. <sup>11</sup> Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

<sup>12</sup> "See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

<sup>14</sup> Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. <sup>15</sup> Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

<sup>16</sup> "It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

<sup>17</sup> The Spirit and the bride say, "Come."

And let everyone who hears say, "Come."

And let everyone who is thirsty come.

Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.

<sup>18</sup> I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this book; <sup>19</sup> if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away that person's share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

<sup>20</sup> The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

<sup>21</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

### **Psalm 150:6 (NRSV)**

<sup>6</sup> Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD!



**Proverbs 31:25–31 (NRSV)**

- <sup>25</sup> Strength and dignity are  
her clothing,  
and she laughs at the  
time to come.
- <sup>26</sup> She opens her mouth with  
wisdom,  
and the teaching of  
kindness is on her  
tongue.
- <sup>27</sup> She looks well to the ways  
of her household,  
and does not eat the  
bread of idleness.
- <sup>28</sup> Her children rise up and  
call her happy;  
her husband too, and he  
praises her:
- <sup>29</sup> “Many women have done  
excellently,  
but you surpass them  
all.”
- <sup>30</sup> Charm is deceitful, and  
beauty is vain,  
but a woman who fears  
the LORD is to be  
praised.
- <sup>31</sup> Give her a share in the  
fruit of her hands,  
and let her works praise  
her in the city gates.